

THE
HOLY
BIBLE



KNOX VERSION

THE HOLY BIBLE

THE HOLY BIBLE

A TRANSLATION FROM THE LATIN VULGATE
IN THE LIGHT OF THE HEBREW AND
GREEK ORIGINALS

AUTHORIZED BY THE HIERARCHY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES
AND THE HIERARCHY OF SCOTLAND



SCHOOL EDITION

LONDON
BURNS & OATES
MACMILLAN & CO LTD

1957

*The Knox Translation of the New Testament
was first published in 1945 and of the Old Testament
(in two volumes, Genesis–Esther and Job–Machabees) in 1949*

*The one-volume edition was published in 1955
School edition published 1957*

IMPRIMATUR

✠ BERNARDUS CARD. GRIFFIN
ARCHIEPISCOPUS WESTMONASTERIENSIS

WESTMONASTERII, DIE 8 DECEMBRIS 1954

MACMILLAN AND COMPANY LIMITED
London Bombay Calcutta Madras Melbourne

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA LIMITED
Toronto

ST MARTIN'S PRESS INC
New York

BURNS OATES AND WASHBOURNE LTD
28 Ashley Place London SW 1

*This book is copyright in all countries which
are signatories to the Berne Convention*

*Printed in Great Britain at the University Press, Oxford
by Charles Batey, Printer to the University*

CONTENTS

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Book of Genesis	<i>page</i> 1
The Book of Exodus	48
The Book of Leviticus	88
The Book of Numbers	114
The Book of Deuteronomy	147
The Book of Josue	180
The Book of Judges	201
The Book of Ruth	224
The First Book of Kings	227
The Second Book of Kings	257
The Third Book of Kings	282
The Fourth Book of Kings	311
The First Book of Paralipomena	339
The Second Book of Paralipomena	363
The First Book of Esdras	395
The Second Book of Esdras or the Book of Nehemias	405
The Book of Tobias	419
The Book of Judith	429
The Book of Esther	441
The Book of Job	453
The Book of Psalms	479
The Book of Proverbs	539
The Book of Ecclesiastes	561
The Song of Songs	569
The Book of Wisdom	574
The Book of Ecclesiasticus	589
The Prophecy of Isaiaes	630
The Prophecy of Jeremias	681
The Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremias	732
The Prophecy of Baruch	737
The Prophecy of Ezechiel	744
The Prophecy of Daniel	789
The Prophecy of Osee	809
The Prophecy of Joel	818
The Prophecy of Amos	821
The Prophecy of Abdias	827
The Prophecy of Jonas	828
The Prophecy of Michaeas	830
The Prophecy of Nahum	835

CONTENTS

The Prophecy of Habacuc	page 838
The Prophecy of Sophonias	841
The Prophecy of Aggaeus	844
The Prophecy of Zacharias	846
The Prophecy of Malachias	855
The First Book of Machabees	858
The Second Book of Machabees	887
<i>Maps.</i> The World of the Old Testament	911
Palestine in the Old Testament	913

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ According to Matthew	1
The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ According to Mark	33
The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ According to Luke	53
The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ According to John	86
The Acts of the Apostles	114
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Romans	148
The First Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Corinthians	164
The Second Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Corinthians	181
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Galatians	192
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Ephesians	198
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Philippians	203
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Colossians	207
The First Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians	211
The Second Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians	215
The First Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to Timothy	217
The Second Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to Timothy	222
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to Titus	225
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to Philemon	227
The Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Paul to the Hebrews	228
The Universal Epistle of the Blessed Apostle James	241
The First Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Peter	245
The Second Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Peter	250
The First Epistle of the Blessed Apostle John	253
The Second Epistle of the Blessed Apostle John	257
The Third Epistle of the Blessed Apostle John	258
The Universal Epistle of the Blessed Apostle Jude	259
The Apocalypse of the Blessed Apostle John	261
<i>Maps.</i> Palestine in the New Testament	279
The World of the New Testament	281
<i>Appendix I</i> Pronunciation of the more difficult names in the New Testament	283
II The Epistles and Gospels for Sundays and the principal Holy Days	285

PREFACE

EXACTLY ten years have passed since the Hierarchy of England and Wales authorized the public use of Monsignor Knox's translation of the New Testament. Subsequently, at my request, he published in two volumes his translation of the Old Testament. Since then, certain verbal revisions have been made and now the Hierarchy has authorized for public use Monsignor Knox's translation of the entire Bible. To that authorization the Bishops add, on behalf of the Catholics of this country, their warm commendation and deep gratitude for this splendid work of scholarship and devotion.

The Knox translation has passed rapidly into common usage and has already won world-wide acclaim. Indeed, one may apply to the translator the words of Dr Worthington who, in his preface to the Douay version of 1609, described Gregory Martin and his collaborators as 'well-known to the world, to have been excellent in the tongues, sincere men and great Divines'. High commendation has been given to Monsignor Knox's translation for its freshness of approach, for its lively language and for the ease with which it may be read. Its style has succeeded in giving meaning to passages which in earlier versions have been difficult to understand.

However, it is not for the study of literary style that we read the Bible. This monumental task of translation has been carried through in order to give us a greater knowledge and understanding of inspired Sacred Scripture. We read the Bible in order to increase our knowledge and love of God. St Jerome tells us that 'to be ignorant of Scripture is not to know Christ'. Although Bible reading is not necessary for salvation the Church treasures the Bible as the inspired word of God and with the help of grace we seek its full meaning and apply its message to ourselves.

Whilst there is great need for scientific study of the Scriptures—and we welcome the abundant evidence of such scholarship in this country in recent times—Bible reading is not to be regarded as the prerogative of specialists. For all, the Bible is a rich source of meditation, the ideal spiritual reading. Pope St Pius X tells us that the fruit of scriptural study is threefold: spiritual delight, love of Christ and zeal for His cause. Herein we recognize at once a means by which we may try to fulfil the very purpose of our existence—'to know, love and serve God'.

At the present time when we are confronted with materialist influences and there is such widespread indifferentism, our Catholic people have great need of a profound spirituality based upon knowledge and love of God. The lay apostle is helpless unless he be formed spiritually and doctrinally. Prayer and the sacraments are his strength, the Bible his armour. Indeed, a knowledge of Holy Scripture, bringing meaning to what may otherwise seem empty phrases, is a valuable element in his participation in the Church's liturgy.

PREFACE

It is of the utmost importance that the Bible be looked upon as a whole, not as a mere concatenation of texts. The New Testament, telling us the story of the life of Christ, has an immediate appeal. But the Old Testament must not be neglected and its study will prove rewarding even in regard to the conduct of our daily life. We would see a Bible in every home, a Bible which is read regularly and which has a real bearing upon the life of those who use it. Its very production should be as worthy as possible of the sublime material it contains; easy to read and a joy to handle. It is to meet this need that Monsignor Knox's translation is now presented in one volume and I trust that this version, which has already made so great a contribution to the life of our people, will succeed in giving increasing numbers a greater understanding of the inspired message it bears.

✠ BERNARD CARDINAL GRIFFIN

Archbishop of Westminster

Feast of St. Jerome, 1954

VIRO EMINENTISSIMO
BERNARDO GRIFFIN
S.R.E. CARDINALI
ARCHIEPISCOPO WESTMONASTERIENSI
HOC OPVS
NEGOTIVM PLENVM VIGILIARVM ET SVDORIS
DIE FESTO S. HIERONYMI IAM NONVM
REDEVNTE FELICITER ABSOLVTVM
INDIGNVS INTERPRES

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

GOD, at the beginning of time, created heaven and earth. Earth was still an empty waste, and darkness hung over the deep; but already, over its waters, stirred the breath of God. Then God said, Let there be light; and the light began. God saw the light, and found it good, and he divided the spheres of light and darkness; the light he called Day, and the darkness Night. So evening came, and morning, and one day passed. God said, too, Let a solid vault arise amid the waters, to keep these waters apart from those; a vault by which God would separate the waters which were beneath it from the waters above it; and so it was done. This vault God called the Sky. So evening came, and morning, and a second day passed.

And now God said, Let the waters below the vault collect in one place to make dry land appear. And so it was done; the dry land God called Earth, and the water, where it had collected, he called the Sea. All this God saw, and found it good. Let the earth, he said, yield grasses that grow and seed; fruit-trees too, each giving fruit of its own kind, and so propagating itself on earth. And so it was done; the earth yielded grasses that grew and seeded, each according to its kind, and trees that bore fruit, each with the power to propagate its own kind. And God saw it, and found it good. So evening came, and morning, and a third day passed.

Next, God said, Let there be luminaries in the vault of the sky, to divide the spheres of day and night; let them give portents, and be the measures of time, to mark out the day and the year; let them shine in the sky's vault, and shed light on the earth. And so it was done.

God made the two great luminaries, the greater of them to command the day, and the lesser to command the night; then he made the stars. All these he put in the

vault of the sky, to shed their light on the earth, to control day and night, and divide the spheres of light and darkness. And God saw it, and found it good. So evening came, and morning, and a fourth day passed.

After this, God said, Let the waters produce moving things that have life in them, and winged things that fly above the earth under the sky's vault.¹ Thus God created the huge sea-beasts, and all the different kinds of life and movement that spring from the waters, and all the different kinds of flying things; and God saw it, and found it good. He pronounced his blessing on them, Increase and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea; and let there be abundance of flying things on earth. So evening came, and morning, and a fifth day passed. God said, too, Let the land yield all different kinds of living things, cattle and creeping things and wild beasts of every sort; and so it was done. God made every sort of wild beast, and all the different kinds of cattle and of creeping things; and God saw it, and found it good.

And God said, Let us make man, wearing our own image and likeness; let us put him in command of the fishes in the sea, and all that flies through the air, and the cattle, and the whole earth, and all the creeping things that move on earth. So God made man in his own image, made him in the image of God. Man and woman both, he created them. And God pronounced his blessing on them, Increase and multiply and fill the earth, and make it yours; take command of the fishes in the sea, and all that flies through the air, and all the living things that move on the earth. Here are all the herbs, God told them, that seed on earth, and all the trees, that carry in them the seeds of their own life, to be your food; food for all the beasts on the earth, all that flies in the air, all that creeps along the ground; here all that lives shall find its nourishment. And so it was done.

¹ The Latin version, like the Septuagint Greek, represents the birds, like the fishes, as having been produced from the sea. The Hebrew text has 'and let winged things fly' instead of 'and winged things that fly'.

31 And God saw all that he had made, and found it very good. So evening came, and morning, and a sixth day passed.

2 Thus heaven and earth and all the furniture of them were completed.

2 By the seventh day,¹ God had come to an end of making, and rested, on the seventh day, with his whole task accomplished.
3 That is why God gave the seventh day his blessing, and hallowed it, because it was the day on which his divine activity of creation finished.

4 Such origin heaven and earth had in the day of their fashioning. When heaven and earth God made, no woodland shrub had yet grown, no plant had yet sprung up; the Lord God had not yet sent rain upon the ground, that still had no human toil to cultivate it; there was only spring-water which came up from the earth, and watered its whole surface. And now, from the clay of the ground, the Lord God formed man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and made of man a living person.² God had planted a garden of delight,³ in which he now placed the man he had formed. Here, at the bidding of the Lord God, the soil produced all such trees as charm the eye and satisfy the taste; and here, in the middle of the garden, grew the tree of life, and the tree which brings knowledge of good and evil. The garden was watered by a river; it came out from Eden,⁴ and went on to divide into four branches. One is called Phison; it is the river which surrounds all the country of Hevilath, a gold-producing country; no gold is better; bdellium is found there too, and the onyx-stone. The second river is called Gehon, and is the river which surrounds the whole country of Ethiopia. The third river, which flows past the Assyrians, is called Tigris, and the fourth is the river Euphrates. So the Lord God took the man and put him in his garden of delight, to cultivate and tend it.
16 And this was the command which the Lord God gave the man, Thou mayest eat thy fill of all the trees in the garden except the tree

which brings knowledge of good and evil; if ever thou eatest of this, thy doom is death.

But the Lord God said, It is not well that man should be without companionship; I will give him a mate of his own kind. And now, from the clay of the ground, all the beasts that roam the earth and all that flies through the air were ready fashioned, and the Lord God brought them to Adam, to see what he would call them; the name Adam gave to each living creature is its name still. Thus Adam gave names to all the cattle, and all that flies in the air, and all the wild beasts; and still Adam had no mate of his own kind. So the Lord God made Adam fall into a deep sleep, and, while he slept, took away one of his ribs, and filled its place with flesh. This rib, which he had taken out of Adam, the Lord God formed into a woman; and when he brought her to Adam, Adam said, Here, at last, is bone that comes from mine, flesh that comes from mine; it shall be called Woman, this thing that was taken out of Man. That is why a man is destined to leave father and mother, and cling to his wife instead, so that the two become one flesh.⁵ Both went naked, Adam and his wife, and thought it no shame.

3 Of all the beasts which the Lord God had made, there was none that could match the serpent in cunning. It was he who said to the woman, What is this command God has given you, not to eat the fruit of any tree in the garden? To which the woman answered, We can eat the fruit of any tree in the garden except the tree in the middle of it; it is this God has forbidden us to eat or even to touch, on pain of death. And the serpent said to her, What is this talk of death? God knows well that as soon as you eat this fruit your eyes will be opened, and you yourselves will be like gods, knowing good and evil. And with that the woman, who saw that the fruit was good to eat, saw, too, how it was pleasant to look at and charmed the eye,⁶ took some fruit from the tree and ate

¹ For 'by the seventh day' the Septuagint Greek has 'on the sixth day'.

² There is, here, a play upon words in the Hebrew; Adam, man, was made out of the ground, adamah. In the Latin text, the word Adam is translated 'the man' up to verse 18, and 'Adam' thenceforward.

³ The Hebrew text probably means that God planted a garden out in the East, in Eden.

⁴ The Latin here translates the word Eden, as in verse 8 above.

⁵ It is not certain whether these words are represented as having been spoken by Adam, or whether they are a commentary by the author. Cf. Mt. 19. 5.

⁶ And charmed the eye; the Hebrew words are sometimes taken as meaning 'and gave desirable knowledge'.

it; and she gave some to her husband, and he ate with her. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they became aware of their nakedness; so they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles.

And now they heard the voice of the Lord God, as he walked in the garden in the cool of the evening; whereupon Adam and his wife hid themselves in the garden, among the trees. And the Lord God called to Adam; Where art thou? he asked. I heard thy voice, Adam said, in the garden, and I was afraid, because of my nakedness, so I hid myself. And the answer came, Why, who told thee of thy nakedness? Or hadst thou eaten of the tree, whose fruit I forbade thee to eat? The woman, said Adam, whom thou gavest me to be my companion, she it was who offered me fruit from the tree, and so I came to eat it. Then the Lord God said to the woman, What made thee do this? The serpent, she said, beguiled me, and so I came to eat.

And the Lord God said to the serpent, For this work of thine, thou, alone among all the cattle and all the wild beasts, shalt bear a curse; thou shalt crawl on thy belly and eat dust all thy life long. And I will establish a feud between thee and the woman, between thy offspring and hers; she is to crush thy head, while thou dost lie in ambush at her heels.¹ To the woman he said, Many are the pangs, many are the throes I will give thee to endure; with pangs thou shalt give birth to children, and thou shalt be subject to thy husband; he shall be thy lord. And to Adam he said, Thou hast listened to thy wife's counsel, and hast eaten the fruit I forbade thee to eat; and now, through thy act, the ground is under a curse. All the days of thy life thou shalt win food from it with toil; thorns and thistles it shall yield thee, this ground from which thou dost win thy food. Still thou shalt earn thy bread with the sweat of

thy brow, until thou goest back into the ground from which thou wast taken; dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

The name which Adam gave his wife was Eve, Life, because she was the mother of all living men.

And now the Lord provided garments for Adam and his wife, made out of skins, to clothe them. He said, too, Here is Adam become like one of ourselves, with knowledge of good and evil; now he has only to lift his hand and gather fruit to eat from the tree of life as well, and he will live endlessly. So the Lord God drove him out from that garden of delight, to cultivate the ground from which he came; banished Adam, and posted his Cherubim before the garden of delight, with a sword of fire that turned this way and that, so that he could reach the tree of life no longer.

4 And now Adam had knowledge of his wife, Eve, and she conceived. She called her child Cain, as if she would say, Canithi, I have been enriched by the Lord with a man-child. Then she bore a second time; this child, his brother, she called Abel. Abel became a shepherd, while Cain tilled the ground. Time passed, and Cain brought the Lord an offering out of the crops the land had given him; Abel, too, brought an offering, and his offering was out of the first-born of his flock, with their fat. On Abel, and on his offering, the Lord looked with favour, but not upon Cain, or his offering; so that Cain was much enraged, and his looks were lowering. But the Lord asked Cain, What does this anger mean, this frowning face of thine? If thy actions are good, canst thou doubt they will be rewarded? If not, canst thou doubt that guilt, thenceforward, will lie at thy door? Meanwhile he is at thy mercy, and thou canst have thy way with him.² Then Cain said to his brother, Let us go out together;³ and while they were out in

¹ For 'she' and 'her' the Septuagint Greek has 'he' and 'his'; the Hebrew text also, as it has come down to us, gives 'he', or perhaps 'it'. But most manuscripts of the Latin version have 'she', which plainly gives a better balance to the sentence. That the reference of this passage, in any case, is to the Incarnation, is the general opinion of the Fathers. The Latin here assumes that there is a play upon words in the original, since there are two Hebrew verbs closely alike, one of which means 'to crush', and the other 'to follow eagerly'. But the Hebrew text has 'to crush' in both clauses; the Septuagint Greek, in both clauses, has 'to lie in wait'.

² The last sentence in this verse probably refers to Abel, and the same words are used as were used of Adam in 3. 16 above. Some think, however, that guilt is represented as a wild beast lurking at Cain's door, and translate, 'its appetite is within thy control, thou canst have the better of it'. The Greek interpreters give a quite different meaning to the whole verse.

³ The words 'Let us go out together' are wanting in the Hebrew text.

the open, Cain turned upon his brother Abel and killed him.

9 Then the Lord said to Cain, Where is thy brother Abel? I cannot tell, said he; is it for me to keep watch over my brother?
 10 But the answer came, What is this thou hast done? The blood of thy brother has found a voice that cries out to me from the
 11 ground. Henceforward thou shalt be an outlaw from this ground, that has opened to drink in thy brother's blood, shed by thy
 12 hand. Till that ground, and it will yield thee its fruit no longer; thou shalt be a wanderer, a fugitive on earth. Then Cain
 13 said to the Lord, Guilt like mine is too great to find forgiveness. And now thou
 14 art robbing me of the ground, and I shall be cut off from thy protection, and wander over the earth, a fugitive; anyone I meet
 15 will slay me. But the Lord told him, It shall not be so; whoever kills Cain shall pay for it sevenfold. And the Lord gave Cain such token of his protection as should warn the chance-comer not to kill him.

16 So Cain was banished from God's presence, and lived as a fugitive, east of Eden.
 17 And now Cain had knowledge of his wife, and she conceived. She called her child Henoah; and Cain built a city which he called Henoah, after his son's name. This Henoah was the ancestor, through Irad, 19 Maviael, and Mathusael, of Lamech. Lamech married two wives, the one called Ada and the other Sella. It was Ada that gave
 20 birth to Jabel, the first founder of all those who live in tents and herd sheep; and he had a brother called Jubal, the founder of all those who play music, on the harp or the
 22 pipe. Sella gave birth to Tubalcain, who became a smith, skilled in every kind of brass and iron work; and Tubalcain had a sister
 23 called Noema. It was to his wives, Ada and Sella, that Lamech uttered the saying, Listen to these words of mine, you wives of Lamech, note my saying well. The man that wounds me, the stripling who deals
 24 me a blow, I reward with death.¹ For Cain, sevenfold vengeance was to be taken; for Lamech, it shall be seventy times as much.²

25 And once more Adam had knowledge of

his wife, and she bore a son; Seth was the name she gave him, as if she would say, Seth, the Lord has secured a line of issue for me in place of Abel, now that Cain has murdered him. Seth, too, had a son whom
 he called Enos; and he began to call upon the name of the Lord.³

5 This is the record of Adam's posterity. When God created human kind, he made them in his own image. Man and woman both, he created them, and gave them his blessing; and Adam was the name by which he called them at the time when they were first created. Adam was a hundred and thirty years old when he begot in his image, his likeness, the son whom he called Seth. He lived eight hundred years more, and lived to be nine hundred and thirty. Seth was a hundred and five years old when he begot Enos, and lived to be nine hundred and twelve. Enos was ninety years old when he begot Cainan, and lived to be nine hundred and five. Cainan was seventy years old when he begot Malaleel, and lived to be nine hundred and ten. Malaleel was sixty-five years old when he begot Jared, and lived to be eight hundred and ninety-five. Jared was a hundred and sixty-two years old when he begot Henoah, and lived to be nine hundred and sixty-two. All these had other sons and daughters besides.

This Henoah was sixty-five years old when he begot Mathusala. For three hundred years after the birth of Mathusala, Henoah lived as God's close friend, and he had other sons and daughters besides; thus Henoah lived altogether three hundred and sixty-five years, the close friend of God; then God took him to himself, and he was seen no more. Mathusala was a hundred and eighty-seven years old when he begot Lamech; he lived for seven hundred and eighty-two years more, and had other sons and daughters besides; he died at the age of nine hundred and sixty-nine. And Lamech was a hundred and eighty-two years old when he begot a son, whom he called Noe, as if he would say, Nahem,

¹ Some think that Lamech was triumphing in the production of metal weapons, which may be implied in the preceding verse. ² The Hebrew text says 77 times, but the Septuagint Greek has '490 times'. The Latin may mean either, but cf. Mt. 18. 22. ³ The meaning of the Hebrew text here is doubtful; some would translate it. 'It was then that men began to call upon the name of the Lord'. But the suggestion is more probably that Enos (or perhaps Seth himself) began a God-fearing tradition, in contrast to the descendants of Cain.

He will console us, that have toiled and laboured with our hands so long on ground
 30 which the Lord has cursed. He lived for five hundred and ninety-five years more, and had other sons and daughters besides;
 31 he died at the age of seven hundred and seventy-seven. And Noe was five hundred years old when he became the father of Sem, Cham, and Japheth.¹

6 Time passed, and the race of men began to spread over the face of earth, they and the daughters that were
 2 born to them. And now the sons of God saw how beautiful were these daughters of men, and took them as wives, choosing
 3 where they would.² But God said, This spirit of mine shall not endure in man for ever, he is but mortal clay; his life-time shall be a hundred and twenty years.³
 4 Giants lived on the earth in those days, when first the sons of God mated with the daughters of men, and by them had children; these were the heroes whose fame has come down to us from long ago.

5 And now God found that earth was full of men's iniquities, and that the whole frame of their thought was set continually
 6 on evil; and he repented of having made men on the earth at all.⁴ So, smitten with
 7 grief to the depths of his heart, he said, I will blot out mankind, my creature, from the face of the earth, and with mankind all the beasts and the creeping things and all that flies through the air; I repent
 8 of having made them. Only on Noe did God
 9 look with favour. And these were the children of Noe, the man who was accepted as faultless in such a generation, the close
 10 friend of God; Noe begot three sons, Sem, Cham, and Japheth.

11 There lay the world, corrupt in God's
 12 sight, full of oppression; and God, seeing the world so corrupt (no creature on earth
 13 but had lost its true direction), said to Noe, The time has come for me to make an end

of all mankind; their coming has filled the earth with oppression; I mean to destroy them, and earth with them. Make thyself
 14 an ark from planks of wood;⁵ in that ark make cabins, and give it a coat of pitch within and without. These are to be the
 15 measurements; three hundred cubits of length, fifty cubits of breadth, and thirty cubits of height. The ark is to have a course
 16 of windows, which thou wilt make a cubit in height;⁶ and thou wilt make a door in its side; and it is to have a hold, and a lower and upper deck. Thou must know that I
 17 mean to bring a flood of waters over the earth, and destroy every creature that lives and breathes under heaven; all that earth
 18 holds must perish. But with thee this covenant of mine shall stand; thou shalt
 19 take refuge in the ark, thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with
 20 thee. And take with thee into the ark, to preserve them, a pair of each kind of living creature, male and female, all the different
 21 birds, all the different beasts, all the creeping things of earth; two of each shall go in with thee, so that all may survive. And it
 22 is for thee to provide thyself with all that is eaten as food, and store it up, so that thou and they may have food to eat. All this Noe did, at God's bidding.

7 And now the Lord said to him, Take refuge in the Ark, with all thy household; looking upon this generation of thine, I find thee only guiltless. Take seven
 2 pairs of all the clean animals with thee, male and female, and two pairs of all the animals that are unclean, and of all the
 3 birds that fly in the air, seven pairs; no breed must vanish from the earth. In
 4 seven days from this, I mean to send down rain on the earth for forty days and forty
 5 nights, and blot out this whole world of living things, my own creatures, from the face of the earth. All this Noe did, at God's
 6 bidding; he was six hundred years old

¹ Throughout this chapter, the Hebrew forms of expression have been recast for the sake of brevity.

² 'Sons of God' appears to mean angels in Job 1. 6; 2. 1; 38. 7; elsewhere its meaning is doubtful. Many Fathers understand this phrase of Seth's descendants, and the 'daughters of men' as descended from Cain.

³ This verse is very obscure in the Hebrew; St Jerome gives 'judge' instead of 'endure', and thinks that God gave mankind a hundred and twenty years' grace before sending the Flood. ⁴ Repentance and grief are here attributed to God analogically; his attitude was that which would, in a human agent, be dictated by such feelings.

⁵ 'Planks of wood'; the rare word given in the Latin version as 'smoothed' is interpreted by some as the name of a tree. St Jerome, using a different reading, gives 'covered with pitch' as a translation.

⁶ 'A course of windows'; literally, 'a window', but, since only one measurement is given, it must be presumed that there were to be openings all round the Ark. Some interpret the word as meaning 'a roof'.

when the waters of the flood covered the earth. Noe and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him took refuge in the Ark from the waters of the flood; of all the beasts, clean and unclean, of all the birds, and all the creeping things of earth, pairs took refuge with Noe in the Ark, male and female, as God had commanded him.

Seven days passed, and then the waters of the flood covered the earth. It was the seventeenth day of the second month of Noe's six hundredth year, when all the springs of the great depth beneath broke through, and the flood-gates of heaven were opened; and it rained for forty days and forty nights on the earth. That very day, Noe and his sons, Sem, Cham and Japheth, his wife, and the three wives of his sons, took refuge in the Ark; and with them all the different kinds of wild beasts, of cattle, of the creeping things of earth, and of things that fly, birds and winged creatures; there was refuge with Noe in the Ark for pairs of all mortal things that live and breathe. Into the Ark they went, males and females, as God had commanded; and the Lord shut him in. For forty days that flood came down on the earth, and the water grew deep, till it lifted the Ark up from the ground; full the tide flowed, covering the whole face of the earth, but still the Ark rode safe on the waters. Higher and higher the waters rose above the ground, till all the high mountains under heaven disappeared; the flood stood fifteen cubits higher than the mountains it covered. All mortal things that moved on earth were drowned, birds and cattle and wild beasts, and all the creeping things of earth, and all mankind; all that lived and moved on the earth perished together. God wiped out the whole world of earthly creatures, man and beast, creeping things and all that flies through the air, so that they vanished from the earth; only Noe and his companions in the Ark were left. And the waters held their own over the land for a hundred and fifty days.

8 Then God bethought him of Noe, and of all the wild beasts and the cattle that went with him in the Ark; so he set a wind stirring over the earth, and with

that, the waters abated. The springs of the great depth closed up again; so, too, did the flood-gates of heaven, and rain fell from heaven no longer; more and more the waters receded from the land, beginning to abate, now that the hundred and fifty days were over. And now, on the twenty-seventh day of the seventh month, the Ark came to rest upon the mountains of Armenia. Inch by inch the waters abated, until the tenth month came; on the first day of the tenth month, the hill tops began to shew. Noe let forty days pass, and then undid the window he had made in the Ark, and sent out one of the ravens, which went this way and that, and had not come back to him when the waters dried up over the earth.¹ Then to make sure whether the waters had become shallow over all the surface of the ground, he sent out one of the doves. But the dove came back to the Ark and its master, finding never a resting-place to perch on; and he put out his hand to catch it, and took it back into the Ark. Seven days more he waited, and then sent the dove out from the Ark again; this time, it came back to him at night-fall, with a twig of olive in its mouth, the leaves still green on it; and then Noe could not doubt that the waters had become shallow all over the ground. But still he waited another seven days, and now, when he sent it out, it came back to him no more. It was the first day of the first month of his six hundred and first year when the waters ebbed away from the land, and Noe, withdrawing the covering of the Ark, looked round him and found that the whole surface of the ground was clear. And by the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the land itself was dry.

Then God's word came to Noe, telling him, Come out of the Ark, with thy wife and thy sons and their wives. Bring out with thee all the living creatures thou hast there, of all kinds, birds and beasts and creeping things that creep on the earth; occupy this earth, increase and multiply upon it. So Noe came out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him: and the living creatures came out of the Ark, beasts and all creeping things that roam on the earth, in all their various

¹ The Hebrew text is slightly different; 'Which went this way and that, and came back again, until the waters dried up all over the earth'.

20 kinds. Thereupon Noe built an altar to the Lord, and chose out beasts that were clean and birds that were clean, and made burnt-offerings there. And the Lord, smelling such a scent as pleased him, made the resolve, Never again will I plague the earth on man's account, that has all the thoughts and imaginations of his heart, even in youth, so bent towards evil; never again will I send affliction such as this upon all living creatures. While the earth stands, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall keep their course unaltered.

9 And God pronounced his blessing on Noe and his sons; Increase, he said, and multiply, and fill the earth. All the beasts of earth, and the winged things of the sky, and the creeping things of earth, are to go in fear and dread of you, and I give you dominion over all the fishes of the sea. This creation that lives and moves is to provide food for you; I make it all over to you, by the same title as the herbs that have growth. Only, you must not eat the flesh with the blood still in it. The shedder of your own life-blood shall be held to account for it, whether man or beast; whoever takes the life of his brother-man shall answer for it to me. Man was made in God's image, and whoever sheds a man's blood must shed his own blood in return.¹ And now, increase and multiply; occupy and fill the earth.

8 This, too, God said to Noe, and to Noe's sons: Here is a covenant I will observe with you and with your children after you, and with all living creatures, your companions, the birds and the beasts of burden and the cattle that came out of the Ark with you, and the wild beasts besides. Never more will the living creation be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again a flood to devastate the world. This, God said, shall be the pledge of the promise I am making to you, and to all living creatures, your companions, eternally; I will set my bow in the clouds, to be a pledge of my covenant with creation. When I veil the sky with clouds, in those clouds my bow shall appear, to remind me of my promise to you, and to all the life

that quickens mortal things; never shall the waters rise in flood again, and destroy all living creatures. There, in the clouds, my bow shall stand, and as I look upon it, I will remember this eternal covenant; God's covenant with all the life that beats in mortal creatures upon earth. Such was the pledge God gave to Noe of his promise to all living things.

These, then, were the names of Noe's three sons, who came out of the Ark with him, Sem, Cham and Japheth; and of these, Cham was the ancestor of Chanaan. All three were Noe's sons, and from them the race of mankind overspread the earth. And now Noe turned farmer, and on the ground he tilled, he grew a vine. So he came to drink wine, and, drunk with it, lay all naked in his tent. And Cham, Chanaan's ancestor, saw how his father's body lay naked, and went out to tell his two brothers of it; whereupon Sem and Japheth spread a cloak over their shoulders, and walked in backwards to cover their father's nakedness, their faces turned away, so that they never caught sight of his naked body. When Noe had slept off his wine, he found out how his younger son had treated him; Cursed be Chanaan, he said, he shall be the slave and drudge of his brethren. He said, too, Blessed be the Lord God of Sem; may Chanaan be a slave to him. May God give Japheth dwelling-space,² and let him share the tents of Sem, but let Chanaan be his slave. And Noe lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood, so that his lifetime, when he came to die, had filled the measure of nine hundred and fifty years.

10 These were the descendants of Noe's children, Sem, Cham and Japheth, through the sons that were born to them after the flood. These were the sons of Japheth; Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Thubal, Mosoch and Thiras. And these were Gomer's sons, Ascenez, Riphath and Thôgorma. And these were Javan's sons, Elisa, Tharsis, Cethim and Dodanim; who divided up the islands of the Gentiles, region by region. Each of these became separate nations, distinct in speech and in blood.

¹ 'Must shed his own blood in return'; in the Hebrew text, 'shall have his blood shed by man'.

² There is here a play upon words between the name Japheth and the Hebrew verb, 'to enlarge'.

6 These were Cham's sons; Chus, Mes-
 7 raim, Phuth and Chanaan. And these
 were the sons of Chus; Saba, Hevila, Sa-
 batha, Regma and Sabatacha. And these
 were Regma's sons, Saba and Dadan.
 8 Chus was also the father of Nemrod, who
 9 was the first great warrior; bold, too, by
 God's grace,¹ at the hunt, whence the proverb
 arose, By God's grace, a huntsman
 10 bold as Nemrod. His empire began with
 Babylon, Arach, Achad and Chalanne, in
 11 the country of Sennaar. It was from that
 country Assur went out to build Nineve
 12 and its suburbs,² and Chale; and between
 Nineve and Chale he built the great city
 13 of Resen. Mesraim was the father of the
 Ludim, the Anamim, the Laabim, and the
 14 Nephthuum; the Phetrusim, too, and the
 Chasluim (from whom the Philistines
 15 sprang) and the Caphtorim. Chanaan was
 the father of Sidon; this was his first-born
 16 son. From him, too, come Hethites, Je-
 17 busites, Amorrhites, Gergesites, Hevites,
 18 Aracites, Sinites, Aradians, Samarites and
 Amathites; so, in later times, the Cha-
 naanite peoples spread this way and that.
 19 That Chanaanite territory, beginning
 at Sidon, reached as far as Gaza on the road
 to Gerara, and as far as Lesa on the road
 to Sodom, Gomorrha, Adama and Seboim.
 20 These were the descendants of Cham;
 such were the tribes, the tongues, the
 branches, the countries, the peoples that
 came from him.
 21 Sem, too, Japheth's elder brother, had
 children; he is father of all who claim de-
 22 scendant from Heber. His sons were called
 Aelam, Assur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram.
 23 These were Aram's sons, Us, Hul, Gether
 24 and Mes. Arphaxad was the father of Sale,
 25 and Sale of Heber. Heber had two sons;
 one was called Phaleg, Division, because
 26 in his time the territory was divided up,
 and his brother's name was Jectan. This
 Jectan was the father of Elmodad, Saleph,
 27 Asarmoth, Jare, Aduram, Uzal, Decla,
 28 Ebal, Abimael, Saba, Ophir, Hevila and
 30 Jobab. All these were Jectan's sons, and
 their territory reached from Messa to
 31 mount Sephar in the east. These were the
 sons of Sem; such were their tribes and
 tongues and countries and peoples.

Noe's Descendants; the Tower of Babel

These were the descendants that sprang ³ from Noe, divided according to their peoples and their races; this was how the nations were scattered over the earth after the flood.

11 Hitherto, the world had only one way of speech, only one language. And now, as men travelled westwards, they found a plain in the land of Sennaar, and made themselves a home there: Here we can make bricks, they said to one another, baked with fire; and they built, not in stone, but in brick, with pitch for their mortar. It would be well, they said, to build ourselves a city, and a tower in it with a top that reaches to heaven; we will make ourselves a great people, instead of scattering over the wide face of earth. But now the Lord came down to look at the city, with its tower, which Adam's children were building; and he said, Here is a people all one, with a tongue common to all; this is but the beginning of their undertakings, and what is to prevent them carrying out all they design? It would be well to go down and throw confusion into the speech they use there, so that they will not be able to understand each other. Thus the Lord broke up their common home, and scattered them over the earth, and the building of the city came to an end. That is why it was called Babel, Confusion, because it was there that the Lord confused the whole world's speech, and scattered them far away, over the wide face of earth.

These were the descendants of Sem; Sem was a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, two years after the flood. He lived five hundred years more. Arphaxad was thirty-five years old when he begot Sale, and lived three hundred and three years more. Sale was thirty years old when he begot Heber, and lived four hundred and three years more. Heber was thirty-four years old when he begot Phaleg, and lived four hundred and thirty years more. Phaleg was thirty years old when he begot Reu, and lived two hundred and nine years more. Reu was thirty-two years old when he begot Sarug, and lived two hundred and seven years more.

¹ 'By God's grace'; literally, 'in the presence of God', a phrase whose exact meaning is doubtful.
² 'Assur went out'; some would understand this as meaning 'he (Nemrod) went out to Assur'. 'Its suburbs'; literally, 'the broad places of the city'; according to some it should be a proper name, Rehoboth-ir.

22 Sarug was thirty years old when he begot
 23 Nachor, and lived two hundred years more.
 24 Nachor was twenty-nine years old when he
 25 begot Thare, and lived a hundred and
 19 nineteen years more. All these had other
 26 sons and daughters besides. And Thare,
 after reaching the age of seventy, became
 the father of Abram, of Nachor, and of
 Aran.

27 These are the descendants of Thare;
 Thare's sons were called Abram, Nachor
 and Aran, and Aran had a son called Lot.
 28 This Aran died before his father Thare, in
 26 Ur of the Chaldees, the country of his
 29 birth. Abram and Nachor married;
 Abram's wife was called Sarai, and Na-
 chor's wife was called Melcha. Her father
 Aran had two children, Melcha herself and
 30 Jescha. Sarai was barren, and had no
 31 children. And now Thare, with his son
 Abram, and his grandson Lot, son of
 Aran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, who
 had married his son Abram, left Ur of the
 Chaldees and set out for the land of Cha-
 naan. They went as far as Haran, and there
 32 they settled. At Haran, at the age of two
 hundred and five, Thare died.

12 Meanwhile, the Lord said to
 Abram, Leave thy country behind
 thee, thy kinsfolk, and thy father's home,
 and come away into a land I will shew thee.
 2 Then I will make a great people of thee;
 I will bless thee, and make thy name re-
 3 nowned, a name of benediction; those who
 bless thee, I will bless, those who curse
 thee, I will curse, and in thee all the races
 4 of the world shall find a blessing.¹ So
 Abram went out, as the Lord bade him,
 and with him went his nephew, Lot.
 Abram was seventy-five years old² at the
 5 time when he left Haran, took his wife
 Sarai and his nephew Lot with him, all the
 possessions they had acquired in Haran,
 and all the retainers born in their service
 there, and set out for the land of Chanaan.
 6 When they reached it, Abram went across
 country as far as Sichem and the Valley of
 Clear Seeing.³ Those were the days when

the Chanaanites still dwelt in the land.
 Here the Lord appeared to Abram, prom-
 7 ising to give the whole land to his pos-
 terity; and this appearance he com-
 memorated by building the Lord an altar
 there. Then he moved on from there to the
 8 mountain on the east of Bethel, where he
 pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and
 Hai on the east; here too he built an altar to
 the Lord, and invoked his name before it.

Thus Abram journeyed on, travelling
 9 always further south. And now the coun-
 10 try was stricken with famine; and Abram
 made his way into Egypt, to take refuge
 there, so grievous was the famine all over
 the country. And when he had nearly
 11 reached Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai,
 I have it in mind that thou art a woman fair
 to see; and it may be that when the Egypt-
 12 tians catch sight of thee, they will say to
 themselves, She is a wedded woman, this
 is her husband; and they will kill me, and
 keep thee for themselves. Tell them, I en-
 13 treat thee, that thou art my sister; so, for
 thy sake, I shall be well used, and I shall
 owe my life to thee. And sure enough, as
 14 soon as Abram set foot in Egypt, the
 Egyptians remarked the great beauty of
 his wife, and Pharaoh was told of her by his
 15 courtiers, who sang her praises to him. So
 Sarai was carried off to Pharaoh's court, and
 16 Abram, for her sake, was well treated; he
 had no lack of sheep, oxen, and asses, of
 men and maid servants, of she-asses, too,
 and camels. But the Lord smote Pharaoh
 and his court with great calamities, be-
 17 cause of Abram's wife Sarai, till at last he
 18 sent for Abram, and asked him, What is
 this trick thou hast played on me? Why
 didst thou not own to me that she was thy
 19 wife? How is it that thou didst call her thy
 sister, and let me wed her? Enough; here is
 thy wife, take her and begone. And Pharaoh
 20 gave Abram an escort to see him on his way,
 with his wife and all his possessions.

13 So Abram came back from Egypt
 into the south country, with his
 wife and all that belonged to him; Lot, too,

¹ 'Shall find a blessing'; some commentators would interpret this, 'shall bless themselves in thy name', that is, use it as a proverbial instance of prosperity. ² It seems that Thare was still alive at the time of Abram's migration (cf. 11. 26, 32). St Jerome, assuming that Thare was dead, would date Abram's age of seventy-five not from his birth, but from the time of his leaving Ur. ³ 'The Valley of Clear Seeing'; in the Hebrew text, 'The oak of Moré' (a proper name). The Latin version evidently follows a different tradition, which would connect the name of the place with the Hebrew word for 'appearance' (cf. the verse following).

2 went in his company. Abram was by now the master of rich possessions, with abundance of gold and silver. He took the same road northwards by which he had come, and reached Bethel, and the place between Bethel and Hai where he had pitched his tent before, with the altar still standing there, as he had built it, commemorating the Lord's name.¹ Lot, his companion, had flocks and herds and a camp of his own, so that there was no room for them to live together on the same land; they could not share a camping-ground, with such great possessions, and already a quarrel had broken out between Abram's shepherds and Lot's. In those days, there were Chanaanites and Perezites living all around, and Abram said to Lot, Pray let us have no strife between us two, between my shepherds and thine; are we not brethren?² See, here is the whole land before thee; come, our ways must part. Turn leftwards, and I will keep to the right, or choose the right, and I will go leftwards. Whereupon Lot looked about him, and the great hollow of Jordan met his eye, well watered, in those days before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha, like the garden of the Lord itself, or the land of Egypt approached by way of Segor. So Lot chose the hollow of Jordan, and went away to the east, and the two kinsmen parted company. Abram made his dwelling in the land of Chanaan, while Lot found a home among the cities round Jordan, camping at Sodom. They were evil folk that lived at Sodom, wicked in the Lord's sight beyond all measure.

14 When Abram had parted from Lot, the Lord said to him, Look about thee, turn thy eyes from where thou art to north and south, to east and west. All the land thou seest I make over to thee, and to thy posterity for ever. And to that posterity I will grant increase, till it lies like dust on the ground, past all counting. Up, then, and journey through the land at thy ease, the length and breadth of it; to thee I will give it. So Abram moved his tent, and went to live by the valley of Mambre,² at

Hebron, and there he built an altar to the Lord.

14 It chanced at this time that Amraphel, the king of Sennaar, and Arioch, King of Pontus,³ and Chodorlahomor, king of Elam, and Thadal, king of the barbarians, went out to war. And their enemies were Bara, king of Sodom, Bersa, king of Gomorrha, Sennaab, king of Adama, Semeber, king of Seboim, and the king of Bala (or Segor). All these joined their forces in the Valley of the Forests, where the Salt Sea is now; they had been tributary to Chodorlahomor for twelve years, and in the following year they had revolted from him. So, in this fourteenth year, Chodorlahomor and the kings allied with him came out to battle. They had defeated the Raphaim, in Astaroth-Carnaim, and the Zuzim in their company;⁴ the Emim, too, in Save-Cariathaim, and the Horrites in the hills of Seir, right up to the plains of Pharan, out in the desert. And now, returning, they had reached the spring of Misphat (or Cades), where they fell upon all the Amalecite country, and the Amorrites that lived by Asason-Thamar. So the kings of Sodom, Gomorrha, Adama, Seboim and Bala (or Segor) came out to meet them, and prepared to do battle with them in the Valley of the Forests. Chodorlahomor, king of Elam, and Thadal, king of the barbarians, and Amraphel, king of Sennaar, and Arioch, king of Pontus, these were the four kings those five kings had to meet. The Valley of the Forests contained many pools of asphalt, and among these the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrha were overcome and routed; those who survived took refuge in the hill country. All the wealth of Sodom and Gomorrha, and all their supply of food, was carried off by the victors as they went; so, too, was Abram's nephew Lot, who dwelt at Sodom, with all the wealth that was his.

And now word came, by one of those who had escaped, to the Hebrew chieftain Abram, where he lived in the valley of Mambre the Amorrite, brother of Escol

¹ 'Commemorating the Lord's name'; or perhaps, 'and there (once more) he invoked the Lord's name'.

² The Hebrew text has 'oaks' instead of 'valley'; (cf. 12. 6 above). ³ 'Of Pontus'; so the Latin version, whereas the Hebrew text and the Septuagint Greek have 'of Ellasar'. It is not likely that Pontus on the southern shore of the Black Sea is meant; the other kings all lived east of Palestine.

⁴ 'In their company'; the Hebrew text makes this a proper name, 'in Cham', a place not elsewhere mentioned.

and Aner; all these were confederate with
 14 Abram. Abram himself, as soon as he
 heard that his kinsman Lot was a prisoner,
 mustered the men he had in arms, all of
 his own household, to the number of three
 15 hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit
 all the way to Dan. Here he divided his
 confederates into companies, and fell upon
 the enemy by night, routing them and
 16 driving them in their flight as far as Hoba,
 to the left of Damascus; and he brought
 back all that wealth with him, Lot, too, and
 the wealth that was his, and the women,
 and the common folk.

17 Thus he defeated Chodorlahomor, and
 the kings who were with him. And as he
 came back, the king of Sodom went out to
 meet him at the Valley of Savé, which is
 18 the same as the Royal Valley; Melchise-
 dech, too, was there, the king of Salem.
 And he, priest as he was of the most high
 God, brought out bread and wine with
 19 him, and gave him this benediction, On
 Abram be the blessing of the most high
 God, maker of heaven and earth, and
 20 blessed be that most high God, whose pro-
 tection has brought thy enemies into thy
 power. To him, Abram gave tithes of all
 21 he had won.¹ As for the king of Sodom,
 he said to Abram, Give me these living
 souls; all the rest thou mayest take for
 22 thyself. But Abram answered, By this
 hand, which I lift up to the Lord God, the
 23 prince of heaven and earth, I will take
 nothing of thine, though it were but a
 thread from the woof or the strap of a shoe.
 Never shalt thou say, Abram got his wealth
 24 from me. Take all, except the food my
 men have already eaten, and the share that
 falls to the three who came out with me,
 Aner, Escol, and Mambre; let them have
 their part.

15 It was after this that the Lord sent
 word to Abram in a vision, Have
 no fear, Abram, I am here to protect thee;
 2 thy reward shall be great indeed. But
 Abram answered, Lord God, what can this
 gift of thine be? I must go the way of
 childless men; Damascus here, the son of
 3 Eliezer, is but the son of my steward;² to

me (Abram added) thou hast given no
 children, so that all the heir I have is a
 slave born in my house. Whereupon the
 4 Lord sent word to him, This man shall not
 succeed thee; thou shalt have an heir
 sprung from thy own body. Then he took
 5 him out of doors, and said to him, Look
 up at the sky, and count, if thou canst, the
 stars in it; thy race, like these, shall be
 numberless. So Abram put his faith in
 6 God, and it was reckoned virtue in him.³

And now God said to him, I am the
 7 Lord, who brought thee out from Ur of
 the Chaldees, to give thee possession of
 this land instead. And when he asked,
 8 Lord God, what assurance may I have,
 that it is mine? the Lord answered, Bring
 9 me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-
 old she-goat, and a three-year-old ram, and
 a turtle-dove, and a pigeon. All these he
 10 brought to him, and cut them in half,
 laying the two halves of each on opposite
 sides, except the dove and the pigeon; he
 did not divide these. The whole day long
 11 Abram stood there, driving away the
 carrion-birds as they swooped down on the
 carcasses; but when the sun set, deep sleep
 12 fell upon him, and in the darkness a great
 dread assailed him. So a voice came to
 13 him, This thou must know, that thy race
 will live as strangers in a land not their
 own, reduced to slavery and ill-used for
 14 four hundred years. But I am here to pass
 judgement on the nation which enslaves
 them; and when this is done, they shall
 come back rich in possessions. For thyself,
 15 thou shalt be buried with thy fathers,
 grown old in comfort; but the fourth
 generation will have come before these
 return hither; the wickedness of the
 Amorrhites has not reached its full term.

So the sun went down, and when the
 17 darkness of night came on, a smoking fur-
 nace was seen, a torch of fire that passed
 between the pieces of flesh. And the Lord,
 18 that day, made a covenant with Abram;
 I will grant this land, he told him, to thy
 posterity, with its borders reaching up to
 the river of Egypt, and the great river
 Euphrates; the land of the Cinites, and the
 19 Cenezites, and the Cedmonites, the

¹ Cf. Heb. 7.

² The meaning of this verse is obscure both in the Hebrew text and in the versions; it seems likely that there has been a corruption in the manuscripts. As the text stands, Damascus must be the name of a person, not of a place, and the words 'Damascus (of) Eliezer' will probably imply that Eliezer was his father.

³ Cf. Rom. 4. 3; Gal. 3. 6.

21 Hethites and the Pherezites, the Raphaim, too, and the Amorrhites, and the Chanaanites, and the Gergesites, and the Jebusites.

16 And still Abram's wife Sarai bore him no children. But she had an Egyptian maid-servant, called Agar; and now she said to her husband, The Lord, as thou seest, denies me motherhood; be-take thyself to this maid of mine, in the hope that I may at least have children through her means. So Abram consented to the wish of his wife, and she brought this Egyptian maid-servant of hers, Agar, and gave her to her husband as his mate, ten years after they had taken up their abode in the land of Chanaan. Abram, then, had knowledge of her, and she, finding herself with child, began to look on her mistress with scorn. And Sarai complained to Abram, I am being wronged, through thy fault; here is this maid-servant of mine, whom I bade thee take in thy arms, treating me scornfully, now that she has conceived. May the Lord do justice between us. To this, Abram made answer, Is she not in thy power, thy own maid-servant? Do what thou wilt with her. Thus it was that Sarai used her cruelly, and she took refuge in flight.

7 She was sitting by a well out in the wilderness, on the desert road to Sur, when an angel of the Lord found her.

8 Whence comes Agar, he asked, and whither does she go, that was Sarai's maid-servant? And she answered, It is from the threats of my mistress, Sarai, that I have fled. Then the angel of the Lord said to her, Go back to thy mistress, and submit to her will.

10 Still will I grant increase, he said, to the race that shall spring from thee, till its numbers cannot be counted. And he added, Now thou art with child; it is a son that will be born to thee, and thou shalt call him Ismael (that is, God hears), in token that God has listened to thee in thy affliction. His shall be a nature none can tame; hating all and hated by all, he shall pitch his camp eastwards of his brethren.¹

13 Thus the Lord spoke to her, and thus she

named him, Thou art God, that hast looked on me; for indeed, she said, there was one who looked on me here, and I saw him as he left me.² So she called that well, the Well of him who lives and looks on me; it is between Cades and Barad. Agar, then, bore a son to Abram, and called him Ismael; Abram was eighty-six years old at the time of Ismael's birth.

17 It was when he reached the age of ninety-nine that the Lord was revealed to him with the words, I am God Almighty; live as in my sight, and be perfect. Then, on my part, I will make a covenant with thee, to give thy posterity increase beyond measure. At this, Abram fell prostrate before him. And God said to him; I AM,³ and here is the covenant I make with thee, thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall thy name be Abram, thou shalt be called Abraham, the father of a throng, such is the multitude of nations I will give thee for thy children.⁴ I will make thee fruitful beyond all measure, so that thou shalt count among the nations; from thy issue, kings shall rise. I will honour this covenant of mine with thyself and with the race that shall follow thee, generation after generation; an eternal covenant that pledges me to be thy God, and the God of the race which follows thee. To thee, and to that race, I will give the land in which thou dwellest now as a stranger, the whole land of Chanaan; their inheritance for ever, and I their God.

Then God said to Abraham, Thou, too, shalt observe this covenant of mine, thou and the race that shall follow thee, generation after generation. This is the covenant you shall keep with me, thou and thine: every male child of yours shall be circumcised; you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, in token of the covenant between me and you. Generation after generation, every male child shall be circumcised when it is eight days old. And this law shall be binding on your slaves, both those born in your households, and those you have bought, though these be of

¹ 'Eastwards'; the Hebrew text is usually so rendered. The Latin gives a literal translation, 'over against'.
² The exact meaning of verses 13 and 14 is uncertain in the Hebrew.
³ Cf. Ex. 3: 14, in the Hebrew text, however, there seems to be no reference to the divine title.
⁴ The derivation of the name Abraham is uncertain, but it seems probable that it is to be connected with a Hebrew root which indicates 'rushing', 'tumult'.

alien breed. So my covenant shall have its seal in your flesh, ratified to all time. If any male person has the flesh of his foreskin uncircumcised, there is no place for him among his people;¹ he has violated the covenant between us.

This, too, God said to Abraham, Thou shalt call thy wife Sarai not Sarai but Sara, the princess. Her I will bless, giving thee a son by her; and him, too, I will bless, giving him whole nations for his posterity; kings with their peoples shall take their origin from him.

At this, Abraham fell prostrate before him; but in his heart he said, laughing at the thought, Shall I have a son when I am a hundred years old? Will Sara, with all her ninety years, become a mother? And this was what he asked of God, If only thou wilt grant life to Ismael! But God said to Abraham, Thou shalt have a son by thy wife Sara, and shalt give him the name of Isaac; it is to him and to the race which shall follow him that I will make good my promise, ratified for ever. As for Ismael, for him too I grant thy prayer; be sure that I will bless him, and make him fruitful, and grant him increase beyond all measure, so that he will be the father of twelve chiefs. From him, too, a great nation shall arise; but when I make good this promise of mine, it will be for Isaac, the son thou wilt have, at this time next year, by thy wife Sara.

So God finished speaking to Abraham, and went up out of his sight. And Abraham sent for his son Ismael, and for all the slaves born in his house and those, too, whom he had bought, every male child that belonged to any of his household, and on that very day he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins, in obedience to the Lord's bidding. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and Ismael, at the time of his circumcision, had reached the age of thirteen. On this same day all were circumcised, Abraham, and his son Ismael, and

the men of his household, slaves born in the house and aliens that were his by purchase, all alike.

18 He had a vision of the Lord, too, in the valley of Mambre, as he sat by his tent door at noon. He looked up, and saw three men standing near him; and, at the sight, he ran from his tent door to meet them, bowing down to the earth.² Lord, he said, as thou lovest me, do not pass thy servant by; let me fetch a drop of water, so that you can wash your feet and rest in the shade. I will bring a mouthful of food, too, so that you can refresh yourselves before you go on further; you have not come this way for nothing. And when they had agreed to what he proposed, Abraham hastened into the tent to find Sara. Quick, he said, knead three measures of flour, and make girdle-cakes. Meanwhile, he ran to the byre, and brought in a calf, tender and well-fed, and gave it to a servant, who made haste to cook it. Then he brought out butter and milk with the calf he had cooked for them, and laid their meal ready, and stood there beside them in the shade of the trees.

When they finished eating, they asked, Where is thy wife Sara? She is here, he answered, in the tent. I will come back, said he who was speaking to him, next year without fail; and, live she till then, thy wife Sara shall have a son.³ Sara, behind the tent door, overheard it and laughed; both were old, and past their prime, so that Sara was no longer subject to the lot of womanhood. What, she said, laughing to herself at the thought, am I to have dalliance with this lord of mine, grown old as I too have grown old? Whereupon the Lord said to Abraham, Why does Sara laugh, and ask whether she is indeed to become a mother in her old age? Can any task be too difficult for the Lord? At this time of year, the time I have appointed, I will come back to thee; live she till then, Sara shall have a son. And when Sara, overcome with

¹ 'There is no more place for him', literally, 'he shall be cut off', a phrase which occurs frequently in the Old Testament. Sometimes, as here, it is not clear whether it implies banishment, or public execution, or punishment by act of God.

² We have no means of knowing, in what form this revelation was made to Abraham; but it seems clear that the divine visit represented itself to him under a human guise. One of the three travellers he recognizes, without asking, as Almighty God himself; though it appears sometimes as if angels were allowed to speak to men in the person of God; cf. Jos. 5. 13; 6. 2. The other two are clearly the same angels who are described as visiting Sodom in ch. 19. ³ 'Live she till then'; his appears to be the meaning of the Latin. The Hebrew text has simply 'a living time'; an obscure phrase which is generally interpreted as meaning 'when spring comes back'.

terror, denied the charge of laughing, Ah, he said, but thou didst laugh.

- 16 And now the men rose up, and turned towards Sodom, Abraham going with them to put them on their way. And the Lord said, Should I hide my purpose from
- 17 Abraham, this man who is destined to give birth to a people so great and so powerful? This man through whom all the nations of
- 18 the world are to find a blessing? Have I not chosen him as one who will teach his children¹ and all his race after him to follow the paths which the Lord shews them, and to do what is just and right, winning him the fulfilment of all the Lord has promised him? So the Lord told him, The ill
- 19 repute of Sodom and Gomorrah goes from bad to worse, their sin is grievous out of all measure; I must needs go down to see for myself whether they have deserved the ill report that has reached me or not; I must know for certain. And Abraham stood there in the Lord's presence, as the men turned and went on towards Sodom.
- 20 Abraham drew close to him, and asked, Wilt thou, then, sweep away the innocent
- 21 with the guilty? Suppose there are fifty innocent men in the city, must they too perish? Wilt thou not spare the place to save fifty such innocent men that dwell
- 22 there? Never that, thou wilt not destroy the innocent with the guilty, as if innocence and guilt were all one; that is not thy way, that is not how the Judge of the whole earth executes justice! And the Lord told him, If I find fifty innocent citizens in
- 23 Sodom, I will spare the whole place to save them. And Abraham answered, Dust and ashes though I be, I have taken it upon me to speak to my Lord, and speak I will.
- 24 What if there should be five wanting to make up the tale of fifty innocent men? Wilt thou bring the whole city to ruin because there are five less than fifty? No, he said, if I meet with forty-five such, I will
- 25 not bring it to ruin. But he plied him once more, What wilt thou do, then, if forty are found there? I will hold my hand, said he,
- 26 to save forty. Then he said, Lord, do not be angry with me for pleading thus; what

if thirty are found there? If I find thirty, he said, I will not do it. I have taken it upon me, said he, to speak to my Lord, and speak I will; what if twenty are found there? I will grant it life, he said, to save twenty. And he said, Do not be angry with me, Lord, I entreat thee, for making one more plea still; what if ten are found there? I will spare it from destruction, he said, to save ten. So God finished speaking to Abraham, and left him, and Abraham turned and went home.

19 It was evening when the two angels reached Sodom, and Lot was sitting at the town gate. He rose up when he saw them, and went to meet them, bowing down his face to the earth. Pray, sirs, he said, turn in to my house and spend the night there; wash your feet now, and go on your journey to-morrow. And when they said, No, we will stay here in the open square, he would take no denial, they must needs lodge with him. So they went to his house, and he baked unleavened bread for them, which they ate. And before ever they had gone to rest, the townspeople laid siege to the house, old and young, from every quarter of the city, calling for Lot, and crying out, Where are thy evening visitors? Bring them out here, to minister to our lust. So Lot went out, shutting the door behind him, and said, No, brethren, I entreat you, do not be guilty of such a wrong. I have two daughters here, that have as yet no knowledge of man; these I will bring out, and you shall have your will with them, but do these men no harm;² are they not guests under my roof? What, said they, wouldst thou come here as a stranger, and then set thyself up as a judge? Stand back, or it will be worse for thee than for them. And they pushed Lot aside with great violence, trying to break the door in. So the two men reached out and pulled Lot back into the house, shutting the door after him; and they put a ban of blindness on the folk without, so that never a man of them could find the entry. And now the two men asked Lot, Is

¹ The Latin here gives, 'I know that he will teach his children'; the meaning of the Hebrew text is rather, 'I have acknowledged him (as my own) in order that he may teach his children'. ² Some have inferred from this verse that it is lawful to counsel the commission of a lesser crime in order to prevent the commission of a greater. But it is more generally held that Lot, in his agitation, made a proposal which was in fact sinful; perhaps only as a gesture of concession, without expecting that the men of Sodom would agree to it.

there any here besides thyself, son-in-law, or son, or daughter of thine? If so, take them out of the city, all that are thine. Our intent is to destroy this place; the ill repute of it goes from bad to worse, and the Lord knows of it, and has sent us to destroy them. So Lot went out, and spoke to the suitors who were betrothed to his daughters;¹ Up, he said, leave this place; the Lord means to destroy the city. But they thought he was speaking in jest. Then morning came, and the angels were urgent with him; Up, they said, take thy wife with thee, and the two daughters who are still at home, or else thou too wilt perish with the offending city. And when they found that he hung back, they pulled him away, with his wife and his two daughters, so resolved was the Lord to spare him; led him out, and set him clear of the city. Here they said to him, Flee for thy life, never once looking behind thee, never lingering once in all the plain round about thee; take refuge in the hills, or thou, too, wilt perish.

But now Lot pleaded with them, My Lord, he said, I entreat thee, as thou lovest thy servant, as thou hast shewn me signal mercy in saving this life of mine, bethink thee that I have no strength to reach the safety of the hills; calamity will overtake me first, and I must die. But there is a city close by that I may reach in safety, a little city, but I can find refuge there. So small a city, and wilt thou not grant me life if I go there? Once again, said he, I yield to thy entreaty; I will not overthrow the city thou pleadest for. Only make haste, and take refuge there; I can do nothing till thou hast reached it. That is how it came to be called the little city, Segor. Into Segor Lot entered as the sun rose over the earth; and thereupon the Lord rained down brimstone and fire out of heaven, the Lord's dwelling-place, and overthrew these cities, with all the plain about them, and all those who dwelt there, and all that grew from their soil. And Lot's wife, because she looked behind her as she went, was turned into a pillar of salt. That morning, Abraham rose up early, and from

the place where but now he had stood talking to the Lord, he looked out over Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the plain where they stood, and saw nothing but smoke going up from the land, like the smoke of a furnace. So it was that when he overthrew the cities in that plain God remembered Abraham, and rescued Lot from the ruins of his chosen dwelling-place.

But Lot left Segor, and went up to live in the hills, taking his two daughters with him; he was afraid to live at Segor, and took up his abode in a cave. There his two daughters dwelt with him, and the elder of these said to the younger, Our father grows old, and as for us, there is no one in the land to mate with us, after the wont of human kind.² Why then, let us give him wine and make him drunk, and so sleep with him, to preserve our father's posterity. So that night they gave their father wine to drink; and the elder went in and slept with her father, lying down beside him and rising up without his knowledge. And next day, the elder said to the younger, Last night it was I that slept with our father; let us give him wine again to-night, and thou shalt sleep with him, to preserve our father's posterity. So that night too they gave their father wine to drink, and the younger went in and slept with him, and still he knew nothing of it when she lay down, or when she rose up. Thus the two daughters of Lot were got with child by their father, and the elder bore a son whom she called Moab, the ancestor of the Moabite race that still survives; the younger, too, had a son, whom she called Ammon, as if she would say Ben-ammi, the son of my people; his descendants still survive as the Ammonites.

20 There was a time when Abraham made his way from there into the southern country, first settling down between Cades and Sur, then living as a wanderer in Gerara. And of his wife Sara he gave out, She is my sister; whereupon Abimelech, king of Gerara, sent and took her for himself. But God visited Abime-

¹ The Hebrew text may also be rendered, 'his sons-in-law, who had married his (other) daughters'.
² 'In the land', or perhaps, 'on earth'. The daughters of Lot may have assumed that the conflagration had been world-wide, and that Segor was shortly to be consumed like the rest of the world. On this understanding, some have excused the action of the two sisters; but the common opinion of theologians is that it was sinful.

lech in a dream by night, and told him, Thy life is forfeit, on account of this woman thou hast taken for thyself; she is wedded to a husband. Abimelech, as yet, had had no intercourse with her. What, Lord, he said, must a nation perish that has done no wrong, except through ignorance? Did he not tell me himself, She is my sister? And she, did not she herself claim him as her brother? My conscience has been clear, my actions honourable, in all I have done. And God said to him, I know that thou hast acted with a clear conscience; that is why I preserved thee from sinning against me, and would not let thee have intercourse with her. But now thou must give her back to her husband; he is a prophet, and will intercede for thy life; if thou dost not restore her, I give thee good warning, thou and thine must perish. So Abimelech rose up at once before dawn of day, and summoned the whole company of his servants to let them hear all this; whereupon they were all overcome with terror. Then Abimelech sent for Abraham too, and asked him, What is this trick thou hast played on us? What wrong have we done thee, that thou shouldst involve me and my kingdom in such guilt? Thou hast treated us amiss. And still he plied him with reproaches; What was in thy mind, that thou shouldst act thus? I thought to myself, answered Abraham, This may be a place where they have no fear of God, and then they will kill me on my wife's account. Besides, she is indeed my sister, on the father's side but not on the mother's, though she is none the less my wedded wife.¹ When God bade me leave my father's house and go on my travels, I said to her, Do me this kindness; give it out, wherever we go, that I am thy brother.²

So Abimelech made Abraham a present, of sheep and oxen, of men and maid servants, and gave his wife Sara back to him. Here is my land, he said, at your disposal, dwell where thou wilt. And to Sara he added, See, I am giving this brother of

thine a thousand silver pieces; such amends will enable thee to look the world in the face, wherever thou goest;³ only, do not forget that thy pretence was discovered. And now, at Abraham's intercession, God restored health to Abimelech, to his wife and to his servant women; up to now, on account of Abraham's wife Sara, the Lord had made all Abimelech's household barren.

21 And now, true to his undertaking, the Lord visited Sara and fulfilled his promise; old as she was, she conceived and bore a son at the very time God had foretold. To this son whom Sara had borne him, Abraham gave the name of Isaac, and circumcised him, as God had commanded, when he was eight days old. He himself was then a hundred years old; so great an age had he reached before Isaac was born to him. And Sara cried out, God has made me laugh for joy; whoever hears of this will laugh (Isaac) with me. Who would have thought, she added, that Abraham would ever be told, Sara is nursing a son, born to thee in thy old age?

The boy grew, and was weaned; on the day of his weaning, Abraham made a great feast, and Sara found the son of the Egyptian woman, Agar, mocking her own son Isaac.⁴ Whereupon she said to Abraham, Rid thyself of this slave-woman and her son; it cannot be that the son of a slave should divide the inheritance with my own son, Isaac. At this Abraham was greatly distressed on his son's behalf; but God said to him, Do not take it to heart so, the boy's lot and the lot of thy slave; attend to all Sara's bidding, for indeed it is through Isaac that thy posterity shall be traced. As for the slave's child, I will make him, too, the founder of a great nation; he too is thy son. So, when he rose next morning, Abraham fetched some bread and a bottle of water, which he put on her shoulder, and bade her take the boy and begone. Thus she left him, and soon she was wandering to and fro in the desert of Bersabee.

¹ Some have thought that Sara was the daughter of Aran, uncle to Abraham, since the Hebrew language does not distinguish between a sister and a cousin. But the more obvious sense is that she was his half-sister.

² Cf. 12. 13 above.

³ 'Will enable thee to look the whole world in the face'; literally, 'will be a covering of the eyes for thee with all who are in thy company'. 'Do not forget that thy pretence was discovered'; so the Septuagint Greek interprets, 'and tell the truth in all things'. The Hebrew text is obscure and perhaps corrupt; the rendering generally given is, 'and in every way thou hast had right done thee'.

⁴ 'Mocking her own son'; the literal sense of the Latin version seems rather to be 'playing with her own son'. But cf. Gal. 4. 29. The words 'with her own son' are not in the Hebrew text.

15 At last all the water in the bottle was spent,
 and she left the boy under one of the trees
 16 there, while she went and sat down opposite
 where he was, at a bow-shot's distance;
 I cannot bear to see my child die, she said.
 And there, sitting opposite him, she wept
 17 aloud. But God had listened to the child's
 crying, and now his angel called to Agar
 out of heaven. Agar, he said, what ails
 thee? Do not be afraid, God has listened
 to the crying of thy child, where he lies
 18 yonder. Up, and take thy child with thee,
 hold him fast by the hand; I will make him
 19 the founder of a great nation yet. With
 that, God gave clear sight to her eyes, and
 she saw a well that had water in it; to this
 she went, and filled her bottle, and gave
 20 the boy drink. Thenceforward, God was
 with him; he grew up, and made his dwell-
 ing there in the wilderness, and became a
 21 great archer. It was in the desert of Pharan
 that he dwelt, and the wife his mother
 chose for him was an Egyptian.

22 It was at this same time that Abimelech,
 with Phicol the commander of his army,
 said to Abraham, God goes with thee in all
 23 thou doest; swear to me, then, in the name
 of God, that thou wilt do no injury to me,
 to those who follow after me, or to my
 race; that thou wilt repay the kindness I
 have shewn thee by like kindness shewn to
 me, and to this land where thou hast dwelt
 as a stranger. That oath, Abraham said,
 24 I will take; but meanwhile, he had a com-
 plaint to bring against Abimelech over a
 well where he used to draw water, that
 Abimelech's servants had seized by violence.
 25 I have no knowledge, said Abimelech,
 who has done it; thou hast never told
 me of it, and I never heard of it till to-day.
 26 So Abraham brought sheep and oxen, and
 gave them to Abimelech, and they made a
 27 treaty there between them. There were
 seven ewe-lambs that Abraham set apart
 28 from the rest of the flock; and when
 Abimelech asked what was the meaning of
 the seven lambs he had set apart, he an-
 29 swered, Thy acceptance of these seven
 lambs shall be my witness, that it was I who
 30 dug this well. That is why the place was
 called Bersabee, the well of the oath, be-
 cause the two men swore friendship there.
 31 Thus they made their treaty over the Well
 of the Oath, and then Abimelech rose, and

went back with Phicol, the commander of
 his army, to the country of the Philistines.
 At Bersabee, Abraham made a planta- 33
 tion, and invoked there the name of the
 Lord God eternal. And for a long time he 34
 dwelt on alien soil, in the country of the
 Philistines.

22 After this, God would put Abra-
 ham to the test. So he called to him,
 Abraham, Abraham; and when he said,
 I am here, at thy command, God told him, 2
 Take thy only son, thy beloved son Isaac,
 with thee, to the land of Clear Vision,¹ and
 there offer him to me in burnt-sacrifice on
 a mountain which I will shew thee. Rising, 3
 therefore, at dawn, Abraham saddled his
 ass, bidding two of the men-servants and
 his son Isaac follow him; he cut the wood
 needed for the burnt-sacrifice, and then
 set out for the place of which God had
 spoken to him. It was two days later when
 he looked up and saw it, still far off; and
 5 now he said to his servants, Wait here with
 the ass, while I and my son make our way
 yonder; we will come back to you, when
 we have offered worship there. Then he 6
 took the wood for the sacrifice, and gave it
 to his son Isaac to carry; he himself carried
 the brazier and the knife. As they walked
 along together Isaac said to him, Father, 7
 What is it, my son? he asked. Why, said
 he, we have the fire here and the wood;
 where is the lamb we need for a victim?
 My son, said Abraham, God will see to it
 8 that there is a lamb to be sacrificed.
 9 So they went on together till they reached the
 place God had shewn him. And here he
 built an altar, and set the wood in order on
 it; then he bound his son Isaac and laid
 him down there on the altar, above the pile
 of wood. And he reached out, and took up 10
 the knife, to slay his son.

But now, from heaven, an angel of the 11
 Lord called to him, Abraham, Abraham.
 And when he answered, Here am I, at thy
 command, the angel said, Do the lad no 12
 hurt, let him alone. I know now that thou
 fearest God; for my sake thou wast ready
 to give up thy only son. And Abraham, 13
 looking about him, saw behind him a ram
 caught by the horns in a thicket; this he
 took, and offered it as a burnt-sacrifice,
 instead of his son. So Abraham called that 14

¹ In the Hebrew, this is a proper name, Moria.

spot, The Lord's Foresight; and the saying goes to this day, On the mountain top, the Lord will see to it.¹

- 15 Once more the angel of the Lord called
16 to Abraham out of heaven; and he said, This message the Lord has for thee: I have taken an oath by my own name to reward thee for this act of thine, when thou wast ready to give up thy only son for my sake.
17 More and more will I bless thee, more and more will I give increase to thy posterity, till they are countless as the stars in heaven, or the sand by the sea shore; thy children
18 shall storm the gates of their enemies; all the races of the world shall find a blessing through thy posterity, for this readiness of thine to do my bidding. Then Abraham went back to his servants, and took them with him to Bersabee; it was at Bersabee that Abraham made his dwelling.
20 It was after this Abraham had news that his brother Nachor, too, had had sons by
21 his wife Melcha. Hus was the name of his first-born, and the next brother was called Buz; then Camuel from whom the Syrians
22 are sprung, and Cased and Azau, Pheldas
23 too and Jedlaph, and then Bathuel, the father of Rebecca; all these eight sons were born to Nachor, Abraham's brother,
24 by his wife Melcha. He had, too, a concubine called Roma; she bore him Tabee, and Gaham, and Tahas, and Maacha.

- 23 Sara reached the age of a hundred and twenty-seven; then she died, at the town of Arbee (that is, Hebron) in the land of Chanaan. And there Abraham came, to make lamentation and to mourn
3 for her. When the last rites were paid, he rose up and said to the Hethite folk, Here
4 am I, a newcomer and a stranger among you; will you grant me rights of burial
5 among you, to bury my dead? And this
6 was the answer the Hethites gave him, Sir, as a heaven-sent chieftain thou hast come to dwell among us; bury thy dead in the choicest of all our graves; no man among us but shall grant thee his own tomb, to
7 bury thy dead in. So Abraham rose up, and made obeisance to the people of the
8 land, the Hethites. If you have a mind, said he, to grant my dead burial, do me

Death and Burial of Sara at Hebron

this favour; plead for me with Ephron, the son of Seor, to give the double² cave at the end of his lands. Let him make it over to me for a just price, here in your presence, as my burial-ground. Ephron had his place there among the Hethites; so, in the hearing of all those who came in by the gate of his native town, he gave Abraham this answer: My lord, that must not be. Do but listen to me; it is my gift to thee, both the field and the cave in it; in the presence of these, my fellow-countrymen, I give it to thee; bury thy dead there. Whereupon Abraham made obeisance before the people of the land; and said to Ephron, in the presence of the whole assembly, Pray listen, rather, to me; I must make payment for the land, and thou must accept it, before I will bury my dead in it. And Ephron answered, My lord, listen to me; the land for which thou art asking is worth four hundred pieces of silver, but what is such a price between thee and me? Bury thy dead. Upon hearing this, Abraham paid Ephron the sum which he had named before the Hethites, four hundred silver pieces of current money; so the field that had been Ephron's, with the double cave in it facing towards Mambre, not only the cave but the field itself, with all the surrounding trees that were in the confines of it, changed hands; and Abraham took possession of it, with the Hethites to witness it, and all those who came in by the gate of Ephron's native town. And so, in the double cave there that looks towards Mambre, Abraham buried his wife Sara; Mambre is the Chanaanite city now called Hebron. Both cave and field were made over to Abraham by the Hethites for a burying-ground.

24 Abraham was old now, and his life was near its end; and still, in all his doings, the Lord had blessed him. So now he called the oldest servant in his house, one who had charge of all his possessions, and said to him, Put thy hand here under my thigh, and let me take an oath of thee. Swear to me by the Lord God of heaven and earth that when thou findest a wife for my son, it shall not be some

¹ In the Hebrew text, 'on the mountain of the Lord it shall be seen to', or perhaps, 'he shall be seen'.
² The words 'double cave', in this and later chapters, conceal a place-name in the Hebrew, 'the cave of Machpela'.

daughter of these Chanaanites, among whom I dwell; that thou wilt make thy way to my own country and my own kindred, and find a wife for my son Isaac there. What then, said the servant, if the woman of my choice refuses to come back to this land with me? Must I then take thy son back instead to the place that was once thy home? Beware of that, Abraham said; never take this son of mine back there. It was the Lord God of heaven that called me away from my father's house and from the land of my birth; and he has spoken with me, swearing to make over this land to my posterity. His angel will go before thee, enabling thee to find a wife for my son there. If the woman will not accompany thee, then thou art quit of this oath of thine, but never must thou take my son back there instead.

So, putting his hand under his master Abraham's thigh, the servant pledged himself to fulfil this errand. He brought out ten of the camels in his master's herd, and took part of all his master's treasure with him; thus he set out, and made his way to the city where Nachor dwelt, in Mesopotamia. He was resting his camels by a well close to the town, just at the time of evening when women go out to draw water, and he prayed thus: O Lord, who art the God of my master Abraham, speed my errand to-day, and shew kindness to my master Abraham. I have taken up my post by this well, and the daughters of the citizens will be coming out to draw water. It may be that one of them, when I ask her to let down her pitcher and give me drink, will say, Here is drink for thee, and I will water thy camels as well. Let this be the bride thou hast chosen for thy servant Isaac; if it proves so, I shall know that thou art shewing kindness to my master.

Before he had finished praying thus in his heart, Rebecca, the daughter of Bathuel, came out with a pitcher on her shoulder. (Bathuel was one of the sons of Melcha, who married Abraham's brother Nachor.) A maiden most beautiful, fair of face, and a virgin that had no knowledge of man; and now she had gone down to the well, and filled the pitcher, and was on her way back, when the servant went to meet

her. Give me a drop of water to drink, he said, from that pitcher of thine. Drink, sir, she answered, and quickly let down the pitcher on to her arm, to give him drink. Then she added, when he had finished drinking, Now I will draw water for thy camels, too, till they have had their fill. And with that she emptied her pitcher into the troughs, and ran back to the well to draw water again, and gave what she drew for all his camels to drink. He, meanwhile, watched her in silence, wondering whether God had sped his errand or no. Then, when the camels had drunk, he took out two golden ear-rings,¹ that weighed ten pennyweights, and two bracelets, weighing five ounces; and he said, Tell me, who is thy father? And can thy father's house give us lodging for the night? Bathuel is my father, she answered, the son of Nachor by Melcha; and she added, We have no lack of straw or of hay, and it is a roomy house to lodge in.

At this the servant bowed low and praised God; Blessed be the Lord, he said, the God of my master Abraham, still so merciful, still keeping his word to this master of mine, and guiding me straight to his brother's house! So the girl ran back home, and told her mother all that had been said to her. She had a brother called Laban; and he hastened out to meet the servant at the well. Full of the sight of those ear-rings, and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and of the words she had reported, he went to look for the man, and found him still standing by the camels, close to the well. Come in, he said; why dost thou stand without, so high in the Lord's favour as thou art? I have made the house ready, and found stabling for the camels. So he brought the servant home, and unharnessed the camels for him, and brought straw and hay for them; water, too, so that the servant and his companions could wash their feet.

Then they put food before him, but he said, I cannot eat until I have delivered my message. So Laban gave him leave to speak, and he said, I am one of the servants of Abraham. The Lord has blessed my master abundantly and made him great, giving him sheep and cattle, silver and

¹ According to the Hebrew text, here and in verses 30, 47 below, the servant gave Rebecca not ear-rings, but a ring for the nose.

gold, men-servants and maid-servants,
 36 camels and asses. And now Sara, my
 master's wife, has borne him a son in her
 37 old age, the heir of all his property. So my
 master took an oath of me to do his bid-
 ding; When thou findest a wife for my son,
 he said, it shall not be some daughter of
 these Chanaanites, among whom I dwell;
 38 thou must make thy way to my father's
 house, and find a wife for my son among
 39 my own kindred. What then, I answered,
 if the woman of my choice refuses to come
 40 back with me? And he said, The Lord, in
 whose sight I live and move, will send his
 angel with thee, to guide thee on thy
 journey and enable thee to find a wife for
 my son among my own kindred, my own
 41 father's household. And if, when thou
 reachest them, these kinsmen of mine will
 not give her up to thee, no curse of mine
 shall light upon thee.

42 So I found myself, to-day, at the well;
 and my prayer was, O Lord, who art the
 God of my master Abraham, wilt thou
 43 speed this present errand of mine? I have
 taken up my post by this well; it may be
 that some maiden, when I ask her to let me
 44 drink a drop of water from her pitcher, will
 say, Here is drink for thee, and I will draw
 water for thy camels as well. Let this be
 the bride the Lord has chosen for my
 45 master's son. I was still praying thus in
 the silence of my own heart, when I saw
 Rebecca coming down to the well with a
 pitcher on her shoulder, and drawing
 water there; and I asked her for a drop of
 46 water to drink. And she, without waiting,
 let down the pitcher from her shoulder;
 Do thou drink, she said, and I will water
 thy camels as well. So I drank, and she
 47 gave the camels their drink. Then, when
 I questioned her, asking who her father
 was, she said, Bathuel is my father, the son
 of Nachor by Melcha. And with that I
 hung these ear-rings upon her, to deck her
 face, and put these bracelets on her arms;
 48 and I fell down to worship the Lord,
 blessing him, the God of my master Abra-
 ham, for guiding me where my master's
 49 niece waited for my master's son. And
 now, if you are ready to shew love and
 loyalty to my master, tell me your mind;
 if you have other thoughts, tell me your

mind none the less, so that I may know
 where my course lies, to right or to left.

Laban and Bathuel had but one answer; 5
 This comes from the Lord; when his will
 is made known, it is not for us to say Yes
 or No. Rebecca stands before thee, take 5
 her and go on thy way; she must wed thy
 master's son at the Lord's bidding. Upon 5
 hearing this, Abraham's servant bowed
 down to earth and gave the Lord worship;
 then he took out cups of silver and gold, 5
 and garments, too, as a present for Re-
 becca, and gave precious gifts to her bre-
 thren and her mother besides. So the
 feasting began, and they ate and drank 5
 and passed the night there; but when morning
 came, the servant rose up and said, Now
 give me leave to go back to my master. 5
 when her mother and her brethren would
 have kept her with them for ten days, at
 least, before her departure, he begged 5
 them, Do not detain me, now that the
 Lord has sped my errand so well, let me
 go back to my master at once. Then they 5
 said, Let us send for the maiden herself,
 and find out what her will is. So they 5
 fetched her, and when she came in, they
 asked, Art thou ready to go with this man?
 And she told them, I am ready. So they 5
 let her go, and her nurse with her, and
 Abraham's servant, and his companions,
 wishing their sister good fortune as she 6
 went: Sister of ours, may thousands of
 thousands spring from thee, and may thy
 posterity storm the gates of their enemies.

So Rebecca and her maids mounted 6
 their camels and followed the servant, who
 went back to his master with all speed. At 6
 this time, Isaac, who now lived in the
 South country, used to walk along a certain
 road, leading to the well called, God lives
 and looks on me.¹ And one evening he had 6
 gone out of doors, to meditate there, when
 suddenly, looking up, he saw camels
 coming towards him from a distance. As 6
 for Rebecca, when she saw Isaac, she
 alighted from her camel, and asked the 6
 servant, Who is this coming towards us
 across the fields? When he said, It is my
 master, she quickly took up her veil, and
 veiled herself.² And now the servant told 6
 Isaac of all that he had done, and Isaac led 6
 her to the tent which had been his mother

¹ The text here is confused, and perhaps corrupt; for the well, cf. 16. 14 above. ² It is not clear why the servant here refers to Isaac as his master, instead of Abraham.

Sara's, and made her his wife, and found comfort over the loss of his mother in his love for her.

25 Abraham, too, married again; his second wife's name was Cetura, and his children by her were Zamran, Jecsan, Madan, Madian, Jesboc and Suë. Jecsan was the father of Saba and Dadan, and Dadan's children were the Assurim, the Latusim and the Loömim. From Madian came Epha, Opher, Henoch, Abida and Eldaa. All these were descended from Cetura. Abraham left Isaac the heir to all he possessed and made gifts to the children he had by his concubines. These children of his he bade journey eastwards, while he was still alive, to keep them apart from his son Isaac. Abraham lived a hundred and seventy-five years; then his strength failed him, and he died, content in late old age, his tale of years complete, and he became a part of his people. His sons, Isaac and Ismael, buried him; buried him in the double cave, on the land opposite Mambre that had once belonged to Ephron, son of Seor, the Hethite. Abraham himself had bought this land from the Hethites, and there he was buried, like his wife Sara before him. And now that he was dead, God's blessing passed to his son Isaac, who had made his home close to the well that is called, God lives and looks on me.

This was the lineage that came down from Ismael, Abraham's son by Agar, the Egyptian, Sara's waiting-woman; these are the names of his sons, arranged by the order of their birth. Ismael's eldest son was Nabaioth, then came Cedar, Adbeel, Mabsam, Masma, Duma, Massa, Hadar, Thema, Jethur, Naphis and Cedma. These were Ismael's sons, and these the names they left to their villages and towns; each of the twelve was chieftain of a tribe. As for Ismael, he lived a hundred and thirty-seven years; then his strength failed and he died, and became a part of his people. The country where he lived reaches from Hevila to Sur, at the gate of Egypt, where the way to Assur lies; and he died with all his kindred about him.¹

And this was how the race of Abraham's son Isaac continued; Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Laban's sister Rebecca, daughter of Bathuel the Syrian, who lived in Mesopotamia. At first she was barren, but he prayed to the Lord for her, and his prayer was answered; Rebecca conceived. But the children fell to struggling in her womb; How am I the better for conceiving, she asked, if this is to befall me? And she went to ask counsel from the Lord. The answer he gave was this: There are two nations in thy womb; in thy body the separation of two peoples has begun; here is a victory of people over people, and it is the elder that shall be subject to the younger. And now the time came for her giving birth, and it was found that there had been twins in her womb. The first to come was of a red complexion, and hairy all over as if he had worn a coat of skin; this one was called Esau. Then the second came, with his hand clutching his brother's heel; and she called him, for that reason, Jacob, the Supplanter. It was when Isaac was sixty years old that these sons were born to him.

When the twins grew up, Esau turned into a skilful huntsman, that loved the open plains; Jacob was a tent-dweller and a man of peace. All Isaac's love was for Esau, who brought him game to eat; Rebecca's favourite was Jacob. One day, when Esau was coming back tired from the chase, he found Jacob making broth, and said to him, Let me have a mouthful, pray, of that red broth of thine; I am full weary. (That is why he came to be called Edom, the Red.) First then, Jacob answered, make over to me thy birthright. Why, surely, said he; I shall have little profit of my birthright, if I am to die of hunger as I stand here. Give me thy oath, saith Jacob; and Esau gave his oath, and made over his birthright. Then Jacob gave him bread, and some of the lentil broth, and he ate and drank and came away, as if the loss of his birthright were a thing of little moment.

26 When a famine came upon the land again, like the famine which had visited it in Abraham's time, Isaac was

¹ 'His kindred'; literally, 'his brethren', but St Jerome thinks his children are referred to (cf. 31. 37 below). Some think the meaning of the Hebrew text is, 'He settled eastwards of all his brethren'; cf. the prophecy in 16. 12 above.

for leaving it; and he had reached the court of Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in
 2 Gerara, when the Lord appeared to him and said, No, do not take refuge in Egypt; thou art to remain in the land of my choice.
 3 Dwell in that land, though it be alien soil, and I will be with thee and bless thee; I mean to give all this land to thee and to thy race after thee, in fulfilment of the oath
 4 I took to thy father Abraham. I will make that race plentiful as the stars in heaven, and grant the whole of this land to thy descendants; in thy posterity all the nations of the world shall find a blessing.
 5 Such reward shall Abraham have for obeying me, for keeping every command and charge I gave him, following observance
 6 and decree of mine. So Isaac remained
 7 where he was, at Gerara. And now, when certain of the inhabitants asked him about his wife, he told them, She is my sister; he was afraid to own that she was his wedded wife, thinking they might be tempted by
 8 her beauty to kill him. And one day, when he had already spent a long time in the country, the Philistine king, Abimelech, looked out of a window and saw Isaac and
 9 his wife in dalliance together. Whereupon he summoned him, and said, It is plain enough, now, that she is thy wife, why didst thou pretend she was thy sister? I was afraid, he answered, that she
 10 might be the cause of my death. What is this trick thou hast played on us? said Abimelech. One of my people might easily have dishonoured thy wife, and so thou wouldst have led us into
 11 grievous guilt. Then he issued his command to all his people, If anyone touches this man's wife, his life must pay for it.
 12 In this country, Isaac began growing crops; and in that first year they yielded a hundredfold; such was the Lord's blessing
 13 on him. Thus he became rich, and went on prospering more and more, until he
 14 rose to great influence; flocks of sheep were his, and herds of cattle, and a great
 15 retinue. And now the Philistines, out of envy, stopped up all the wells which the servants of his father Abraham had dug
 16 there, filling them in with earth. At last Abimelech himself said to Isaac, Separate from us; thou hast become altogether too

powerful for us. So he went to live in the
 17 valley of Gerara. Here he opened afresh
 18 other wells, dug by his father Abraham's servants, and stopped up long since by the Philistines, when Abraham died; calling them by the old names his father had given them. While they were thus digging in the
 19 valley, they came upon running water; but
 20 here, too, the herdsmen of Gerara disputed the rights of Isaac's herdsmen, and claimed the water as their own. So he called the well, in memory of what had happened, the False Claim. Then they dug another,
 21 and this, too, was a cause of contention, so he called this well the Feud. And at last,
 22 when he had gone further on and dug another well, over which they did not dispute with him, he called it Freedom; Now at last, he said, the Lord has given us freedom to spread over the land. From there
 23 he went to Bersabee; and here, the same night, he had a vision of the Lord, who said to him, I am the God of thy father Abraham; fear nothing, I am with thee. I mean to bless thee, and give increase to thy posterity, in reward of Abraham's true service. So he built an altar, and invoked the Lord's name, and pitched his tent there, and bade his servants dig a well.

When Abimelech came from Gerara to visit him there, with Ochozath, his counsellor, and Phicol, the commander of his army, Isaac asked them, What means your visit? Here is a man you have treated as an enemy, and driven him away from you. But they answered, We have seen how all this while the Lord is with thee; and our thought was, It is time there was an oath between us. Let us make a covenant that thou wilt do us no wrong; we never laid
 24 hands on thee, never did thee anything but good; we parted from thee peaceably, and the Lord's blessing was thine. So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank with him; then, when they rose up in the morning, they bound themselves by oath each to the other, and so Isaac took leave of them, and they went home in peace. It was on that very day that Isaac's servants came to him and brought word of the latest well they had been digging; We have found water, they told him. So he called it Abundance;¹ that is how the city

¹ 'Abundance'; the Hebrew text has, 'the Oath', which is more consonant with the derivation given in 21. 31 above.

came to be called Bersabee, as it is to this day.

- 34 Esau, who was by this time forty years old, married two wives, Judith the daughter of Beëri, the Hethite, and Basemath, the daughter of another Hethite, Elon.
35 Both of these distressed the hearts of Isaac and Rebecca.

27 And now Isaac was old, and his eyes had grown so dim that he saw nothing. One day he called to his elder son Esau, My son! and when he answered,
2 I am here, at thy command, See, his father said, how old a man I have grown; there is no telling how soon I may be overtaken
3 by death. Come, fetch that armoury of thine, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out hunting; when thou hast slain thy quarry,
4 make me a roast dish, such as I love well, and bring it me to eat. And so thou shalt have my blessing, against the time of my death.

- 5 To all this, Rebecca listened; and when Esau had gone out hunting, to do as his father had bidden him, she said to her son Jacob, I heard thy father talking to thy brother Esau, and thus he spoke to him;
6 Bring my venison from the chase, and make me a dish of meat; so thou shalt have my blessing, with the Lord to witness it,
8 against the time of my death. Nothing remains for thee, my son, but to fall in with this plan of mine. Make thy way to the herd,
9 and bring me two choice kids; of these I will make such a dish as thy father
10 loves to eat, and thou shalt take it in to him; so, when he has eaten it, his dying benediction shall be thine instead. Be-
11 think thee, answered Jacob, how hairy my brother Esau's skin is, and mine how
12 smooth! What if my father should feel it? He will think that I have been trying to
13 make game of him, and it is a curse, not a blessing, I shall win. A curse, my son?
14 said his mother. Let it fall on me; do but attend to my bidding, and fetch me what
15 I ask for. So he went and brought them to his mother, and she made a dish of meat,
16 such as she knew his father loved. She had fine clothes of Esau's by her in the house,
17 and she dressed Jacob in these; enclosed his hands, too in skin he had taken from the kids, and covered his bare neck with it;
7 then she gave him the dish, and some

loaves which she had cooked, to carry with him.

So he brought them in, and said, Father. 18
Yes, my son, he said; who is it? I am Esau, 19
said Jacob, Esau, thy first-born; I have done thy bidding. Rise up, I pray thee, sit at table, and eat this venison of mine, and give me a father's blessing. Why, answered 20
Isaac, how didst thou come to find thy quarry in so short a time, my son? It was God's pleasure, said he, to send it in my way. Then Isaac said, Come near, and let me 21
feel thee, to make sure whether thou art my son Esau or not. So he went close 22
to his father; and he, upon feeling the touch of him, said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. There was no recognizing Jacob, since his 23
hands were hairy like Esau's hands, and he must needs give his blessing. Thou art my 24
son, he said, my son Esau? Yes, he answered, I am. Why then, said he, bring it 25
here; let me eat my son's venison, and give him a father's blessing. So he ate what was brought him, and Jacob offered him wine too, and he drank.

Then he said to Jacob, Come here, my 26
son, and kiss me. And when he came near, 27
and kissed him, all at once Isaac caught the smell of his garments, and this was the blessing he gave him: How it breathes about this son of mine, the fragrance of earth when the Lord's blessing is on it! God give thee dew from heaven and fruit- 28
ful soil, corn and wine in plenty. Let nations serve thee, and peoples bow before thee; mayst thou be lord over thy brethren, receive obeisance from thy own mother's sons; a curse on those who curse, a blessing on those who bless thee! Scarcely had 30
Isaac finished speaking, and Jacob gone out, when Esau returned. And now he brought his father a dish of venison; Rise up, father, he said, eat thy son's venison, and give me a father's blessing. Why, who art thou? Isaac asked. I am thy son, he answered, thy first-born son Esau. At this, 33
quite overcome with dread, astonished past belief, Isaac cried out, Why then, who is it that has already brought me venison from the chase? Before ever thou camest back to me, I have eaten my fill and to him given my blessing; on him the blessing will come.

Esau, on hearing his father's words, 34

broke out into a loud cry of anguish; Thy blessing, father, for me also thy blessing!
 35 Thy brother, it seems, Isaac answered, came in disguised; he has snatched thy blessing from thee. Why, said Esau, he is well named Jacob, the Supplanter; first he took away my birthright, and now he has stolen my blessing. And then, turning to his father, he asked, Hast thou no blessing
 37 left, then, a blessing for me too? Nay, answered Isaac, I have designated him thy master; I have condemned all his brethren to do him service; I have assured him of corn and wine; what claim have I left myself to make for thee, my son? But Esau pleaded still, Hast thou only one blessing to give, father? I pray thee, bless me too. And he could not control his voice, but wept aloud. Then Isaac said, greatly moved, All thy blessing shall come from earth's fruitfulness, and from the dew of
 40 heaven.¹ Thy sword shall be the breath of life to thee, but thou shalt be subject to thy brother, until the day comes when thou wilt rebel, and wilt shake off his yoke from thy neck.

41 But ever Esau bore Jacob a grudge over the blessing he had won from their father. Soon, he thought, the days will come when we shall be mourning for my father's death; that is the time to kill my brother.
 42 News of this reached Rebecca; so she sent for her son Jacob, and told him, Thy brother Esau is threatening thy life. Thou must needs do what I bid thee, my son; bestir thyself, and take refuge in Haran with thy uncle, Laban. There thou must dwell for a short while, till thy brother's
 44 anger dies down. Soon his rage will cool, and he will forget the wrong thou hast done him; then I will send there, and bring thee back home; only begone; shall I let one day's work rob me of both my sons?²
 46 And to Isaac Rebecca said, I am weary of life, with these Hethite women about me; if Jacob weds a bride of this native stock, may I not live to see it!

28 So Isaac summoned Jacob to him, and gave him his blessing, and laid this charge upon him: It is not for thee

¹ 'Thy blessing'; in the Hebrew text, 'thy dwelling-place'. Some think the meaning is, 'Thy dwelling-place shall be far from earth's fruitfulness, and the dew of heaven', since these advantages had already been pledged to Jacob (verse 28 above). ² Rebecca probably means that if Esau killed Jacob he would become a fugitive, like Cain, and thus be lost to her. ³ 'To Ismael'; that is, probably, to Ismael's family, their father being now dead.

to marry a woman of Chanaanite stock; rather bestir thyself, and make thy way to
 2 Mesopotamia of the Syrians; there dwelt thy mother's father, Bathuel, there thou mayest wed one of the daughters of thy uncle Laban. God Almighty bless thee,
 3 and make thy posterity thrive and increase, so that a multitude of nations may spring from thee. May he grant to thee, and to
 4 thy race after thee, the blessing which he promised to thy grandfather Abraham; possession of the land in which thou
 5 dwellest now as a stranger. Jacob took leave of him, and set out on his journey to Mesopotamia of the Syrians, to the home of his uncle Laban, son of Bathuel, the Syrian. An ill day for Esau; here was Jacob
 6 sent with his father's blessing to find himself a wife in Syria; forbidden, as he would win that blessing, to marry a Chanaanite; here was Jacob gone all the way to Mesopotamia in obedience to his parents' whim!
 7 These women of Chanaan, Esau thought, are little to my father's liking; so he betook himself to Ismael,³ and married a third wife, Maheleth, daughter to Abraham's son Ismael, and sister to Nabaioth.

Meanwhile Jacob had left Bersabee, and
 10 was on his way to Haran. There was a place he reached as nightfall overtook him, so that he must lie down and rest; so he took one of the stones that lay around him, to make a pillow of it, and went to sleep. He
 11 dreamed that he saw a ladder standing on the earth, with its top reaching up into heaven; a stairway for the angels of God to go up and come down. Over this ladder
 13 the Lord himself leaned down, and spoke to Jacob, I am the Lord, he said, the God of thy father Abraham, the God of Isaac; this ground on which thou liest sleeping is my gift to thee and to thy posterity. Thy
 14 race shall be countless as the dust of the earth; to west and east, to north and south thou shalt overflow thy frontiers, till all the families on earth find a blessing in thee, and in this race of thine. I myself will
 15 watch over thee wherever thou goest, and bring thee back to this land again; before I have done with thee, all my promises to thee shall be fulfilled.

116 When he awoke from his dream, Jacob said to himself, Why, this is the Lord's dwelling-place, and I slept here unaware of it! And he shuddered; What a fearsome place is this! said he. This can be nothing other than the house of God; this is the gate of Heaven. So it was that, when he rose in the morning, Jacob took the stone which had been his pillow, and set it up there as a monument, and poured oil upon it; and he called the place Bethel, the House of God, that was called Luza till then. And there he took a vow; If God will be with me, he said, and watch over me on this journey of mine, and give me bread to eat and clothes to cover my back, till at last I return safe to my father's house, then the Lord shall be my God. This stone, too, which I have set up as a monument, shall be called the House of God. And of all the gifts thou sendest me, a tenth part shall be the offering I make thee.

29 Then Jacob went on his way, and reached the eastern country. Here, in the open plain, he found a well, with three flocks of sheep lying down beside it. It was here that the flocks were watered; but the mouth of the well was closed by a great stone, and it was not the custom to roll this stone away till all the flocks were assembled. When these had had their fill, the stone was put back on the well mouth. Whence come you, brethren? he asked the shepherds. From Haran, they answered. And his next question was, whether they knew Laban, son of Nachor. Yes, they said, we know him. Is all well with him? asked Jacob. Yes, said they, all is well with him. That is his daughter, Rachel, yonder, coming towards us with her flock. Then Jacob said, The sun is still high, and it is a long time before the flocks need to be folded; why do you not water the sheep at once, and take them back to their pasture again? That cannot be done, they answered, until all the herds have assembled here; we wait till then, before we move the stone from the well mouth and water our flocks. The words were scarcely spoken, when Rachel came up with her father's sheep; Rachel herself was their shepherdess. Jacob watched her as she came; this was his cousin, these were his uncle Laban's sheep; so he moved

away the stone by which the well was shut in. Then, when she had watered her flock, he went up and kissed her, weeping aloud; and he told her that he was her father's kinsman, Rebecca's son; whereupon she went quickly home to tell her father the news.

No sooner did Laban hear of his nephew Jacob's arrival, than he ran out to meet him, embraced him, covered him with kisses, and brought him back home. He listened to the reasons that had brought him there, and said, Thou art my own flesh and blood. And he waited till a month had passed; then he said, Because thou art my kinsman, that is no reason why thou shouldst work for me free of charge; tell me what reward thou wouldst have. Laban had two daughters; Rachel was the younger and her elder sister was called Lia. But Lia was dull-eyed, whereas Rachel had beauty both of form and face, and on her Jacob's love had fallen. So he answered, I will work seven years for thee to win thy younger daughter Rachel. Better thou said Laban, than any other husband I could find for her; stay, then, at my side. So Jacob worked seven years to win Rachel, and they seemed to him only a few days, because of the greatness of his love.

Then he said to Laban, Give me my bride; the time has come now for me to wed her. So Laban invited a great company of his friends to the wedding feast; but that night he matched Jacob with his daughter Lia instead, giving her a maid called Zelpha to wait on her. So, with all due ceremony, Jacob took her to his bed, and it was not till morning he found out that it was Lia. Whereupon he said to Laban, What meanest thou? Did not I work for thee to win Rachel? What is this trick thou hast played on me? And Laban answered, It is not the custom of our country to wed our younger daughters first. Celebrate this wedding of thine for a full week, and I will give thee Rachel too, and thou shalt work for me another seven years to earn her. To this Jacob agreed, and when the week was over he made Rachel his wife; the waiting-maid her father gave to Rachel was called Bala. So, at last, he won the bride he had longed for, and loved her better than he had loved her

sister; meanwhile, he spent another seven years in Laban's service.

31 And now, seeing Lia thus despised, the Lord gave her issue, while Rachel must remain barren. So she conceived and bore a son, whom she called Ruben, as if she would say, the Lord has looked on my lowliness, Raa-beoni. Now, she thought, 32 my husband will love me. Then she conceived again, and again bore a son; Fresh gift, said she, is fresh proof the Lord has come to hear of the despite done me; so she called him Simeon, Hearing. Then she conceived a third time, and bore another son; This time, she thought, my husband will be closely knit to me, now that I have borne him three sons, and she called him 35 Levi, Knit together. And when she conceived a fourth time, and bore a son, she said, Now I may praise the Lord, and she called him Juda, Praise. Then, for a while, she had no more children.

30 Rachel, meanwhile, when she found she remained barren, looked with envy on her sister; Thou must needs give me children, said she to her husband, or it will be my death. What, answered Jacob, angry at her mood, Must I stand in the place of God to thee? It is he that has denied thee motherhood. Here is Bala, she said, my maid-servant; get her with child instead, and it shall be born on my knees; thus, through her means, I shall have a family of my own.¹ So she gave him 5 Bala as his mate; and Bala, got with child 6 by Rachel's husband, bore a son. Whereupon Rachel said, God has pronounced judgement for me, and listened to my plea, by giving me a son; and she called the boy Dan, as if she would say, He has pronounced judgement. Afterwards Bala conceived again and bore a second son; of him Rachel said, God has matched me like a wrestler against my sister, and I have won the bout, so she called him Nephthali, 9 Wrestling. Lia, too, finding that she was not having any more children, gave her maid-servant Zelpha to her husband for 10 his mate; and when Zelpha conceived and 11 bore a son, Lia said, Good fortune has

come to me, and called the boy Gad, Fortune. Zelpha, too, bore Jacob a second son, and Lia said, Here is a blessing for me; 12 women must needs call me blessed now; so she gave him the name of Aser, Blessedness.

Once, at the time of the wheat harvest, 14 Ruben went out and found some mandrakes, which he brought back to his mother Lia;² and Rachel said to Lia, Give me some of the fruit thy son has found. What, answered she, art thou not content 15 with stealing my husband from me? Must thou have my son's mandrake fruit as well? And Rachel said, Jacob shall sleep with thee to-night, if I may have some of thy son's mandrake-fruit. So, when Jacob 16 came back from work at evening, Lia went out to meet him; Thou art to share my bed to-night, she told him; I have paid thy hire with the mandrake fruit which my son found. So he slept with her that night; and 17 now God listened to her prayers, so that she conceived again and bore a fifth son. Whereupon she said, God has paid me too 18 my hire, for the maid-servant I lent to my husband, and she called the boy Issachar, Reward. And again Lia conceived, 19 and bore a sixth son; This is a fair dowry, she said, God has endowed me with; once more my husband will dwell with me, now that I have borne him six sons; and she called the boy Zabulon, Dwelling. She had one more child after this, a daughter called Dina. Meanwhile, the Lord had not 22 forgotten Rachel; her prayer was answered, and she, too, had issue. When she conceived and bore a son, her thought was, God has taken away my disgrace. And she called him Joseph, Increase; If only, she thought, God would increase my household with another son.

After Joseph's birth, Jacob said to his 25 father-in-law, Give me leave to go back home, to my own country. And when I go, let me take with me the wives and the children I have earned in thy service; how hard I have worked for thee, none knows better than thou. Let me ask a favour of 27 thee, said Laban. Proof needs none that it is for thy sake God has made me prosper

¹ Legitimacy, in ancient times, depended on recognition by the foster-parents, and if Rachel consented to take the child on her knees, the ceremony would make it, for legal purposes, her child. ² The fruit of the mandragora or mandrake was anciently thought to be a specific for promoting conception in women.

so. Work for me still, and name thy own hire. None knows better than thou, answered Jacob, how hard I have worked for thee, and how these herds of thine have increased under my care. It was little enough thou hadst before I came to thy house, and now thou hast become rich; the Lord has blessed thee from the day when I came hither. Now it is time that I should think of my own household too. What shall I give thee? Laban asked. Give me nothing, said he; but I will consent to feed and tend thy herds still on this condition. Go round all thy flocks, now, and remove from them every sheep that is speckled, or has a blotched fleece. And the hire thou art to pay me shall be all the lambs that are born, even so, grey or spotted or speckled; and so with the kids. So, later, when our agreement is fulfilled, my honesty shall be on its trial; if I keep for myself any beast except those which are speckled or spotted or grey, whether it be lamb or kid, call me a thief. Thy request, said Laban, is granted; and, that same day, he set aside she-goats and ewes, he-goats and rams, that were speckled and spotted; all those, too, that were of one colour, white (among the goats) or black (among the sheep);¹ and these he gave in charge of his own sons. And he put a distance of three days' journey between himself and his son-in-law.

Jacob, then, left in charge of the rest of the flocks, did this. He took green branches of poplar, and almond, and plane, and partly peeled them; so that (now the bark had gone) the white shewed through where they had been stripped, whereas the parts he had left untouched remained green; everywhere the colour was varied. These branches he fitted into the troughs where his flocks were watered, so that when they came to drink, they should have these speckled branches before their eyes, and the dams would conceive in full view of them. Looking at the branches at the very heat of their coupling, the dams bore spotted and speckled and piebald young.

There, then, were the two flocks di-

vided, and there were Jacob's branches set up before the very eyes of the rams. All the white (sheep) and all the black (goats) were to be Laban's, the rest Jacob's, when the flocks were sorted afresh. And this was his plan; at the earlier breeding-season he fitted the branches into the troughs, before the eyes of ram and ewe, so that the dams might be looking at them when they conceived; but when the later breeding happened, and the time for conceiving was at an end, he put the branches there no longer. So all the late-bred (weaklings) belonged to Laban, and all the (strong) early-bred belonged to Jacob.² Thus he became rich beyond measure; many were the herds, the men-servants and maid-servants, the camels and asses that were his.³

31 Meanwhile, Laban's sons were complaining, Our father has been robbed of all his goods by Jacob, who has become rich at his expense. Jacob was aware of this; he found, too, that Laban looked on him more coldly than hitherto. But what moved him most was that the Lord had bidden him, Return to the land of thy fathers, to thy own kindred. So he sent word to Rachel and Lia to meet him on the pasture-ground where he was feeding his flocks, and said to them, I find that your father looks on me more coldly than hitherto; and all because the God of my father has prospered me. You know well that I have worked for your father with all my might, whereas he has defrauded me, altering, time and again, his bargain with me; it was only God's mercy that prevented him doing me an injury. As it was, whenever he said, The speckled beasts shall be thy wages, it was to speckled lambs that all my ewes gave birth; when he changed about, and said, Thou shalt have all the white lambs for thy pay, all my flocks bore white. That is how God has taken away your father's wealth and given it to me. I had a dream at the time when my ewes were mating; as I looked round,

¹ 'White (among the goats) or black (among the sheep)'; the Latin text here has simply 'white or black', but if all the white and black, as well as the particoloured, were entrusted to Laban's sons, there would have been no herd left for Jacob at all. The Hebrew text, instead of 'white or black', has 'the black among the sheep'.

² The words 'weaklings' and 'strong' are not expressed in the Latin, but the Hebrew text shews that this was the author's meaning. Apparently it was thought that winter lambs were more robust than spring lambs.

³ In the Hebrew text, this whole story is confused, and difficult to unravel. The Latin version differs from it very considerably; and this, too, is obscure in places; the rendering here given, is based on the exposition given by St Jerome himself in his notes on Genesis.

I could see none but speckled and spotted and blotched rams coupling with the ewes.
 11 And in my dream, an angel of God called me by name, and when I answered, I am
 12 here, at thy command, he said, Look about thee, and mark well that all the sires coupling with the dams are speckled, spotted, or blotched; that is because I have taken good note of all Laban's dealings with
 13 thee. I am the God who dwells at Bethel, where thou didst anoint the stone, and didst take a vow to me. It is time for thee, now, to bestir thyself, to leave this country, and
 14 go back to the country of thy birth. Why, answered Rachel and Lia, we have no reversion left to us in all our father's wealth and possessions. He has treated us as if we were no kindred of his, putting us up for sale, and keeping the price for himself.
 16 And now, it seems, God has taken away our father's wealth from him, and given it to us and to our children. Why then, do as the Lord has bidden thee.

17 Upon this, Jacob waited no longer; he mounted his children and wives on the camels, and set out on his journey; taking with him all his possessions, his cattle and all the wealth he had gained in Mesopotamia; he would return to his father Isaac, and the land of Chanaan. Meanwhile, in the absence of her father Laban, who had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole his household gods from him. Jacob had given his father-in-law no warning of his flight, and it was not till he and all that belonged to him had gone away, and crossed the Euphrates, and were making
 22 for the hills of Galaad, that a message came to Laban, three days too late, Jacob has fled. So now he took his kinsmen with him and gave chase; and he had been on the road seven days before he overtook him on the hills of Galaad. Here, in his sleep, he had a vision of God warning him, Have a care thou dost not speak to Jacob harshly.
 25 Jacob had already pitched his tent on the hills, and now Laban, coming up with his kinsmen in pursuit, encamped in these same hills of Galaad. What meanest thou, he asked Jacob, by thus tricking me, and carrying off my daughters as if they were prisoners of war? Why wouldst thou run away when my back was turned, instead of warning me of it, so that I could have sped thee on thy way with good cheer, with

singing, and music of timbrel and harp? But no, thou wouldst not even let me part
 28 from my own grandsons and daughters with a kiss. This was a rash act of thine, and see where it has brought thee. Thou
 29 art in my power, and I could repay the injury if I would; but the God who protects thy father's race warned me yesterday, Have a care thou dost not speak harshly to Jacob. Thou wert hastening to
 30 return to thy own kindred? Thou wert longing for thy home? Tell me then, why hast thou carried away my household gods with thee? To this Jacob answered, If I
 31 left thee unawares, it was because I was afraid thou wouldst rob me of thy daughters by violence. But as for thy charge of
 32 theft, whoever is found with these gods of thine in his possession shall pay for it with his life. Make search in the presence of thy kinsmen and mine, and take away with
 thee all thou findest here that belongs to thee. Of Rachel's carrying off the images, Jacob knew nothing.

33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and Lia's, and the tents of both the serving-women, but found nothing. At last he came to Rachel's tent; and Rachel, who had
 34 quickly hidden the images among the harness of her camel, now sat down upon the harness. As her father looked in vain all through the tent, she said, Forgive me, sir,
 35 if I do not rise to greet thee; the common lot of women has come upon me; and so the anxious search came to nothing. And
 36 now Jacob broke out into angry reproaches against Laban. For what fault, what guilt of mine, hast thou so hotly pursued me, and made this search of all my goods?
 37 What treasure hast thou found here, of all the treasures in thy house? Bring it out here, before my brethren and thine, and let them judge between us. Was it for this
 38 that I spent twenty years in thy service? All that time, thy ewes and she-goats were never barren, no wether lamb of thine did I take for my own eating. If wild beasts
 39 preyed on them, I made good the damage, instead of bringing it to shew thee; I must needs give account to thee of all that was lost by theft. Burning heat by day, and
 40 biting frost at nights, till my eye-lids lost the power of sleep; thus it was that I spent twenty years as a servant in thy household, fourteen years for thy daughters, and six

for thy flocks; time and again thou didst alter thy bargain with me. Why, if the God of my father Abraham, the God before whom Isaac trembles, had not prospered me, thou wouldst have sent me away peniless; as it is, God has taken account of my wretchedness, and the toil these hands have borne; that is why he gave thee, yesterday, his warning. And Laban answered, These are my daughters, these boys are mine, as thy flocks, and all thou seest before thee, are mine; something I must do to protect my own daughters, my own grandchildren. Come, let us make a covenant, which shall stand on record between us.

So Jacob took a stone, and set it up there is a monument; he said, too, to his kinsmen, Bring stones here. And they gathered stones, and made them into a heap; and over that heap they took food together. Laban called it the Cairn of Record, and Jacob called it the Witness-heap, each according to the usage of his own tongue. Laban had said Let this heap bear record of our covenant to-day; that is how it came to be called Galaad, the Witness-heap. Let the Lord keep watch, he said, and see justice done between us, when our ways have parted.¹ If thou dost treat these daughters of mine amiss, and bringest some other wives instead of them, there will be no one else to bear witness of what we have said, but God will bear witness; he is here to see us. He said further to Jacob, Look at this heap, this stone which I have set up between us;² these shall be witnesses, heap and stone shall be there to accuse us, if I pass by them on my way to thee, or thou on thy way to me, with harmful intent. May the God who is Abraham's God and Nachor's, the God of their common father³ see justice done between us. Then Jacob swore by the God his father Isaac held in reverence, and summoned his kinsmen, when sacrifice had been done on the hill, to take food there. So they took their meal, and remained there, while Laban rose up at daybreak, kissed his grandsons and his two daughters, and blessed them, and went back to his home.

¹ 'Let the Lord keep watch': in the Hebrew text, these words are explained as the origin of another place-name, Maspha. ² There may have been some confusion in the text of this passage; perhaps Jacob in verse 45 is a mistake for Laban, whose 'kinsmen' have been mentioned in verse 23. ³ This is the sense of the Latin; the Hebrew text is confused, and leaves it doubtful whether one God or a plurality of Gods is meant.

32 Jacob, too, set out to continue his journey, and as he went, God's angels met him. This is God's encampment, he said when he saw them, and called the place Mahanaim, which means a Camp.

And now he sent messengers of his own before him, to greet his brother Esau in the country of Seir, which is Edom's territory. These were his directions, You are to tell my lord Esau this, from his brother Jacob: I have been living abroad, on a visit to Laban, and am but just returned. I have brought back oxen and asses and sheep, men-servants and women-servants with me. And now, my lord, I have sent these envoys to thee, to secure thy good will. And this was the news the messengers brought back with them, We found thy brother Esau; even now he comes hastening to meet thee, with four hundred men. At this, Jacob was overcome with terror, and in his extremity he divided up his followers, the flocks of sheep, too, and the cattle, and the camels, into two companies; If Esau, he thought, should meet with one company, and fall upon it, at least the other will come through safely. And now Jacob said, O God of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, thou, Lord, who hast bidden me return to my own country, the land of my birth, and hast offered to bless me, I, thy servant, am not worthy of all the mercies thou hast shewn me, the faithful observance of thy promises. I had nothing but this staff with me, when I crossed the Jordan, and now I have come back with two companies behind me. Save me now from the power of my brother Esau; I fear grievously that when he comes he will spare neither women nor children. Hast thou not promised me thy continued favour, and a posterity spread wide as the sand by the sea, that is beyond all counting?

When he had slept the night there, he chose out of all his possessions a present for his brother Esau, two hundred she-goats and twenty buck-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty camels in milk with their colts, forty cows and twenty

bulls, and twenty she-asses with ten colts.

16 All these he sent on, with their drivers; Go on in front of me, he told his men, and leave a space between one herd and the next. And to the first of these, his directions were, If thou shouldst encounter my brother Esau, and he should ask, Whose man art thou? or Whither goest thou? or
17 Whose are these beasts thou tendest? thy answer is to be, They belong to thy servant Jacob, who is sending them as a present to my lord Esau; and he himself follows behind us. Then he bade the second do the like, and the third, and all the drovers in turn; these same words you are to use, he said, when you fall in with Esau, and be sure to add, Thy servant Jacob follows on behind us. I will not see him, he thought, until I have disarmed his anger with the gifts I have sent before me; then perhaps he will be well disposed towards me!¹

21 So the gifts went on in advance of him, and he waited in the camp all night. But before dawn he rose, and took his two wives, their serving-women, and his eleven
22 sons, across the ford of Jacob. And now he had set down all that was his on the further side, and he was left there alone. And there one appeared to him who
23 wrestled with him until the day broke. At last, finding that he could not get the better of Jacob, he touched the sinew of his thigh,
24 which all at once withered; then he said, Let me go, the dawn is up. But Jacob answered, I will not let thee go until thou
25 givest me thy blessing. What is thy name? asked the other, and when he heard that it was Jacob, Jacob, he said, is no name for thee, thou shalt be called Israel, one that
26 prevails with God.² If thou hast held thy own with God, how wilt thou prevail over men! Tell me, asked Jacob, what is thy
27 own name? Why wouldst thou know my name? he answered, and gave him there
28 and then, his blessing. So Jacob called the place Phanuel, the Face of God; I have
29 seen God face to face, he said, and my life was not forfeit. As soon as he passed
30 beyond Phanuel, the sun rose, and he went limping on one foot; that is why the race
31 of Israel, to this day, will not eat the sinew

of the thigh, in which Jacob's strength failed him, the sinew of his thigh that withered when it was touched.

33 And now Jacob looked in front of him, and there was Esau coming towards him, with four hundred men at his back. So he divided up his children into families, Lia's sons and Rachel's and those of the two serving-women. He put these first, with their children, and Lia second with hers; Rachel and Joseph came last of all. He himself, as he came up, prostrated himself seven times before his brother reached him. Seeing this, Esau ran to meet his brother, embraced him, clung to his neck and kissed him, in tears. Then, as he looked round him and saw the women with their sons, he asked, What are these? Are they part of thy company? And he was told, They are the children God has granted to thy servant. So the serving-women and their children came up first, and made their obeisance, then Lia with her children; and when they had done the like, Joseph and Rachel made theirs last of all.

And when Esau asked, What of those companies I met on my way? Jacob answered, A gift, my lord, to secure me thy good will. I have abundance, said he; keep what is thine. But Jacob said, No, I entreat thee; do me the favour to accept this present of mine; to gain audience with thee is like gaining audience with God himself. Assure me of thy favour by receiving the offering I have brought thee, God's gift to me, who has given me all I have. So at last Esau consented, overcome by his brother's persuasions; then he said, Let us travel on together, so that I can be the companion of thy journey. But Jacob answered, My lord, bethink thee that I have young children with me; that I have ewes here in lamb, and cows in calf, so that I may lose a whole herd if I overdrive them. Pass on, my lord, in advance of thy servant; I will follow slowly, at whatever pace suits these children of mine, and meet thee again, my lord, in Seir. Pray then, said Esau, take some of my followers to escort thee on thy journey. No need for

¹ It is not clear, either in the Hebrew or in the Latin, whether the sentence beginning 'I will not see him' is part of the message which Jacob's servant was to deliver or not. ² The name Israel may be derived from either of two verbs, one meaning 'to persevere', and the other 'to rule as a prince'.

that, answered Jacob; enough for me, my lord, that I should have thy good will.

16 So that day, Esau went back to Seir the way he had come; Jacob went as far as
17 Socoth, and there built himself a house, with sheds for his cattle; that is why he called the place Socoth, which means
18 Sheds. He passed on from there to Salem, a city belonging to Sichem,¹ thus returning to Chanaan after his journey to Mesopotamia of the Syrians. Here he dwelt near the town; he bought the piece of ground where he encamped from the men of Hemor's clan, that was father to Sichem, at the price of a hundred lambs. And here he built an altar, and dedicated it to the almighty God, the God of Israel.

34 A time came when Dina, Lia's daughter, went out to visit some of the women who dwelt in that country.
12 And one of the chieftains, Sichem, son of Hemor the Hevite, cast longing eyes at her; then seized her and mated with her, violating her virginity. And indeed his heart was set on her, so he comforted her
14 sorrow, and went to his father Hemor, asking him to demand the girl's hand in marriage. When Jacob was told of it, his sons were away, engaged in feeding their cattle; so he kept silence, awaiting their
16 return. But even as Hemor, Sichem's father, was on his way to confer with Jacob, Jacob's sons came back from the plains and heard what had befallen. They fell into a great rage; Sichem had dishonoured the whole race of Israel, and done great wrong, by violating their father's daughter.

18 And now Hemor began to plead with them, My son Sichem has set his heart on this maid of yours; grant him her hand in marriage. It is well that we should intermarry, that you should give us your daughters, and wed ours, and settle down amongst us. Our country is yours; you may till and trade and have your dwelling here. Sichem, too, said to her father and her brethren, Grant my request, and I will
22 pay whatever price you name. Increase the sum of the dowry, ask for presents in addition, you shall have what you will so
24 you will let me make the girl my wife. But the sons of Jacob, enraged at their sister's disgrace, made a treacherous answer to

Sichem and his father: We cannot grant
14 your request, if it means bestowing our sister's hand on a husband who is not circumcised; that is a forbidden thing, abominable to us. But we can enter into a treaty
15 with you, if you will consent to be like ourselves, and have every male among you circumcised; then we will give our daughters
16 to you in marriage, and accept yours; we will share your country, and form one people with you. If you refuse to be circumcised, we must take the girl with us and be gone. This offer of theirs commended itself to Hemor and his son Sichem; nor did the young man lose any time in having their request fulfilled, such was his love for the girl, and such was the influence he had with all his father's kindred. They both went to the city gate, and there made it known to the people: These
21 are peaceable folk, ready to share our country with us; let us allow them to trade here and to till the land, wide and open as it is, and in need of farming; let us marry their daughters, and give them ours in exchange. There is but one thing that stands
22 in the way of this happy agreement. We must adopt the custom of their race, and have all the males among us circumcised. Then their wealth and these cattle of theirs
23 and all they have will be ours too; we have only to humour them in this, to make them form one people with us. To this everyone
24 agreed, and all their men folk were circumcised.

The third day came, which is the day on which the pain of the wound is most felt. Then, two of Jacob's sons, who were brothers to Dina, Simeon and Levi, took up their swords, and made their way boldly into the city, where they killed all the men folk; making an end of Hemor and Sichem
26 with the rest, and carrying off their sister Dina from Sichem's house. When they had left the city, the rest of Jacob's sons broke in, to find the men already slain; so they plundered the city to avenge the wrong done; making spoil of their sheep
28 and oxen and asses and all they found in houses or in fields, and seizing their children and their wives as captives. Recklessly the deed was done; in vain did Jacob
30 protest to Simeon and Levi, You have much injured me, to Chanaanite and

¹ In the Hebrew text, this may also be rendered, 'to the city of Sichem in peace'.

1 Pherazite all around making my name
 31 abominable; see how few we are! If they
 make common cause against me, I and
 mine will perish. What, they answered,
 should we allow him to treat our sister
 like a harlot?

35 In the meanwhile, too, God had
 said to Jacob, Bestir thyself, go
 up to Bethel, and make thy dwelling there;
 there build an altar to the God who
 revealed himself to thee when thou wast in
 2 flight from thy brother Esau. Whereupon
 Jacob summoned all his household; Cast
 away, he told them, whatever images of
 alien gods you have among you, purify
 3 yourselves, and put on fresh garments. We
 must leave this, and go up to Bethel; there
 we must build an altar to the God who
 listened to me in time of trouble, and
 4 escorted me on my journey. So they gave
 him all the images of alien gods that were
 in their possession, the rings, too, which
 they wore on their ears, and he buried
 them under the mastic-tree, close to the
 5 town of Sichem. Thus they set out on their
 journey, and God inspired terror into the
 hearts of all who dwelt around them, so
 that they durst not pursue them as they
 went.

6 Jacob, then, with all his clan, made their
 way to Luz, which is now called Bethel,
 7 and built an altar there. It was he who
 called the place Bethel, the house of God,
 because it was there God appeared to him
 8 when he was in flight from his brother. It
 was at this time that Debora, Rebecca's
 nurse, died; she was buried under an oak,
 by the spur of the hills where Bethel is, and
 the place came to be called, The Oak of
 9 Mourning. Once again God revealed him-
 self to Jacob, after his return from Mesopotamia
 of the Syrians, blessing him, and
 10 assuring him, Thou shalt not be called
 Jacob any longer; Israel is to be thy name.
 11 So, calling to him by this name of Israel,
 he said to him, I am God all-powerful, and
 I bid thee increase and multiply; peoples
 shall descend from thee, whole families of
 nations, and kings shall be born of thy
 12 stock; and that land, which I gave to
 Abraham and Isaac, I will give to thee and
 13 to thy posterity after thee. Then God went

Death of Rachel at Bethlehem-Ephrata

away out of his sight; and he built a monu-
 1 ment of stone at the place where God had
 spoken to him, offering libations there and
 pouring oil upon it. Bethel was the name
 2 he gave to the place, and when he left it, in
 the spring, he journeyed into the country
 that lies towards Ephrata.¹ Here Rachel
 3 was in travail, and the difficult labour she
 had was endangering her life; but the
 midwife said to her, Do not be afraid; this
 time, too, thou wilt give birth to a son. But
 4 her life was ebbing away in her pangs; she
 saw that she was close to death, and called
 her son Benoni, the child of my distress.
 His father's name for him was Benjamin,
 the child of his right hand. So Rachel died,
 5 and was buried on the way that leads to
 Ephrata (the same as Bethlehem). Over
 her tomb, Jacob raised a monument; it is
 called, to this day, the Pillar of Rachel's
 Tomb. And he went on from there, and
 6 pitched his tent on the further side of the
 Sheep-tower.

It was while he was living there that
 2 Ruben betook himself to his own father's
 concubine, the one who was called Bala,
 and slept with her; nor did he contrive to
 keep Jacob in ignorance of it. Jacob had
 twelve sons altogether: by Lia, this first-
 3 born son, Ruben, as well as Simeon, Levi,
 Juda, Issachar, and Zabulon; by Rachel,
 4 Joseph and Benjamin; by Bala, Rachel's
 serving-woman, Dan and Nephthali; by
 5 Zelpha, Lia's serving-woman, Gad and
 Aser. These were Jacob's sons, and Mesopotamia
 of the Syrians was their birth-
 place.

He went, too, to visit his father Isaac at
 2 Mambre, the city of Arbee, also called
 Hebron; here, as strangers, Abraham and
 Isaac had dwelt. And now Isaac finished
 3 his life, of a hundred and eighty years; he
 died at last, worn out with age, his tale
 4 of years complete. He too became a part
 of his people; and his two sons, Esau and
 Jacob, gave him burial.

36 Here is a list of the descendants
 of Esau (or Edom). Esau's Chan-
 1aanite wives were Ada, daughter of Elon
 the Hethite, Oolibama, who was daughter
 of Ana and grand-daughter of Sebeon the
 Hevite, and Basemath, who was daughter

¹ 'In the spring he journeyed'; the Hebrew text here has a different meaning, 'It was still some way for him to travel'.

4 of Ismael and sister of Nabaioth. Ada became the mother of Eliphaz, Basemath of
5 Rahuel, and Oölibama of Jehus, Ihelon and Core; all of these were born while their father still lived in the land of Chanaan.
6 Afterwards Esau removed to another region, with wives and sons and daughters and all his household, with his wealth and his cattle and all that Chanaan had given him. He must needs part from his brother Jacob, now that they had become too rich to live side by side; the country in which they lived as strangers hitherto could no longer give feed for all their cattle. So Esau (or Edom) dwelt thenceforward in the hill country of Seir.

9 Thus Esau is the father of those Edomites who live in the hill country of Seir, and this was the line that came from him through those two sons of his, Eliphaz who was his son by his wife Ada, and Rahuel, his son by his wife Basemath. The sons of Eliphaz were called Theman, Omar, Sepho, Gatham, and Cenez. He also had a concubine called Thamna, by whom he became the father, and Esau the grandfather, of Amalec. All these were descended from Esau's wife Ada. And Rahuel's sons were called Nahath, Zara, Samma, and Meza; these were descended from Esau's wife Basemath. Esau's other three sons, Jehus, Ihelon and Core, were borne to him by his wife Oölibama, daughter of Ana and grand-daughter of Sebeon.

13 These, then, were the Edomite chieftains: of the family of Eliphaz, Esau's first-born, Theman, Omar, Sepho, Cenez, Core, Gatham, Amalec, all Edomite chieftains descended from Eliphaz, and so through Ada. Of the family of Esau's son Rahuel, the chieftains called Nahath, Zara, Samma and Meza, all Edomite chieftains descended from Rahuel, and so through Esau's wife Basemath. And three chieftains, Jehus, Ihelon and Core, were sons of Esau's wife Oölibama, who was daughter of Ana. So the descendants of Esau (or Edom) are named, after the chieftains who ruled them.

16 There were other chieftains native to the land, descended from Seir, the Horrite. Their names were Lotan, Sobal, Sebeon, Ana, Dison, Eser, and Disan; all Edomite

chieftains, but Horrite by race and descended from Seir. Lotan had a sister called Thamna, and the names of his two sons were Hori and Heman. The names of Sobal's sons were Alvan, Manahat, Ebal, Sepho, and Onam. Sebeon had two sons, Aia and Ana. It was this Ana who was feeding his father's asses, when he came upon hot springs, out in the desert. He had a son called Dison, and a daughter, Oölibama. Dison's sons were called Hamdan, Eseban, Jethram, and Charan; Eser's were called Balaan, Zavan, and Acan; Disan's were called Hus and Aram. Thus the Horrites had for their chieftains Lotan, Sobal, Sebeon, and Ana, Dison, Eser, and Disan. These were the Horrite chieftains who bore rule in the land of Seir.

There were kings ruling in the Edomite country before the Israelites had kings of their own; these are their names; Bela the son of Beor reigned in Denaba, and after his death Jobab son of Zara, from Bosra, who was succeeded by Husam from the Themanite country; his successor was Adad, son of Badad, who defeated Madian in the territory of Moab; he ruled at Avith. Adad was succeeded by Semla from Masreca, and Semla by Saul from the river Rohoboth, and Saul by Balanan, son of Achobor, and Balanan by Adar, who ruled at Phau; his wife's name was Meëtabel, daughter of Matred, who was daughter of Mezaab.

And these chieftains of Esau's race have clans and territories called after the names; Thamna, Alva, Jetheth, Oölibama, Ela, Phinon, Cenez, Theman, Mabsar, Magdiel, and Hiram. Such were the chieftains of Edom, each bearing rule over the territory about him; and the father of the Edomite race was Esau.

37 Jacob, meanwhile, had settled in the land of Chanaan, where his father lived a wanderer's life before him; and this is the record of Jacob's line. By now, Joseph was sixteen years old,¹ and helped his brethren to feed the flocks, young though he was. He worked with the sons of his father's wives, Bala and Zelpha; and against these brothers of his he told his father ill tales. Among his children, Jacob loved Joseph best, as old men love

¹ Seventeen, according to the Hebrew text.

the sons old age has brought them; and he dressed him in a coat that was all embroidery. Whereupon his brethren, who saw that he was his father's favourite, bore him a grudge, and never had a good word for him. They hated him the more, when he recounted to them a dream of his; Listen, he said, to this dream I have had. I dreamt that we were all binding sheaves in a field, and my sheaf seemed to lift itself up and stand erect, while all your sheaves stood about it and did reverence to mine. What, said his brethren, art thou to be our king? Are we to be thy subjects? So this talk about his dream fed the fires of their envious anger. Then he had another dream which he disclosed to his brethren; In this dream of mine, he said, it seemed to me that the sun and the moon and eleven stars did reverence to me. When he reported this to his father and his brethren, his father said, in reproof, What means this dream of thine? Must I and thy mother and thy brethren bow down to earth before thee? So his brethren eyed him with jealousy, while his father pondered over the story in silence.

One day, when his brethren were away at Sichem, feeding their father's flocks, Israel said to him, Thy brethren are pasturing the sheep at Sichem; I have an errand for thee there. And when Joseph answered, I am here, at thy command, he said to him, Go and see whether all is well with thy brethren, and with the flock, then come back and tell me their news. So he set out from Hebron valley and reached Sichem, where a stranger found him wandering on the open plain, and asked what was his errand. I am looking for my brethren, he said; Canst thou tell me where they are feeding their flocks? They have left this part, the man answered; I heard them say, Let us go to Dothain. So Joseph went on in search of his brethren, and it was at Dothain he found them. Before he came up to them, they caught sight of him in the distance, and began plotting against his life. They said to one another, Here comes the dreamer; how if we kill him, and throw his body into a dry well? We can pretend he has fallen a prey to some wild

beast. Now we shall see what good these dreams of his can do him! Upon this, Ruben began scheming to save Joseph from their violence; No, he said, do not take his life, there must be no bloodshed. Throw him down into this well here, far from all help, and so keep clear of any murderous act. His meaning was to rescue Joseph out of their hands, and restore him safe to his father. As soon, then, as Joseph reached his brethren, they stripped him of his long, embroidered coat, and threw him into a disused well, which had no water left in it.

And now, as they sat down to take their meal, they saw a company of Ismaelites mounted on camels, who were on their way from Galaad to Egypt, with a load of spices, balm, and myrrh. Whereupon Juda said to his brethren, What shall we gain by killing our brother, and concealing his murder? Far better sell him to these Ismaelites, and keep our hands clean of crime; remember that he is our brother, our own flesh and blood. His brethren fell in with the plan; so, when the merchants from Madian passed by, they dragged Joseph up out of the well, and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to these Ismaelites, who carried him off with them to Egypt. In vain did Ruben go back to the well, there was no sign of Joseph there. For grief he tore his garments, then he went back to his brethren, crying, The boy is not to be seen; what is left for me? Where can I betake myself now?

Meanwhile, they killed a goat, and dipped Joseph's coat in its blood; then they sent a message to their father, We have found this coat; satisfy thyself, whether it is thy son's or not. And their father recognized it, It is my son's coat, he said; past doubt, some wild thing has devoured him, my son Joseph, the prey of a wild beast! And he tore his garments, and put on sackcloth; and long he mourned for his son. Vainly did all his children conspire to solace their father's grief; he would admit no consolation. I will go down mourning, he said, to keep my son company in the grave; and would not dry his tears. Meanwhile, the Madianites had

¹ The merchants are here called both Ismaelites and Madianites, although Madian was descended not from Agar, but from Ceturah (25. 2); it is probable that the latter word is used only in a geographical sense, to denote the country (south-east of Palestine) where the descendants of Ismael lived.

sold Joseph in Egypt, to Putiphar, one of Pharaoh's courtiers, and captain of his guard.

38 A time came when Juda left his brethren up in the hill country, and went to lodge with a man called Hiras, at Odollam. Here he cast his eyes on the daughter of one Sue, a Chanaanite, and wedded and bedded her. She conceived, and bore a son, whom she named Her; then conceived again, and called her second son Onan; then bore a third, whom she called Sela, and after that had no more children. Juda found for his eldest son, Her, a wife whose name was Thamar; but this first-born son of his was a sinner, and God saw it and cut him off in his prime. Whereupon Juda bade his son Onan mate with the widow, and do a husband's duty by her, so as to beget children in his brother's name; but Onan, who knew that they would not be reckoned as his, frustrated the act of marriage when he mated with her, sooner than breed sons in his brother's name. Him, too, for this abominable deed of his, the Lord punished with death. And now Juda said to Thamar, his daughter-in-law, Go back to thy father's house, and there support thy widowed state until my son Sela has grown up. The truth was, he was afraid the same doom might overtake Sela. Thamar, then, went back to live at her father's house.

Time passed, and Sue's daughter, the wife of Juda, died. And when his grief for her was assuaged, he went with his friend Hiras of Odollam, who was a shepherd, to see the men who were shearing his flock at Thamnias.¹ When she heard that her father-in-law was going up to Thamnias for the sheep-shearing, Thamar laid aside her widow's weeds, put a veil on, and disguised herself; then she went and sat at the cross roads on the way to Thamnias. She knew well that Sela had grown up, and still no husband was given her. Juda saw her without recognizing her as his daughter-in-law (for she kept her face veiled), and took her for a harlot; so he accosted her, and asked for her favours. What wilt thou give me, she asked, as the price of enjoying them? I will send thee a goat, he

answered, from my herd. And when she told him he might have his will, on condition that he gave her a pledge, to hold until he kept his promise, What wilt thou have, asked Juda, for a pledge? Thy ring, she answered, and thy bracelet, and the staff thou carriest. At this single mating she conceived; and now she rose up and was gone, took off her disguise, and was back in her widow's weeds again.

Then Juda bade his shepherd at Odollam take the woman a goat, so as to recover the pledge he had given her. But the shepherd could not find her; and when he asked the townfolk, What has become of the harlot that used to sit at the cross-roads? they said, There was never a harlot there. So he went back to Juda, and told him, I could not find her; and what is more, the townfolk would have it there was never harlot sitting there at all. Let her keep what she has, said Juda; she cannot call us dishonest, now that I have sent the kid as I promised, and she was not to be found. So three months passed; and then word came to Juda, Thamar, thy daughter-in-law, has proved a light woman; she is big with child for all to see. Whereupon Juda said, Bring her here, then; she must be burned alive. But she, on the way to her place of punishment, sent a message to her father-in-law to say, These belong to the man who got me with child; satisfy thyself, whose are this ring, this bracelet, and this staff. And Juda, recognizing his own gifts, said, She is in the right, not I; why did I not give her my son Sela in marriage? Yet would he never mate with her again.

When she was near her time, it proved she had twins in her womb. And at the very moment of her delivery, one of the children put his hand out; so the midwife tied a red cord round it, thinking to herself, This one is the first-born. But he drew his hand in again, and the other was born first. Whereupon the woman said, Wouldst thou break thy way out? And so he was called Phares, which means, A breach in the wall. And when his brother was brought to birth after him, with the red cord round his hand, he was called Zara, the Dawn.

¹ Here, and in verse 20, the Latin version represents Hiras as Juda's shepherd, the Hebrew text, as his friend. The two words are much alike in the Hebrew language.

39 Meanwhile, Joseph had been taken away into Egypt, where his Ismaelite owners sold him to an Egyptian called Putiphar, one of Pharaoh's courtiers, and captain of his guard. The Lord was with him, so that he prospered in all he undertook; and he was given a lodging in the house of his master, who saw clearly enough how God was with him, giving him success in all he turned his hand to. Thus Joseph became his master's favourite servant, and had the management of all his affairs, and of all the property that was entrusted to him. For Joseph's sake, the Lord blessed the household of this Egyptian, and gave him large revenues of stock and store; he ate what was put before him, and could not tell how he came by it.

Joseph had beauty of form and face, and after a while his mistress cast longing eyes at him, and bade him share her bed. But he would have nothing to do with such wickedness; My master, he said, entrusts everything to my care, and keeps no count of his belongings; there is nothing of his but I, by his appointment, have the keeping of it, save thee only, his wedded wife. How canst thou ask me to wrong him so grievously, and offend my God? Such was the talk between them day after day, she ever more importunate, and he still resisting her shameful desire. A day came at last when Joseph must needs be within doors, busy with some task when no one else was by; and she caught him by the hem of his garment, inviting him to her bed. Whereupon he went out, leaving his cloak still in her hand.

And now, finding herself alone with his garment in her hands, and all her advances spurned, she summoned the men of the household; Look, she said, what comes of bringing in a Hebrew to insult us! Joseph came in, and would have dishonoured me, but I cried out, and at the sound of my voice he ran out, leaving his cloak in my grasp. She kept the cloak in support of her story, and shewed it to her husband when he came back home; This Hebrew slave, she told him, whom thou hast brought into the house to insult me, offered me violence; and it was only upon hearing me cry for help that he ran out, leaving me with this cloak in my hand. Upon this Joseph's master, too easily convinced by what his

Putiphar's Wife; Joseph is imprisoned

wife told him, broke into a rage, and committed him to the prison in which the king's prisoners were kept. There lay Joseph, then, a captive, but the Lord was still with him, and by the Lord's mercy he became a favourite with the chief gaoler, who put all the prisoners detained there in his charge, and would have nothing done save at his discretion. Thus the chief gaoler, in his turn, knew nothing of what went forward, but left all to Joseph, well knowing that the Lord was with him, and prospered all he did.

40 Soon after this, it chanced that two of the king of Egypt's courtiers, his cup-bearer and his pastry-cook, fell into disgrace with their master. The one was chief of all his cup-bearers, the other of all his pastrycooks, and Pharaoh, angry with both of them, handed them over to the captain of the guard, to share Joseph's prison. So the gaoler put them in Joseph's charge, and he saw to their needs. They had not been long in captivity when, on a single night, either of them had a dream, portending what it portended to each. Joseph, when he visited them next morning, found both of them downcast, and enquired why they looked sadder than their wont. We have been dreaming, they said, and we can find no interpreter. Why, said Joseph, it is God who interprets our dreams for us; tell me what it was you saw.

The chief cup-bearer related his dream first; I saw in front of me, he said, a vine, which had three shoots. First they budded, and then, when they had flowered, grapes grew upon them. I had Pharaoh's cup in my hand; so I took the grapes and pressed them out into the cup I held, and gave Pharaoh the draught. This, answered Joseph, is what thy dream meant; the three shoots stand for three days which have yet to pass, after which Pharaoh will bethink himself that he has need of thee, and will restore thee to thy old office; then thou wilt hand the cup to him by right of thy office as thou ever didst. Pray do not forget me, in that day of thy prosperity; as thou lovest me, win from Pharaoh my release from this prison of ours. It was treachery brought me here, when I left the land of the Hebrews, and now I am in this dungeon for no fault of mine.

16 Hereupon the chief cook, finding that Joseph could interpret the first dream so well, reminded them that he had dreamt too; I was carrying three baskets of loaves on my head, said he, and the top basket contained pastry of every kind; but the birds came and ate it. Thy dream, answered Joseph, means this; the three baskets stand for three days which have yet to pass, after which Pharao will take away thy life,¹ and so hang thee on a gibbet, for the birds to come and prey on thy flesh.

17 The third day after was Pharao's birthday, and he made a great feast for his servants. And as he sat feasting, he remembered the chief cup-bearer and the chief pastrycook. The one he restored to his office of putting the cup in his hand; the other he hung on a galows, to prove the truth of the prophecy that had been made. But the chief cup-bearer, in his new good fortune, thought no more of the man who had interpreted his dream.

41 Then, two years afterwards, Pharao himself had a dream. He thought that he was standing by the Nile, and out of its channel there came up seven heifers, sleek and well fattened, which began feeding on the river bank, among the reeds. Then seven others came up, also out of the river, ill-favoured and ill-nourished; and these too stood grazing where it was green, close to the river. And it seemed as if they ate up those other seven, that were so fine and well fed. With that Pharao awoke, and when he slept again, it was to dream a second dream. This time, there were seven ears of corn growing from a single stalk, all plump and fair, and another seven ears, all shrunken and blighted, came up in their turn, to eat up the fair promise of the other seven. Pharao, then, awoke from his dream, and as soon as it was daylight, he sent in great confusion of mind for all the diviners and all the wise men of Egypt. When they answered his summons, he told them of his dream, without finding anyone who could interpret it.

9 And now, at last, the chief cup-bearer remembered; I am much to blame, he said. 10 When thou, my lord, wast vexed with thy

servants, thou didst commit me and thy chief cook to prison, with the captain of thy guard in charge of us; and there, on a single night, either of us had a dream which foretold what was to become of us. One of our fellow-prisoners, a Hebrew slave, belonging to this same captain, heard what our dreams were, and gave us an account of them which the event proved right, when I was restored to my office, and that other was hung on a gibbet. With that, the king sent to have Joseph released from prison and brought before him, with his beard shaved and new clothes to wear. I have had certain dreams, he said, and no one can tell me the meaning of them; I have heard of thee as one who can interpret such things with sovereign skill. No skill of mine is needed, said Joseph; the Lord will give Pharao his answer, and a favourable one.

So Pharao described what he had seen; I thought I was standing on the river bank, and seven heifers came up out of the stream, sleek and well fed, that grazed on the rushes, there in the marsh-land. Then, on a sudden, seven other heifers followed them, so pinched and starved that in all this land of Egypt I never saw the like. These ate up the first seven, wholly consuming them, and yet they shewed no sign of having had their fill; they languished there, as gaunt and wretched as ever. Then I woke up, but was soon plunged in sleep again; and this time I dreamed that seven ears of corn, plump and fair, were growing from a single stalk, until seven others, all shrunken and blighted, sprang up out of the stubble near by and devoured all the fair promise of the first seven. This is the dream I have told to these diviners of mine, and none of them can tell me what it means.

My lord, answered Joseph, the two dreams are all one, God is warning my lord Pharao of what he intends to do. The seven sleek cattle, the seven plump ears, have the same sense in the two dreams; they stand for seven years of plenty. Whereas the seven gaunt, starved cattle which came up after them, and the seven shrunken, blighted ears of corn, prophesy seven years of famine. And they will come about in this order; first, there will be seven

¹ Literally, 'remove thy head'; the same expression in the Hebrew can also give the sense 'lift up thy head', i.e. 'restore thee to thy old position', as in verse 13 above.

harvests of great abundance all over this
 30 land of Egypt, and they will be followed by
 seven years of such drought as will efface
 the memory of the good times that went
 before them. Famine will ravage the whole
 31 country, till the evil effect of the drought
 does away with all the good effect of those
 32 abundant harvests. That thou shouldst
 have dreamed twice to the same purpose,
 is proof that God's decree stands firm;
 what he foretells will come about, and
 33 there will be no delay in its fulfilment. It
 is for thee, my lord king, to find some man
 that has the wisdom and the skill for it, and
 put the whole of Egypt under his charge.
 34 He must appoint a commissioner for each
 region, to collect a fifth of the harvest
 during the seven years of plenty which are
 35 now upon us, and store it up in barns. All
 this reserve of corn must be held at the
 royal disposition, and kept in the various
 36 cities, to make provision for the seven
 years' famine by which Egypt will be over-
 taken; if not, the whole land will perish for
 want of it.

The plan commended itself to Pharaoh
 37 and to all his courtiers. And now he asked
 38 them, Where are we to find another man
 such as this, so full of God's inspiration?
 39 Then he turned to Joseph, and said, Every
 word thou hast spoken comes to thee re-
 vealed by God, and shall I look for some
 other whose wisdom can match thine?
 40 Thou shalt have charge of my household
 and all my people shall obey thy word of
 command; thou shalt share all I have, ex-
 cept this royal throne. Hereby, Pharaoh
 41 said to Joseph, I put the whole land of
 42 Egypt under thy care. And with that, he
 took off the signet-ring from his own hand,
 and put it on Joseph's hand instead; gave
 him robes, too, of lawn, and hung a gold
 43 chain about his neck; then bade him
 mount on a chariot that was next in honour
 to his own, and would have a herald pro-
 claim that all must do him reverence, and
 acknowledge him as ruler of the whole land
 44 of Egypt. And he gave Joseph this as-
 surance, On the word of Pharaoh, no one in
 all Egypt shall be free to move hand or foot
 45 without thy permission. He gave him a
 new name, calling him in Egyptian Saviour
 of the World; and bestowed on him the
 hand of Aseneth, daughter of Putiphare,
 that was priest at Heliopolis.

So Joseph set out on his mission to the
 46 land of Egypt, having thus won the favour
 of king Pharaoh when he was only thirty
 years old; and there was no part of Egypt
 he did not visit. Seven years of abundance
 47 came, and the corn was bound in sheaves
 and taken away to all the storehouses that
 48 could be found in Egypt; all that could be
 spared of the crops was thus stored away
 in the various cities. And indeed the yield
 49 of wheat was so rich that it might have
 been sand by the sea-shore; there was no
 measuring the amount of it. In these years
 50 before the famine came, Joseph's wife
 Aseneth, daughter of Putiphare that was
 priest at Heliopolis, bore him two sons.
 He called his first-born Manasses, Ob-
 51 livion; God has bidden me forget all my
 troubles, said he, forget my home. The
 52 second he called Ephraim, as if he would
 say of God, Hiphrani, he has made me
 fruitful, in this land where I was once so
 poor.

So the first seven years passed, years of
 53 plenty for Egypt; and now, as Joseph had
 54 prophesied, seven years of scarcity began;
 famine reigned all over the world, but
 everywhere in Egypt there was bread to
 be had. When food grew scarce, there was
 55 ever a cry made to Pharaoh for bread, and
 still he would answer, Betake yourselves
 to Joseph, do what he bids you. And
 56 Joseph, as the famine grew daily worse
 everywhere, opened the storehouses and
 made the Egyptians, too, buy their corn.
 for they were as hungry as the rest. Soon
 57 the whole world was coming to Egypt and
 buying food to relieve its want.

42 The news that there was corn to
 be bought in Egypt reached Jacob
 among the rest; and he said to his sons,
 What means this lethargy? They tell me
 2 there is corn for sale in Egypt; why do you
 not go down there, and buy enough for us
 to live on, instead of waiting till we starve?
 So ten of Joseph's brethren went down
 3 into Egypt to buy corn there; only Ben-
 4 jamin his father kept at home, saying to the
 others, Some harm might befall him on
 the way. So they made their way into
 5 Egypt with others who were going there
 to buy; the whole of Chanaan was by now
 famine-stricken.

Egypt was under the control of Joseph: 6

it was at his discretion that corn was sold to foreign nations. And when his brethren came and did him reverence, he recognized them; but he treated them as strangers, and talked roughly to them. Whence come you? he asked. From the land of Chanaan, they said, to buy food. Well as he knew them, his brethren did not know him again, and his mind went back to the dreams he had had, long ago. You are spies, he told them; you have come to find out where our country's defences are weak. No, my lord, they said, we are thy servants, come here to buy food, sons of one father, all of us, sent on an errand of peace; thy servants know nothing of any evil intent. I know better, he answered; you have come to spy out where our country is ill defended. We are all brethren, they said; our father, in the land of Chanaan, is the father of twelve sons; the youngest is still with him, and one of us no longer lives. I was sure of it, said he; you are spies, all of you. I will put you to the test; your youngest brother must come here, or, by the life of Pharao, none of you shall leave this land. One of you must go and fetch him, the rest shall be my prisoners, until you give me proof whether your story is true or not. If you refuse this, as sure as Pharao lives, you are spies.

So he committed them to prison, and kept them there for three days. When the third day came, they were released, and now he said to them, Do what I bade you, and I will spare your lives; I am a man that fears God. To prove whether your errand is peaceful, one of you must be kept here in prison; the rest shall go home, taking with them the corn they have bought. Then you must bring your youngest brother here into my presence; when you have done that, I shall know that your story is true, and your lives shall be spared. And they bowed to his will, saying to one another, It is no more than we deserve, we, who so wronged our brother, and looked on without pity when he pleaded, in anguish, for his life. That is what has brought all this trouble upon us. And Ruben said to the rest, I pleaded with you not to do the boy such wrong, and you would not listen to me; we are being punished, now, for his murder. All this Joseph understood, although they did not suspect it (he always

spoke to them through an interpreter); so that he withdrew from them for a little, and gave himself up to tears. Then he went back and spoke to them, taking Simeon, and fastening chains upon him, there in their presence. Meanwhile, he had bidden his servants fill their sacks with corn, enclosing in each sack the money its owner had paid, and providing them with victuals for their journey as well. All this was done, and now they loaded their asses with the corn, and were on their homeward journey, when one of them opened his sack, to feed his beast at a halting-place. And there, in the mouth of the sack, he found his money. Look, he said to his brethren, my money has been restored to me; here it is, in the sack. And their minds misgave them; they said to one another in bewilderment, What is this God has done to us?

When they came back to their father Jacob, in Chanaan, they told him of all that had happened; how the regent of the country had spoken to them roughly, taking them for spies, and how they had answered, Ours is an errand of peace, we have no mischievous intent; there were twelve of us, all born of one father; one is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father in Chanaan. And then, the test of their honesty he had proposed; that they should go home with what they needed, leaving one of them behind; that he should remain a prisoner, until they cleared themselves of suspicion by coming back with their youngest brother; then they should be restored, and they should be free to buy as they would. When they had finished their story, they began unloading the corn, and were filled with dismay at finding the money each had paid enclosed there in his sack. As for their father Jacob, he told them, You have made a childless man of me; Joseph is dead, Simeon a prisoner, and you would rob me of Benjamin too; it is I who have to bear all this trouble. Whereupon Ruben answered, Kill my own two sons in requital of it, if I do not restore Benjamin to thee in safety; give me charge of him, and I will bring him back. No, said he, I will not let this son of mine go with you; his brother is dead, and he is all I have left; if any harm should befall him in the country of your travels, you would send an old man sorrowing to the grave.

43 But still the land was famine-stricken and all the food they had brought with them from Egypt was used up. Go back, said Jacob to his sons, and bring us all a mouthful of food. Why, answered Juda, this man we told thee of warned us with a solemn oath he would not give us audience, unless our youngest brother came back with us. If thou wilt send him in our company, we will all go together, and buy what thou needest; not otherwise. How often must we tell thee that the man gave us solemn warning, You shall have no audience without this youngest brother of yours? This was great unkindness you did me, Israel said, to tell him you had a brother at all. Why, they answered, the man asked news of all our family in turn, whether our father was still alive, and whether we had any brother besides; we told him no more than he asked, and how were we to know he would demand to have our brother brought into his presence? Let the boy go with me, Juda said to his father; let us go and find something to support life with, or we shall all die, and our children with us. I take the boy under my charge, and make myself answerable for his safety; never forgive me if I do not bring him back and restore him to thee. If there had not been this delay, we might have gone to Egypt and been back again by now.

And their father Israel said to them, Since it must be so, have your way. Only, take gifts with you in your packs, the most precious this land yields, a little balm, and honey, and storax, and myrrh, and mastic, and almonds. Take a double amount of money with you, and restore what you found in your sacks; it may have been an oversight. And so go back to the man, taking your brother with you. May the almighty God I serve secure you his favour, so that he will send back that brother of yours who is now his hostage, and Benjamin as well. Meanwhile, I shall be like a man bereft of children. With such gifts, and a double amount of money, they took Benjamin down into Egypt, and presented themselves before Joseph.

As soon as he saw them, and Benjamin in their company, he said to his steward, Take these men home, and kill victims,

and make a feast; they will eat with me at noon. The steward did as he was bidden, taking them all to Joseph's house, where they stood dismayed; We have been brought in here because of the money, they said to one another, the money we took home in our sacks. He means to trump a charge against us, and to hold us here in pawn, and our beasts along with us. So, in the very doorway of the house, they approached the steward, Pray, sir, listen, they said. We came here some while since, to buy food, and buy it we did; but when we reached our halting-place we found the money lying in the mouths of our sacks. And now we have brought back the same amount, over and above the sum that is to defray our fresh needs; we cannot guess who it was put the money back in our purses. Set your mind at rest, he said; you have nothing to fear. Your own God, the God your father serves, must have enriched those sacks of yours; I have the money you paid me accounted for. Then he fetched Simeon out to meet them, and took them into the house, where he brought water for them to wash their feet; he also gave their beasts fodder.

There then they waited, with the gifts ready, till Joseph should come home at noon; they had been told that they would be his guests. And as soon as Joseph entered his house, they offered him the gifts they carried, and bowed down to earth. And he, returning their greeting with courtesy, asked how their father was, the old man of whom they had spoken to him. Was he still living? Yes, my lord, they said, our father still lives. And they bent to do him reverence. Then Joseph looked round, and saw Benjamin there, his own mother's son; Is this, he asked, the younger brother you told me of? And he added, God be merciful to thee, my son. After this he could wait no more; his heart went out to this, his own brother, and the tears began to come. He withdrew into his private room, and there wept; then washed his face and came out again, master of himself; Serve the meal, he said. So food was brought, with separate portions for Joseph, for his brethren, and for the Egyptians who kept them company; the Egyptians are not allowed to eat with men of Hebrew blood, and would think it foul disgrace to share a

133 meal with them. There they sat in his presence, ranged in order from the eldest, with his birthright, to the youngest in age. And
134 they were not a little surprised when they received the portions he sent them, for the greatest share of all came to Benjamin, six times as large as the others. So they drank and made merry with him.

44 And Joseph gave orders to his steward; Fill their sacks with corn, as full as they can hold, and enclose in each man's sack the money he has paid.
2 And when it comes to the youngest, enclose in his sack not only the money he paid for his corn, but my silver cup as well.
3 His command was obeyed; and now morning came, and they were given leave to depart, with their asses. They had left the city and passed on a little further, when Joseph summoned his steward; Bestir thyself, he said, and go in pursuit of these men. When thou overtakest them, say, This is a poor return to make for the kindness you have received; you have stolen my master's cup, the one from which he drinks, and takes omens; you have done him a great wrong. The steward obeyed, and as soon as he overtook them, delivered
7 his message by rote. What a charge is this, my lord, they answered, to bring against thy servants! That we should have been
8 guilty of such a shameful deed! When we found our money enclosed in the mouths of our sacks, we brought it back to thee all the way from Chanaan; is it likely we would rob thy master's house of gold or
9 silver? If the cup that is missing should be found in possession of any of us, let him pay for it with his life; and we, too, will be slaves in our lord's service. I accept this
10 test of yours, said he; the man in whose possession it is found, shall be my slave, and the rest of you go clear. So, with all haste, they lowered their sacks to the ground, and began opening them one by
11 one. And he began with the eldest, and examined each in turn, till at last he found the cup in Benjamin's sack.

13 And now they tore their garments about them, loaded their asses again, and went
14 back to the city. Joseph was awaiting them there, and Juda led his brethren into Joseph's presence, where they all bowed face
15 to the earth before him. What moved you,

said he, to do this? Surely you must know that I have powers of divining such as no other man has? My lord, said Juda, what
16 answer can we make? What plea can we offer in our defence? We are guilty men, and God would not let it pass unnoticed; and now all of us, not only he in whose possession the cup was found, will be thy slaves. God forbid I should ask that, answered Joseph; no, the thief who stole the cup shall be my slave; the rest of you may go back to your father as free men.

At this, Juda made bold to draw nearer
18 him; My lord, he said, let thy servant speak a word for thy own hearing, without earning thy displeasure, Pharaoh's viceroxy though thou art, and my sovereign lord. When thou didst ask us whether we had a
19 father or a brother living, our answer was, My lord, we have a father well advanced
20 in years, and one of his sons is still with him, the youngest, who was born to him in his old age. There was another son by the same mother, but he is dead, and now only this one recalls his mother's memory, so that his father loves him dearly. Upon
21 this, thou didst bid us bring the boy to thee and let thee have sight of him. My lord,
22 we urged, our father cannot do without the boy; the parting would kill him. But thou
23 didst warn thy servants, You shall never have audience of me again, unless you bring your youngest brother with you.

Then we went back to our father, and
24 told him of the warning which thou, his master and ours, hadst given us. And
25 when our father bade us come here again and buy a little bread, we told him we could not, unless our youngest brother was allowed to come down with us. In his company, we said, we will go willingly enough, but we dare not face the man we told thee
26 of without him. You know, he answered,
27 that my own wife only bore me two sons; I let one of them go out of my sight, and
28 your news was, that some beast had made a prey of him; he was never seen again. If
29 you take this one too, and any harm befalls him on the way, you will send an old man
30 sorrowing to the grave. My lord, shall I present myself before my father, and the
31 boy not with me? His life is bound up with his son's, and if he finds we have not brought him with us, it will be the death
of him; must we bring an old man to the

32 grave in sorrow? Enslave me instead; with full justice, I made myself answerable for him. If I do not bring him back, I said, I will never claim my own father's forgiveness. I, therefore, my lord, would be left here as thy servant, to wait upon thee in his stead; let the boy go home with his brethren. Should I go back to my father without him, and witness the blow that strikes my father down?

45 Joseph could contain himself no longer, and there were many standing by. So he gave orders that all these should leave his presence; there must be no strangers to see it, when he made himself known. But when he spoke, he burst into such a fit of weeping that these Egyptians, and all Pharaoh's household, could not but hear it. I am Joseph, said he to his brethren; is my father yet alive? But his brethren were so overcome with fear that they could not answer him, and he must needs use gentleness; Come closer, he said, and then, when they had drawn close to him, I am Joseph, that brother of yours whom you sent away to be sold as a slave in Egypt. And now, do not take it to heart; waste no regrets over the bargain that brought me here; if I came to Egypt first, it was on God's errand, to be your protector. It is two years now since famine came to these parts, and there will be no ploughing, no reaping harvests, for five years more; so God would have me here in readiness to preserve your race, by giving you food to live on. It was not your design, then, it was God's will that sent me here; he it is that has put Pharaoh himself under my tutelage, made me regent of all his domains, with the whole of Egypt under my care.

9 Make haste, go back to my father and give him this message from his son Joseph: God has made me ruler of all Egypt; make thy way here with all speed. Thou shalt have the land of Gessen for thy dwelling-place, so that thou canst live close to me, with thy children and thy grandchildren, thy sheep and cattle and all that is thine.

11 And there, since there are still five years of famine to come, I will maintain thee and keep thee from starving, with that house-

Joseph reveals himself to his Brethren

hold of thine and all thou hast. You and my brother Benjamin here can assure him from the witness of your own eyes, that it was Joseph who spoke to you. Tell my father of all these honours I enjoy, and of all you saw in Egypt, and bring him back to me here with all speed.

With that, he threw his arms round Benjamin's neck, in tears; Benjamin, too, wept as he clung to him. Then Joseph kissed all his brethren in turn, and wept over them, till at last they found courage to speak to him. And now the news was in everybody's mouth, and all Pharaoh's court heard that Joseph's brethren were there. Pharaoh rejoiced heartily over it, and all his courtiers with him; and these were the orders he would have Joseph give to his brethren, Pack your beasts, and go back to Chanaan, bring your father here, and all your family, to share the blessings of Egypt with me, and live on the best the land can give. And they might borrow waggons from Egypt, to carry their wives and children back. Take your father with you (he was to tell them) and make haste over your return; and leave none of your farm stock behind you;¹ all the wealth of Egypt awaits you here.

The sons of Israel did as they were bidden; Joseph providing them with waggons at Pharaoh's command, and with food for the journey. He also had two new garments brought out for each, and gave Benjamin three hundred silver pieces and five new garments of the choicest sort; sending his father a like gift in both kinds, as well as ten asses laden with the best merchandise of Egypt, and ten she-asses with corn and bread to last him over his travels. Thus he sent his brethren home, and his last word, as they set out, was Be sure there is no quarrelling on the way. So they left Egypt, and when they reached their father Jacob in Chanaan, they gave him their news, Thy son Joseph is still alive, and it is he that rules the whole land of Egypt. Jacob heard it, with the look of one just awoken from a heavy sleep, but at first he would not believe them, and they must tell him the whole story from first to last. Then, when he had seen for himself the waggons and all the gifts, he could breathe

¹ The sense of the Hebrew text here is the opposite of the Latin 'Do not waste any regrets at leaving your goods behind'.

again. If my son Joseph, he said, is still alive, that is all I ask; I will go with you, and have sight of him again before I die.

46 So Jacob set out with all his possessions, and when he reached the Well of the Oath, he offered sacrifice there to the God of his father Isaac. That night, in a vision, he heard God calling to him, Jacob, Jacob! and when he answered, I am here, at thy command, God said to him, I am the almighty God thy father worshipped. Betake thyself to Egypt without fear; I mean to make thy descendants into a great nation there. I will go down there with thee; and when the time comes to return, it shall be under my guidance still; and Joseph shall stand by thee to close thy eyes in death. So Jacob left the Well of the Oath behind him, and his sons took him on further in the waggons which Pharaoh had provided, to ease an old man's travel. With him were their own wives and children, and all the possessions he had in Chanaan, and so he reached Egypt with the whole of his family, sons and grandsons and daughters with them, the whole of his race.

These are the names of Israel's descendants who made their way into Egypt. He had his sons with him, of whom Ruben was the first-born, and Ruben's own sons were called Henoah, Phallu, Hesron, and Charimi. Simeon's were called Jamuel, Jamun, Ahod, Jachin, and Sohar; he had another, called Saul, by a Chanaanite. Levi's were called Gerson, Caath, and Merari. Juda's were called Her, Onan, Sela, Phares and Zara, but of these, Her and Onan had already died in Chanaan; Phares had two sons, Hesron and Hamul. Issachar's were called Thola, Phua, Job and Semron; Zabulon's were called Sared, Elon and Jahelel. So much for the sons Lia bore in Mesopotamia of the Syrians, with one daughter, Dina; the whole count of these, sons and daughters, was thirty-three. Gad's sons were called Sephion, Haggi, Suni, Esebon, Heri, Arodi and Areli. Aser's were called Jamne, Jesua, Jessui and Beria, and they had a sister called Sara; Beria had two sons, Heber and Melchiel. All these were descended from Zelpha, the woman-servant Laban gave to his daughter Lia; thus Jacob counted six-

teen descendants through her. Jacob's wife Rachel had two children, Joseph and Benjamin; Joseph's two sons, Manasses and Ephraim, were borne to him in Egypt by Aseneth, daughter of Putiphare that was priest at Heiopolis; Benjamin's were called Bela, Bechor, Asbel, Gera, Naaman, Echi, Ros, Mophim, Ophim and Ared. These were descended from Jacob's wife Rachel, fourteen in all. Dan was the father of Husim, Nephthali of Jasiel, Guni, Jeser and Sallem; these were descended from Bala, whom Laban gave as a serving-woman to his daughter Rachel; through her, Jacob had seven descendants in all. Thus Jacob went into Egypt with sixty-six companions all sprung from his stock, not reckoning his son's wives. Meanwhile, Joseph had had two sons born to him in Egypt; so that Jacob's whole clan, when they found a home in Egypt, reached the number of seventy.

He had sent Juda on before him to tell Joseph of his coming, so that they could meet in Gessen; and upon his arrival, Joseph had horses put in his chariot and drove there to meet his father. At the first sight of him, he threw his arms about his neck, and embraced him, in tears. Now, his father said to him, I can die happy; I have seen thee face to face, and know that my son survives me. Then Joseph said to his brethren and to his family, I must go and tell Pharaoh that my brethren and my family have come here from Chanaan. They are shepherds, I shall say, and all their skill is in tending flocks; those flocks, and their herds, and all they possess, they have brought with them. So when he summons you and asks you what is your trade, your answer must be, Thy servants are shepherds; to that trade we have been brought up from youth, as our fathers were before us. This profession will win you a home in the land of Gessen; the Egyptians hold all shepherd-folk in abhorrence.

47 So Joseph approached Pharaoh with the news that his father and his brethren had brought their sheep and cattle and all they possessed away from Chanaan, and were there in the land of Gessen. He also presented his five youngest brethren to the king, and these,

when the king asked what their employment was, answered, Thy servants are shepherds, as their fathers were before them. We have come to seek hospitality in this land of thine, my lord, because the drought lies heavy on Chanaan, and there is no pasture for our flocks; our plea is, that thou wouldst grant thy servants a home in the country of Gessen. So the king told Joseph, Now that thy father and thy brethren have come here to bear thee company, the whole land of Egypt is at thy disposal; bid them dwell where they are best able to dwell, occupying the country of Gessen. And if thou knowest any of their number to be skilful at their craft, give them charge of my own herds. Afterwards, Joseph brought his father in, and presented him to the king, to whom he gave his blessing. And when the king asked him, what was his age? I have lived a wanderer's life, said he, these hundred and thirty years; no long life, and no happy one, compared with the years my fathers spent, roaming the world before me. So he gave the king his blessing, and left him.

Joseph obeyed Pharaoh's bidding, and gave his father and his brethren lands in the most favoured part of Egypt, at Ramesses; and there he maintained them, with all his father's kindred, giving an allowance of food to each. All the world over, bread was still scarce, and the drought bore hardest on Egypt and on Chanaan, till at last Joseph had amassed all the money either land possessed in the royal treasury, through his sales of wheat. So, when they had nothing left to buy with, the Egyptians all came to Joseph asking to have bread given them for nothing; Wilt thou watch us starve, they asked, now that we have no more money left? If you cannot pay, he answered, bring your cattle here, and you shall have food in return for these.

So they brought them and he bartered corn for horses and sheep and cattle and asses, feeding them the whole of that year and taking their beasts at the price. By the next year, they came to him and said, My lord, we must needs be open with thee; we have come to the end of our cattle, as well as our money; thou canst see for thyself that

nothing is left us except our lives and our lands. Do not watch us starve; thou shalt have the disposal of our lands and of ourselves, making both of these the king's property, and giving us seed-corn in return; if not, the land will become a wilderness for want of tillage. So Joseph bought the whole land of Egypt, one and all selling their possessions to him because the famine was so grievous; and he made it Pharaoh's property, with all the inhabitants of it from one end of Egypt to the other; except the land which the king had assigned to the priests. These had a fixed allowance of food made to them from the royal store-houses, and there was no occasion for them to sell their lands.

Joseph said to the people, You can see for yourselves now that Pharaoh is lord of your lives and lands; you shall have seed-corn to sow your fields with, and when harvest-time comes you shall give up a fifth of your crops to the king; the other four-fifths I will grant you for the next sowing, and to feed your households and your children. Our lives are in thy hand, they said; as long as we enjoy my lord's favour, we will gladly be the king's servants. All over Egypt, from that day to this, the payment of the fifth is a custom which has the force of law, except in the priests' lands, which are bound by no such conditions.

Thus Israel began to find a home in Egypt, that is, in the land of Gessen, took possession of it, and flourished, and grew great. Jacob himself lived on seventeen years there, so that he reached altogether the age of a hundred and forty-seven. And when he saw the day of his death approaching, he sent for his son Joseph; Do me this favour, he said, put thy hand under my thigh, and swear, in love and loyalty, that thou wilt not bury me here in Egypt. I would sleep where my fathers sleep; take me far away from this land and bury me in the burial-place of my kindred. I will do thy bidding, answered Joseph; but Jacob would have him bind himself by an oath. So he gave his oath; and then Israel turned his eyes towards the top of his bed,¹ and gave praise to God.

¹ The Greek here has 'worshipped towards the top of his staff', perhaps in the sense that he did honour to Joseph's staff, the staff being the recognized symbol of the tribe. This reading, which involves a very slight modification of the Hebrew text, is followed in Heb. 11. 21.

48 Soon after this, Joseph was told that his father had fallen sick, and took his two sons, Ephraim and Manasses, to visit him. When the old man heard that Joseph had come to see him, he found strength to sit up in bed, and greeted him thus, The almighty God revealed himself to me at Luza in Chanaan, and gave me his blessing there. I will make thy posterity increase and multiply, he said, so that a host of nations shall spring from thee; and I will give this land to thee and to thy race after thee, to be their possession eternally.

Thy two sons were born to thee in Egypt, before my coming, but they shall be counted as sons of mine; Ephraim and Manasses shall take rank with Ruben and Simeon. Whatever children thou shalt beget after this shall be thine, not mine, and they shall hold whatever possession they hold under the title of these brothers of theirs. It was when I was on my way back from Mesopotamia that I lost Rachel, there in Chanaan, while we were on our journey, in spring time,¹ and when I reached Ephrata I buried her there, by the road which leads to Ephrata; Bethlehem is another name they call it by. Then he saw Joseph's two sons there, and asked, Who are these? The sons God has given me, said he, while I have been living here. Bring them close to me, he answered, and let me give them my blessing; by now, Israel's eyes were failing through his great age, and he could not see clearly.

So they were brought close to him, and he kissed them; then he said to his son, Once I never thought to see thee again; that fear was groundless, and now God has given me sight of thy children too. And Joseph took them from his father's embrace, and bowed low, putting Ephraim on his right, by Israel's left hand, and Manasses on his left, at Israel's right hand, and holding them both close to him. But Jacob stretched out his right hand, and put it on the head of Ephraim, the younger, and put his left on the head of Manasses, the elder, changing his hands round. And this is the blessing which Jacob gave to Joseph's sons; May that God, in whose presence my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, once lived

and moved, that God who has guided me like a shepherd from my youth till now, that angel of God, who has rescued me from all my troubles, bless these sons of thine. Let them inherit my name, and the names of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; may their posterity spread wide over the earth. Joseph took it amiss when he saw his father put his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and would have raised it up from Ephraim's to put it on Manasses' instead; No, father, said he, thou art wide of the mark; here is the eldest, upon whom thy right hand should rest. But Jacob would not be persuaded; I know it, my son, said he, I know it; Manasses too shall give birth to a people, and spread far; but this younger brother shall outdo him, and beget a multitude of nations. So then and there he blessed them; When men give a blessing in Israel, he said, the words they use shall be, God make thee like Ephraim and Manasses. So he put Ephraim before Manasses. He said, too, to Joseph, I must die, but God be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. And there I bequeath thee one portion² to which thy brethren shall have no claim, the land I won from the Amorrhite with my sword and my bow.

49 Then Jacob summoned all his sons to him; Gather about me, he said, to hear what awaits you in the days still to come; gather about me, sons of Jacob, and listen; it is Israel, your father, who speaks. Thou, Ruben, art my first-born, my pride, my manhood's first-fruits; thine was the privilege, thine the right to rule, but all went to waste like water. Never mayst thou thrive, thou who wouldst lie between thy father's sheets, and defile his bed. Simeon and Levi are brothers indeed, warriors both, and ready tools of violence. Never may this soul of mine take part in their conspiracy, this heart be of their company; raging, they slew their enemy, recklessly they broke down a city wall.³ A curse on this unrelenting rage of theirs, this bitter spite! I will distribute them here and there in Jacob, I will scatter them throughout

¹ See note on 35. 16 above.

² The word used here in the Hebrew text is *schem*, shoulder, evidently an allusion to the town of Sichern, with which Joseph was traditionally connected.

³ 'Broke down a city wall'; the Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'hamstrung an ox'.

8 Israel. But thou, Juda, shalt win the praise of thy brethren; with thy hand on the necks of thy enemies, thou shalt be
 9 revered by thy own father's sons. Juda is like a lion's whelp; on the hills, my son, thou roamest after thy prey; like a lion couched in his lair, a lioness that none
 10 dares provoke. Juda shall not want a branch from his stem,¹ a prince drawn from his stock, until the day when he comes who is to be sent to us, he, the hope
 11 of the nations. To what tree will he tie his mount; the ass he rides on? The vine for him, the vineyard for him; when he washes his garments, it shall be in wine, all his vesture shall be dyed with the blood of
 12 grapes. Fairer than wine his eyes shall be, his teeth whiter than milk.²

13 Zabulon shall dwell by the sea shore, where the ships find harbour, at Sidon's gates. Issachar lies secure within its own confines, like some beast of burden that
 14 has great strength; so pleasant he finds his resting-place, so fair his land, that he is willing to bow under the yoke, and pay tribute to others. But Dan shall administer his own laws, like any other tribe of Israel;
 15 Dan is like a snake by the road side, an adder on the path, to bite the horse's heels, and make him throw the rider backwards.
 16 I will wait patiently, Lord, for the deliverance thou canst bring me.³ Gad shall be at the mercy of armed men, till he goes
 17 armed in his turn. Rich in wheat shall Aser's lands be; he shall send out delicacies
 18 for the tables of kings. Nephthali is like a roe-deer that goes free, bringing a message of gladness.⁴

19 Joseph grows upward, upward still, fair to view; see how the maidens pass to and fro on the city walls!⁵ Sorely his enemies harass him with the darts they throw, unrelenting in their hatred, but his bow rests in the strength that does not fail him; the power of the God who rules in Jacob gives

Jacob's dying Prophecy about his Sons

free play to hand and arm. From Joseph one shall arise, who will be the shepherd and the corner-stone of Israel. The God
 25 of thy father shall bring thee aid; the Almighty shall bless thee with all the blessings that lie stored in heaven above, or in the depth beneath us, all the blessings that enrich breast and womb. This blessing
 26 which thy father gives thee draws strength from all the blessings which his own fathers bequeathed; they shall not cease till he comes, whom the everlasting hills await. May they all rest on Joseph's head, rest on his brow, who is separated, like a Nazirite, from his brethren. As for Benjamin, he is
 27 like a ravening wolf, that must devour his own prey in the morning, and have plunder still to divide at nightfall.

All these names are perpetuated in the
 28 twelve tribes of Israel; and these are the words in which their father blessed them one by one, giving each the blessing that was due to him. Then he laid a charge
 29 upon them; I must die, he said, and become a part of my people; bury me with my fathers in the double cave on the land that belonged once to Ephron the Hethite, the cave that looks towards Mambre, in
 30 the land of Chanaan. It was this cave that Abraham bought, with the ground it stands in, from Ephron the Hethite, to make his tomb there. There they buried
 31 him, and his wife Sara with him; there, too, Isaac lies buried with his wife Rebecca; there Lia, too, was laid. So he
 32 made an end of giving the directions he would have his sons observe; then lay his full length on the bed, and died, and became a part of his people.

50 Joseph, when he saw this, threw himself down at his father's side, weeping and covering his face with kisses. And now he would have the doctors who were in his service embalm his father with

¹ 'A branch'; literally, 'a rod'. The sense intended may be that of a royal sceptre. The meaning of the word rendered 'who is to be sent to us' is very uncertain in the Hebrew text. For 'he, the hope of the nations', the Hebrew text gives 'he shall have the obedience of the nations'.

² The words used about Ruben, Simeon and Levi seem to be a reference, for the most part, to past events; cf. 35. 22, and chapter 34 above. The blessing of Juda is more naturally understood of the position which the tribe of Juda was to occupy.

³ No plausible explanation has been given of the sudden interruption introduced by this verse.

⁴ The reference, and sometimes the meaning, of the shorter blessings contained in verses 13-21 is difficult to establish with certainty; but they probably allude to the future, not to the past. Those given to Dan and Gad involve a play upon words.

⁵ Some think that Joseph is compared to a fruitful tree, whose branches (though the word 'daughters' never has this meaning elsewhere) spread along a garden wall. The blessing of Joseph is very uncertain in its interpretation throughout. It has been supposed that the reference is to the later prominence of Ephraim among the ten tribes that were separated from Juda (cf. e.g. Ps. 77. 67).

13 spices. Forty days went by, and they were still at their task; that is the custom of the embalmers in Egypt; and for seventy days the whole of Egypt mourned him. Then, when the time of mourning was over, Joseph said to Pharaoh's courtiers, Do me a favour, and prefer this request of mine to Pharaoh. My father has left me bound by an oath; I am dying, said he, and I charge thee to bury me in the tomb I dug for myself in Chanaan. I would go back there to bury my father, and so return. 16 And Pharaoh told him, Go back, and bury thy father in fulfilment of thy oath. So he went, and with him went all Pharaoh's senators and all the elders of Egypt; Joseph's brethren too and all his household, except the children and the flocks and herds; these were left behind in the land of Gessen. He had chariots and horsemen with him, so it was a great retinue that accompanied him. When they reached Atad's Threshing-floor, on the further side of Jordan, they spent seven days over the funeral rites, mourning long and bitterly; till the Chanaanites, watching it, said This is great lamentation the men of Egypt are making, and the place came to be called, 12 The Lament of the Egyptians. Thus Jacob's sons carried out his command, by taking his body to Chanaan, and burying it in the double cave opposite Mambre, that Abraham bought, with the ground it stands in, from Ephron the Hethite, to be his burial-place.

14 And Joseph, when the funeral rites were done, went back to Egypt with his brethren and all his retinue. His brethren, now that their father was dead, grew afraid of

Joseph; what if he should remember his wrongs, they asked one another, and punish us for our ill deeds? So they sent a message to him, Our father, before he died, laid a charge on us. We were to say to thee in his name, Forget, I pray thee, the crime which thy brethren committed, the cruel wrong they did thee. And it is our prayer too that thou wouldst grant forgiveness to us, the servants of the God thy father served. Joseph wept upon hearing it; and when his brethren came and bowed to the ground before him, owning themselves his servants, his answer was, Do not be afraid; who am I, that I should oppose my will to God's will? You thought to do me harm, but God turned it all to good account; I was to be raised up to greatness, as you see, for the saving of a multitude of people. Do not be afraid; both you and your children shall still have maintenance from me. With such kindly words he comforted them.

So, with all his father's household, he continued to dwell in Egypt, and reached the age of a hundred and ten. He lived to see Ephraim a grandfather, and Machir, son of Manasses, had children whom he took on his knees.¹ After this he said to his kindred, When I am dead, God will have mercy on you, and enable you to return from this country to the home which he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And he bound them by an oath, When God shews you this mercy, you must take my bones out of this land with you. So he died, a hundred and ten years old, and they embalmed him with spices, and laid him to rest in a coffin, there in Egypt.

¹ See note on 30. 3 above.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

HERE are the names of Israel's sons; these were the men who betook themselves to Egypt, each with his family, when Jacob went there; 3 Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Issachar, Zabulon and Benjamin, Dan and Nephthali, Gad and Aser. There were seventy 4 souls altogether that came from Jacob's stock, but of these, Joseph was in Egypt 6 already. When he and his brethren and all their next descendants were dead, the 7 race of Israel grew into a teeming multitude, in such strength that the whole 8 land was peopled with them. Meanwhile, a new king of Egypt had arisen, who 9 knew nothing of Joseph. See, he said to his people, how the race of the Israelites has grown, till they are stronger than we 10 are. We must go prudently about it and keep them down, or their numbers will 11 grow; what if war threatens, and they make common cause with our enemies? They will get the better of us, and leave 12 our country altogether. So he made them answerable to officers of the public works, who laid crushing burdens on them, using 13 them to build the store-cities of Phithom and Ramesses; but the more they were ill-treated, the more they bred and multiplied. 14 The Egyptians, in their abhorrence for the Israelites, oppressed and insulted them, making their lives a burden with drudgery in the clay-pit and the brick-kiln, drudgery, too, of all kinds in the cultivation of the land. 15 Then the king of Egypt gave orders to Sephora and Phua, two midwives who 16 attended the Hebrews; When you are called in, he said, to attend the Hebrew women, and their time comes, kill the child 17 if it is a boy; if it is a girl keep it alive. But these midwives feared the Lord, and would not carry out the commands of the king of 18 Egypt; they kept the boys safe; and when the king summoned them and asked, What do you mean by sparing the boys too? they 19 answered, The Hebrew women are not like those of Egypt; they are skilled in

midwifery, and contrive to give birth before we reach them.¹ For this, God rewarded the midwives; while his people grew and attained great strength, he gave the midwives, too, families of their own, as women who feared God. And at last Pharaoh made a proclamation to the whole of his people: Whenever a male child is born, cast it into the river, keep only the girls alive.

2 And now one of the descendants of Levi wooed and married a woman of his own clan, who conceived and bore him a son. So winning were the child's looks, that for three months she kept him hidden away; then, unable to conceal him any longer, she took a little basket of reeds, which she smeared with clay and pitch, and in this put her baby son down among the bulrushes on the river bank. The boy's sister waited at a distance, to see what would happen. Just then, Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, while her maid-servants walked along the bank. She caught sight of the basket among the rushes, and sent one of her attendants to fetch it; and when she opened it, and saw the baby crying, her heart was touched. Why, she said, this must be one of the Hebrew children. And at that, the boy's sister asked, Wouldst thou have me go and fetch one of the Hebrew women, to nurse the child for thee? Go by all means, she said; and the girl went and fetched her mother. Take this boy, Pharaoh's daughter said, and nurse him for me; I will reward thee for it. So the woman took the boy and nursed him till he was grown; then she handed him over to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her own son, and gave him the name of Moses, the Rescuer; I had to rescue him, she said, from the river.

A time came when Moses, now a grown-up man, went out among his brethren the Hebrews, and saw how ill they were treated, saw one of these brethren of his being beaten by an Egyptian; whereupon,

¹ 'Are skilled in midwifery'; according to the Hebrew text, 'Are quick to bear'.

12 after looking this way and that to see that
 13 no one was near, he killed the Egyptian
 and buried him there in the sand. When
 he went out next day, he found two He-
 14 brews that had come to blows, and asked
 the aggressor what he meant by offering
 violence to a friend. Why, said he, who
 made thee a ruler and a judge over us?
 Hast thou a mind to kill me, as thou didst
 kill that Egyptian yesterday? And Moses
 was terrified to find that his action had so
 15 strangely come to light. When Pharaoh
 heard of it, he was for putting Moses to
 death; and Moses, to avoid his scrutiny,
 took refuge in the country of Madian.
 Here he sat down to rest by the side of a
 16 well. And it chanced that seven maids,
 daughters to the priest of Madian, came
 out and began drawing water, to fill the
 troughs and water their father's sheep. But
 17 now came shepherds, and would have
 turned the maidens away, until Moses
 stood up for them, and himself watered
 18 their sheep. When they reached home their
 father, Raguel, asked them why they were
 earlier than their wont; and they told
 him, There was an Egyptian there, who
 took our part against the shepherds, and
 then drew water for us himself, for our
 19 sheep to drink. Upon which he asked,
 What has become of this man? Why did
 you part from his company? Bid him
 come in and eat.

20 So it came about that Moses bound him-
 self by an oath to live there with Raguel,
 21 and wedded his daughter Sephora. The
 first son she bore him he called Gersam,
 as if he would say, I have been a stranger,
 Ger, in an alien land. And when she bore
 22 another son, Moses called him Eliezer,
 Help from God; the God of my father
 (said he) has helped me to escape from the
 power of Pharaoh.¹

23 Then, after a long while, the king of
 Egypt died, and the cry of the Israelites,
 still groaning aloud in their drudgery, went
 up to God, who took pity on this drudgery
 24 of theirs, and listened to their complaint;
 he had not forgotten the covenant which he
 made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So
 25 it was that the Lord looked down in mercy
 on the Israelites, and took heed of them.

3 Moses, in the meanwhile, had mar-
 ried the daughter of Jethro, priest of
 Madian, and was doing shepherd's work
 for him. Deep into the desert he led his
 flock, till he reached God's own mountain
 of Horeb. And here the Lord revealed
 2 himself through a flame that rose up from
 the midst of a bush; it seemed that the
 bush was alight, yet did not burn. Here is
 3 a great sight, said Moses, I must go up and
 see more of it, a bush that does not waste
 by burning. But now, as he saw him
 4 coming up to look closer, the Lord called
 to him from the midst of the bush, Moses
 Moses; and when he answered, I am here,
 at thy command, he was told, Do not come
 5 nearer; rather take the shoes from thy feet,
 thou art standing on holy ground.

Then he said, I am the God thy father
 6 worshipped, the God of Abraham, and
 Isaac, and Jacob. And Moses hid his face;
 he dared not look on the open sight of God.
 I have not been blind, the Lord told him,
 7 to the oppression which my people en-
 dures in Egypt, I have listened to their
 complaints about the cruelty of the men
 who are in charge of their work. I know
 8 what their sufferings are, and I have come
 down to rescue them from the power of
 the Egyptians; to take them away into a
 fruitful land and large, a land that is all
 milk and honey, where the Chanaanites
 dwell, and the Hethites, and the Amor-
 rhites, and the Pherezites, and the Hevites,
 and the Jebusites. Yes, the cry of Israel's
 9 race has reached my ears, I have watched
 how their Egyptian oppressors ill-treat
 them. Up, I have an errand for thee to
 10 Pharaoh's court; thou art to lead my people,
 the sons of Israel, away out of Egypt.

At this, Moses said to God, Ah, who
 11 am I, that thou shouldst send me to
 Pharaoh? Who am I that I should lead the
 sons of Israel out of Egypt? I will be with
 12 thee, God said to him. And here is a sign
 for thee, that thy mission comes from me;
 when thou hast brought my people out of
 Egypt, thou wilt find thyself offering sacri-
 13 fice to God on this mountain. But Moses
 still pleaded with God: How if I appear
 before the Israelites with the message that
 the God of their fathers has sent me to

¹ 'Raguel'; more ordinarily he is called Jethro; cf. 3. 1 below.
 found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. It is possibly an addition derived from
 18. 4 below.

² The second part of this verse is

them, and they ask me, What is his name?
 14 What answer shall I make? And God said to Moses, I am the God who IS; thou shalt tell the Israelites, THE GOD WHO IS
 15 has sent me to you.¹ And he charged Moses again, That is what thou shalt tell the sons of Israel, that he who bears this name, the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has sent thee to them, and this is the name he will be known by for ever; it shall stand recorded, age after age.
 16 Go then, and summon the elders of Israel to meet thee. Tell them that the Lord, the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has appeared to thee, with this message: Day after day I have watched, and seen all that has befallen you
 17 in Egypt. And now I mean to take you away from Egypt, where it goes so hard with you, into the land of the Chanaanites, the Hethites, the Amorrhites, the Phe-
 18 rezites, the Hevites, and the Jebusites; a land that is all milk and honey. The elders of Israel will give thee a good hearing; and with them thou shalt make thy way into the king of Egypt's presence. The Lord God of the Hebrews, thou shalt tell him, has summoned us to go out three days' march into the desert, and there we must
 19 offer sacrifice to the Lord our God. I know well enough that the king of Egypt will not let you go, except under strong compulsion; I must needs exert my power, and smite the Egyptians with all the portents
 20 I mean to do among them, before he will give you leave. And I will let you have your way with the Egyptians; when you
 21 go you shall not go empty-handed. Each woman shall claim from her neighbour, or from some woman that lodges with her, gold and silver trinkets, and clothes to dress your sons and daughters in; such
 22 tell you shall take of the Egyptians.

4 But Moses still had his answer; What if they will not believe me, he said, or give a hearing? What if they tell me to

my face that I never had any vision of the Lord? What is that in thy hand? the Lord
 23 asked him. A staff, he said. So the Lord bade him cast it on the ground, and when
 24 he did so, it turned into a serpent, and Moses shrank away. Now put out thy
 25 hand, the Lord said, and catch it by the tail. He did so, and it turned to a staff in
 26 his hand. And the word came to him, Will they still doubt that the Lord God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has
 27 appeared to thee? And now the Lord had a fresh command for him, Put thy hand into thy bosom; and, doing so, he found that it came out a leper's hand, white as
 28 snow. Now, said he, put it back in thy bosom again; so he put it back, and this
 29 time, when he brought it out, the skin on it was no different from the rest of his skin. And the Lord said, If credence and hearing
 30 thou canst not gain, with the first sign for thy warrant, the evidence of this second sign will make them believe thee. And if
 31 even two signs are not enough to convince them and make them listen to thee, thou hast but to take water from the river and pour it out on the ground; the water thou
 32 hast drawn out of the river will turn into blood.

Then Moses said, Lord, have patience
 33 with me; but all my life I have been a man of little eloquence, and now that thou, my Master, hast spoken to me, I am more
 34 faltering, more tongue-tied than ever. Why, the Lord said to him, who was it that
 35 fashioned man's mouth? Who is it that makes a man dumb or deaf, clear-sighted or blind, if not I? Go as thou art bidden; I
 36 will speak with thy mouth, telling thee what words to utter. But still he said,
 37 Lord have patience with me; wilt thou not choose some fitting emissary?² And now
 38 the Lord was angry with Moses; What of thy brother Aaron (the Levite)? he asked.³ I know him to be a man of ready speech. He is even now on his way to meet thee, and will give thee a joyful welcome when

¹ The verb used in the Hebrew text can be translated 'I will be', and it is possible to understand the formula as meaning, 'I will be what I will be'. In the second half of the verse, according to the Hebrew text, the name used is 'I am' (or, 'I will be'), rather than 'He who is'. But the personal name under which Almighty God was known to the Jews was Yahweh, He who is. The Greek translators, out of reverence, substituted 'the Lord' wherever this name occurred in the Old Testament, and the Latin follows them. Thus, in verse 15 immediately following, 'Yahweh the God of their fathers' appears in the Latin as 'the Lord, the God of their fathers'.
² The phrase here used, 'Send the man whom as a matter of fact thou art going to send' must be interpreted, in view of what follows, as a remonstrance, not as an act of submission.
³ 'The Levite'; this description seems out of place here; it is perhaps due to some corruption of the text.

15 he finds thee. To him thou shalt repeat my message, entrusting it to his lips; through his lips I will speak, and through thine, 16 telling you what I would have you do. He shall be thy spokesman, giving out thy message to the people, and thou shalt be his representative with God.¹ And take this staff of thine with thee; thou hast portents to bring about by means of it.

18 Then Moses made his way back to his father-in-law, Jethro; Give me leave, he said, to return to Egypt, and see whether my brethren there are still living. And 19 Jethro said, Go in peace. From Madian, then, the Lord bade Moses return to Egypt; all those who had threatened his life were dead. So Moses took his wife and children, with his ass to carry them, and returned to Egypt, with the staff, divinely appointed, in his hand. And as he went back to Egypt, the Lord said to him, Thy part is to do all the wonders I put it in thy power to do, in Pharaoh's presence. But I mean to harden his heart, so that he refuses 22 to let my people go; and then thou shalt give him this message: Israel, says the 23 Lord, is my first-born son, and when I bade thee give this son of mine leave to go and worship me, that leave was refused; I come to claim the life of thy first-born in return.

24 On this journey, at one of his halting-places, the Lord came in his path and threatened him with death, until Sephora took a sharp stone, and circumcised her son with it; then, touching her husband's feet with the flesh, she said, Now we are betrothed in blood. And as she said the words, Betrothed in blood, after the circumcision, the Lord consented to spare him.²

27 Meanwhile the Lord had told Aaron to go out and meet Moses in the desert; so he set out and met him at God's mountain, and greeted him with a kiss. And Moses told Aaron all the message the Lord had entrusted to him, and the wonders he had commissioned him to perform. So together they went and summoned all the elders of the Israelite race to meet them;

and when Aaron told them all the Lord 30 had said to Moses, and shewed the people the appointed signs, the people were convinced. At last the Lord had come to enquire after the sons of Israel, and had witnessed their affliction; they would bow down and worship.

5 After this, Moses and Aaron obtained audience with Pharaoh, and said to him, We have a message to thee from the Lord God of Israel, Give my people leave to go and offer me sacrifice in the desert. Why, he answered, who is this Lord, that I must obey his command, and let Israel go free? I know no such Lord as that; I will not let Israel go. It is the God of the Hebrews, they told him, who has summoned us to go out into the desert, a matter of three days' journey, and offer sacrifice to him; he, the Lord, is our God, what if he should bring sickness or war upon us? Nay, said the king of Egypt, it is two men, Moses and Aaron, enticing the people away from their work; go back to your duties.

These folk, Pharaoh complained, have outgrown their territory already: see how their numbers have increased! And it will be worse still if you ease them of their burdens. So he gave orders, that very day, to overseer and foreman alike: Do not give them any more straw to make bricks with, as your custom has been; let them go and find straw for themselves. Meanwhile, you must give them the same tale of bricks to make as before; there must be no lessening of it. They are idle; that is what has led to this outcry about going and offering sacrifice to their God. Give them heavier work to do; then they will pay no more attention to these lying tales.

So overseer and foreman gave it out to the people as a message from Pharaoh, You shall have no more straw from me; go and gather it for yourselves where you can find it; meanwhile, there is to be no lessening of the work done. And the people found themselves scattered all over Egypt gathering straw; and still the overseers were

¹ 'Thou shalt be his representative with God'; literally, 'thou shalt be to him in those things which concern God'. The Hebrew text has, 'Thou shalt be to him (for) a God'.

² Apparently, in marrying a foreign wife, Moses had culpably neglected the duty of circumcising his first-born (Gen. 17. 10); the part played by his wife is easier to understand, if we suppose that Moses himself was prostrated by some sudden illness. It is hard to know whether the juxtaposition of this passage with verses 22 and 23 is or is not intentional.

urgent with them: Finish those daily tasks of yours, as you did when the straw was found. The foremen, who were Israelites, must undergo a beating, now, from Pharaoh's overseers, who asked them why the full tale of bricks had not been made up these two days past, as it was formerly. So the Israelite foremen went and complained to Pharaoh; Master, they cried, why dost thou treat us so? The straw is not being found for us any longer, and never a brick less demanded of us. Here are we, thy servants, beaten for it; there is no justice for this people of thine.¹ You are idlers, said he, idlers all, or you would not be asking leave to go and sacrifice to this Lord of yours. Off with you to your work; no straw shall you have; and as for the bricks, you must make up the same tale as before.

When they heard that the same tale of bricks was to be demanded each day, the Israelite foremen saw that it would go hard with them; and meeting Moses and Aaron face to face, as they came away from Pharaoh's audience, they said to them, The Lord take note of it, and be your judge; you have made our name stink in the nostrils of Pharaoh and his court, put a weapon in his hand that will be our doom. So that Moses had recourse to the Lord again, and asked him, Lord, why dost thou treat thy people so cruelly? Why didst thou ever send me on such an errand? I gained audience with Pharaoh, and spoke to him in thy name; and since then he does nothing but ill-use thy people; is this the deliverance thou hast sent them?

6 But the Lord said to Moses, Thou hast yet to see what I have in store for Pharaoh, such constraint as will make him let them go; he shall have no choice but to drive them away out of his country.

And now the Lord sent his word to Moses: I am the same Lord who revealed myself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; but although I revealed myself as God the Almighty, my name Adonai I did not make known to them.² And the covenant I made with them was that I would give them the

land of Chanaan, their dwelling-place then, but not their home. And now the complaints of the Israelites under their Egyptian oppressors have reached my ears, and I am reminded of this covenant. Tell the sons of Israel, I am the Lord, and I mean to release you from your prison-house in Egypt, to set you free from your slavery, to buy you back for myself, with my arm uplifted in signal acts of redress. Then I will make you my own people, and will be your God; you will learn to acclaim the Lord as your God, that Lord who has brought you out of your Egyptian prison-house, that Lord who made good his promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, led you back to your dwelling-place, and made it your home. All this Moses repeated to the Israelites, but they, in their bitterness of heart and the misery of their bondage, would not listen to him. And when the Lord sent Moses to bid Pharaoh, king of Egypt, let the sons of Israel go, Moses told the Lord to his face, The Israelites will not listen to me; what hope is there that Pharaoh will listen to me? A man, moreover, so tongue-tied.³

When the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, giving them a message to the Israelites and to the Egyptian king, Pharaoh, and bidding them lead the sons of Israel away out of Egypt, these were the heads of families that had left their names to clans. From Ruben, Israel's first-born, came Henoch, Phallu, Hesron and Charmi. From Simeon came Jamuel, Jamin, Ahod, Jachin, Soar, and Saul (the son of a Chanaanite woman). From Levi came the three clans of Gerson, Caath, and Merari. (Levi lived to the age of a hundred and thirty-seven.) From Gerson, the two families of Lobni and Semei. From Caath, Amram, Isaac, Hebron and Oziel. (Caath lived to the age of a hundred and thirty-three.) From Merari, Moholi and Musi. Such were the families descended from Levi.

Amram married a kinswoman of his called Jochabed, who bore him two sons, Aaron and Moses. (Amram lived to the age of a hundred and thirty-seven.) From

¹ The last clause in this verse means, according to the Latin, 'wrong is being done to this people of thine', meaning Israel. The Hebrew text probably means, 'The fault lies with thy own people', meaning the Egyptians.

² 'Adonai'; rather, as the Hebrew text shews, 'Yahweh'. The Latin here, confusingly has substituted another divine title, which has the literal meaning of 'the Lord'; see note on 3. 14 above.

³ 'A man so tongue-tied'; literally, 'a man of uncircumcised lips', and so in verse 29 below.

Isaar came Core, Nepheg, and Zechri, from Ozicl, Misael, Elisaphan and Sethri. Aaron's wife was Elisabeth, daughter to Aminadab and sister to Nahasson, and the sons she bore him were called Nadab, Abiu, Eleazar and Ithamar. And Core's sons were called Aser, Elcana and Abiasaph; those were the divisions of the Corite clan. Meanwhile Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Phutiël, and become the father of Phineës. Such were the heads of the Levite families that gave their names to clans.

It was these two, Aaron and Moses, who had orders from the Lord to lead the Israelites away, in their full muster, out of Egypt; and it was these two, Moses and Aaron, who bade Pharaoh, king of Egypt, let them leave his country, at the time we are speaking of. It was to Moses the Lord said, there in Egypt, I am the Lord, repeat to Pharaoh king of Egypt all this message of mine, but Moses hung back and asked the Lord to his face, How should Pharaoh listen to me, tongue-tied as I am?

7 And the Lord said to Moses, It is my will that thou shouldst be a divine oracle to Pharaoh,¹ with thy brother for spokesman; Aaron will receive my commands from thee, and repeat them to him, bidding him let the Israelites depart from his country; but I, meanwhile, will harden Pharaoh's heart. Many signs, many portents will I give in this land of Egypt, and still he will not listen. Then Egypt shall feel the weight of my hand, and I will deliver the Israelites, my army, my people, out of Egypt, with signal acts of redress. All Egypt shall know that it was I, the Lord, who raised my hand against it, and brought out the sons of Israel from its midst. This command of the Lord was faithfully carried out by Moses and Aaron; they did all he bade them do. Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three, when they gave Pharaoh their message.

And now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, When Pharaoh asks you to shew him signs of your mission, thou, Moses, shalt bid thy brother take up his staff and cast it down in Pharaoh's presence; it will turn into a serpent. So Moses and Aaron

gained Pharaoh's audience and did as the Lord had bidden them; Aaron brought out his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his court, and it turned into a serpent. At this, Pharaoh summoned his diviners and magicians, who, in their turn, uttered secret spells in the Egyptian language and did the like; each man's staff, when he cast it down, turned into a serpent; but the staff of Aaron devoured them. Meanwhile, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, so that he would not obey the Lord's will and heed their warning.²

Then the Lord said to Moses, Pharaoh's heart is still obdurate, he does not mean to let my people go. Betake thyself to him to-morrow morning; thou wilt find that he is walking by the water side, and there on the bank of the river, thou shalt meet him. Thou wilt be carrying the staff which turned into a serpent, and this shall be thy message to him: The Lord God of the Hebrews sent me to bid thee let his people go and offer him sacrifices in the desert, and hitherto thou hast refused to listen. And now the Lord has a new message for thee, to convince thee that he is indeed the Lord. When I strike the water of the river with this staff I carry, it will turn into blood; the fishes in the river will die, till its waters are full of corruption; it will go hard with the Egyptians if they are for drinking river water. Then the Lord gave Moses a message for Aaron, Take up thy staff, and stretch thy hand out over the waters of Egypt; all their rivers and channels and marshes and pools of water. All must turn into blood; blood in every bucket and pitcher, all over Egypt. So Moses and Aaron did as the Lord had bidden them; Aaron lifted up his staff and struck the waters of the river in the presence of Pharaoh and his court, and the river turned to blood. All the fishes in the river died, and its waters stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink river water any longer, and there was blood all over the land of Egypt. But the Egyptian magicians did as much with spells of their own; and Pharaoh's heart was still hardened, still he would not obey the Lord's will and heed their warning. He turned away and went home, paying no more attention to them

¹ 'A divine oracle'; literally, 'a God'. ² The Hebrew text probably means, 'He refused, just as the Lord had foretold, to heed their warning'. So also in verse 22 below, and elsewhere.

24 than before. Meanwhile, all the Egyptians had to dig wells round about the banks, since they could not drink any water from the river itself. So passed the first week after the Lord smote the river.

8 Then the Lord bade Moses present himself before Pharaoh with this message from him, Give my people leave to go and offer me sacrifice; if thou dost refuse, I mean to plague thy whole country with frogs. The river shall swarm with frogs, which will come up out of it and find their way into thy palace, into thy bed-chamber, into thy bed itself; and so with all thy servants and all thy people, with thy ovens and thy larders; neither thou nor thy servants nor thy people will be able to keep the frogs out. Then the Lord would have Moses tell Aaron to stretch out his hand over river and channel and marsh, and bring up frogs all over Egypt; so Aaron stretched out his hand over all the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up till the whole land of Egypt was full of them. But the magicians, too, did as much with their spells; to fill Egypt with frogs was not beyond their powers.

8 So Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, and bade them entreat the Lord to rid him and his people of the frogs, promising that he would let the Israelites go and offer God sacrifice. Appoint a time, then, Moses said to him at which I shall pray for thee and thy servants and thy people, asking that the frogs may be driven away from thee and them, and no longer be found anywhere but in the river. To-morrow, said he, and Moses answered, I will do what thou hast said, to let thee know that there is no other God like this Lord of ours; thou and thy palace and thy servants and thy people shall be rid of the frogs, and they will remain in the river, nowhere else. 12 So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh's presence, and Moses asked the Lord to grant what he had promised 13 Pharaoh about the frogs. His prayer was answered; in house and farm and countryside all the frogs died, and must be collected in great heaps; the whole land stank with them.

15 As with Pharaoh found that a respite

The Plagues of Frogs, Gnats, and Flies

was granted him, he steeled his heart against the Lord's will, and would not heed their warning. So the Lord would have Moses tell Aaron to hold out his staff and strike the dust on the ground with it, to bring gnats upon the whole land of Egypt. The command was obeyed; and when Aaron stretched out his hand, with the staff in it, and smote the dust on the ground, gnats settled on man and beast; all over Egypt the dust on the ground turned to gnats. When the magicians tried to do as much with their spells, they found they could not, but still the gnats came and settled on man and beast, till the magicians told Pharaoh, This is God's handiwork; but Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and still he would not listen to them, or obey the Lord's will.

So the Lord said to Moses, Rise up early, and present thyself before Pharaoh; thou wilt find he has gone out to the water side. Give him this message from the Lord, Let my people go and offer me sacrifice; if thou dost not send them on their way, I will send on thee, thy servants, thy people, and the houses in thy land, flies of all sorts;¹ flies of every kind shall swarm in the houses of the Egyptians, and all over the land in which they dwell. But I will shew signal favour to the land of Gessen, where my own people dwell, sparing it from the flies; am I not Lord in every part of the earth? My people shall not fare as thine; to-morrow shall see this portent happen. And the Lord carried out his threat; into the houses of Pharaoh and his servants and upon all the land of Egypt came a grievous swarm of flies, such a swarm as tainted the whole land by its presence.

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron to him; Go and sacrifice to your God, he said, but here, in this land. That may not be, said Moses; do we not sacrifice to the Lord what the Egyptians worship? If we are seen slaughtering the very beasts which the Egyptians hold sacred, they will stone us. We will do what the Lord bade us do, go out three days' march into the desert and offer him sacrifice there. Then Pharaoh said, You shall go and sacrifice to the Lord your God in the desert, provided

¹ 'Flies of all sorts'; this rendering is perhaps due to a faulty understanding of the Septuagint Greek; the sense of the Hebrew text seems to be 'swarms (of flies)'.

it is no long distance away; now go and use
 9 your prayers on my behalf. When I leave
 thy presence, said Moses, I will pray to the
 Lord, and to-morrow Pharaoh and his ser-
 vants and his people shall be rid of the
 flies; only do not play us false again by
 10 holding the people back from their sacri-
 fice. So Moses left Pharaoh's presence, and
 prayed to the Lord, and what he had prom-
 11 ised, the Lord granted, ridding Pharaoh
 and his servants and his people of the flies,
 12 until not one was left. But the heart of
 Pharaoh was still obdurate, and once more
 he would not let the people go.

9 Then the Lord bade Moses present
 himself before Pharaoh with this mes-
 sage from the Lord, the God of the He-
 brews; Give my people leave to go and
 2 offer me sacrifice. If thou dost still refuse,
 3 wouldst still keep them in thy power, then
 my hand shall be felt all through this
 countryside; a most grievous plague shall
 4 fall upon horse and ass and camel, on oxen
 and sheep. And I will make a signal dif-
 ference between the lands of Israel and the
 lands of the Egyptians; the Israelites will
 5 not lose any of their possessions at all. And
 the Lord has appointed his own time for
 it; To-morrow, he says, the Lord will
 6 carry out this threat against thy land. So,
 next day, the Lord did as he had threat-
 ened; everywhere the beasts belonging to
 7 the Egyptians died, and the Israelites did
 not lose one. Pharaoh himself sent to make
 enquiry, and found that no beast belong-
 ing to the Israelites had died. But still Pharaoh's
 heart was obdurate, and he would not let
 the people go.

8 So the Lord said to Moses and Aaron,
 Take handfuls of ashes from the oven, and
 let Moses sprinkle them in the air in
 9 Pharaoh's presence. They will turn to a
 dust that falls everywhere in the land of
 Egypt, and everywhere ulcers and boils
 10 shall break out on man and beast. So they
 took ashes from the oven into Pharaoh's
 presence, and Moses sprinkled them in the
 air; and ulcers and boils broke out on man
 11 and beast, so that even the magicians could
 not present themselves before Pharaoh,

such pain they had, like all Egypt, from
 the ulcers. But the Lord hardened
 12 Pharaoh's heart so that he would not listen
 to them; all fell out as the Lord had pro-
 phesied to Moses.

And now the Lord bade Moses rise up
 13 early in the morning, and present himself
 before Pharaoh with this message from the
 Lord, the God of the Hebrews: Let my
 people go and offer me sacrifice. I am
 14 taking occasion now to send all my plagues
 upon thy person,¹ and thy servants, and
 thy people, to shew thee that none on earth
 has power like mine. Were I to stretch out
 15 my hand and smite thee and thy people
 with pestilence,² earth would see no more
 of thee. But no, this is the very reason why
 16 I have made thee what thou art, so as to
 give proof, in thee, of my power, and to let
 my name be known all over the earth. So
 17 thou wouldst still play the tyrant with my
 people, and refuse them leave to go away?
 To-morrow, then, at this hour, I will pour
 18 down such a fierce storm of hail as Egypt
 has never known, from the first day of her
 existence to this. Lose no time in sending
 19 word to have thy cattle brought in, and all
 that thou hast out of doors; men and cattle
 and all else that is left in the open, not
 brought under shelter, will die when the
 hail falls upon it. Some of Pharaoh's ser-
 vants were struck with awe at the Lord's
 20 threat, and made their servants and their
 cattle take refuge within doors; others paid
 21 no heed to the message the Lord had sent,
 and left their servants and their cattle in
 the open.

Then the Lord said to Moses, Stretch
 22 out thy hand towards heaven, so that hail
 may fall all over the land of Egypt, on man
 and beast and every growing thing the soil
 of Egypt produces. So Moses lifted up his
 staff towards heaven, and the Lord sent
 23 thunder and hail and fire that ran along the
 ground; all over the land of Egypt the Lord
 showered down hail. The hail drove on,
 24 and fire mingled with the hail; never was
 such hail seen anywhere in Egypt since its
 people became a people. And throughout
 25 the land this hail smote all that was left in
 the open, man or beast; smote upon all the

¹ I am taking occasion now to send all my plagues; literally, 'this time I am sending all my plagues', but it is difficult to see the force of the words unless they mean (as we should say nowadays) 'while I am about it, I mean to send all my plagues'. ² Some would interpret, 'I will stretch out my hand' etc., but no pestilence is mentioned among the judgements which follow, and it is clear that Pharaoh himself was still alive when the Exodus took place.

soil yielded, and broke down every wild tree. Only in the land of Gessen, where the Israelites dwelt, no hail fell.

So Pharaoh had Moses and Aaron summoned to his presence; Thus far, he said, I have done wrong; the Lord has justice on his side, the guilt lies with me and my people. Pray to the Lord that these heavenly thunders, this hail, may cease; then I will let you go, and not keep you waiting here any longer. And Moses answered, When I leave the city I will spread out my hands in prayer to the Lord; the thunders will cease, and there will be no more hail, to prove to thee that the Lord rules the earth. But thou and thy people, I know it well, have not learned to fear the Lord God even now. (The flax and the barley had been spoiled; the barley was ripening, and the flax already in the pod. But no harm was done to the late crops, the wheat and the spelt.) When Moses left Pharaoh and the city, he stretched out his hands to the Lord; whereupon the thunder and the hail ceased, and no more rain fell on the land. And Pharaoh, seeing that rain and hail and thunder were past, added sin to sin; his heart and those of his servants were dull and hardened beyond belief, and he would not let the Israelites go; the Lord's warning through Moses went unheeded.

10 So the Lord said to Moses, Gain admission, now, to Pharaoh's presence; I have hardened both his own heart and the hearts of his servants, so that he shall be a signal proof of my power. It is a story thou shalt repeat in the hearing of thy children and thy children's children, how I crushed the Egyptians, what portents I did amongst them, and you shall know, all of you, what manner of God you serve. So Moses and Aaron gained Pharaoh's audience, and brought him this message from the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, Wilt thou never learn to bow to my will? Give my people leave to go and offer me sacrifice. If thou dost refuse to let them go, then to-morrow I am sending the locust to invade thy territory, covering the face of the ground till it is lost to sight, devouring all that the hail has left, eating away all the trees that grow in the country-side. Locusts shall lie thick in all the

houses that belong to thee, and thy servants, and all the Egyptians; such a swarm as father or grandfather of thine has never seen in all their time. With that, Moses turned away, and left Pharaoh's presence.

And now Pharaoh's servants said to him, Shall we never be rid of this thorn in our sides? Let the men go, and sacrifice to the Lord their God if they will. Canst thou not see for thyself that Egypt is a ruined country? So they brought Moses and Aaron back into the presence of Pharaoh, who said to them, Go and sacrifice to the Lord your God if you will. How many will you take with you? We must take our children with us, answered Moses, and the old as well; our sons and daughters, our flocks and our herds; it is a solemn festival of the Lord our God. As you hope for the Lord's mercy, cried Pharaoh, you shall not go thus, taking your children with you. Who can doubt there is mischief brewing here? That will not serve; you that are grown men shall go and sacrifice to the Lord; that is all you asked for. And with that they were driven away from Pharaoh's presence.

Then the Lord bade Moses stretch out his hand over Egypt, to make the locusts swarm over it and devour all the growing things that had outlived the hail. So Moses stretched out his staff over Egypt; and the Lord made a sirocco blow all that day and that night.¹ When morning came, the sirocco carried locusts with it; and these invaded all the land of Egypt, settling upon its whole extent in such numbers as had never been seen before, nor shall be hereafter. They covered the whole face of the ground, laying everything waste; devoured all the growing things which the soil produced, and all the fruit which the hail had left on the trees; no green was to be found on tree or plant all over Egypt. Upon this, Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron with all haste; I have wronged you, he said, you and this Lord of yours; but forgive me this once, and pray the Lord your God to rid me of this deadly plague. So Moses went out from Pharaoh's presence, and prayed to the Lord; who thereupon sent a violent west wind, that caught up the locusts and swept them away into the Red Sea; not one was left in the whole land of Egypt.

¹ 'A sirocco'; in the Hebrew text, 'an east wind'.

20 But still the Lord hardened Pharaoh's
heart, and he would not let the Israelites
21 go. So the Lord said to Moses, Stretch
out thy hand towards heaven, to bring
darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness
22 so thick that it can be felt. And when
Moses stretched out his hand towards
heaven, all over the land of Egypt utter
23 darkness fell; for three days no one caught
sight of his neighbour's face, or moved
from where he was. But wherever sons of
24 Israel dwelt, the light shone. Then Pharaoh
had Moses and Aaron summoned; Go and
sacrifice to the Lord, he said, and take your
children with you, only leave your flocks
25 and herds behind. But Moses said, Nay,
thou must let us take victims with us, if
we are to offer the Lord our God burnt-
26 sacrifice. All our flocks must go with us,
not a hoof but shall take the road; we shall
need them for the worship of the Lord our
God. We cannot tell what kind of offering
we must make, until we reach the place
itself.

7 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart,
8 and he would not let them go. Depart
from me, Pharaoh said to Moses, and take
good care thou dost not come into my pre-
sence any more; if I see thee again, that
9 day shall be thy last. It shall be as thou
sayest, Moses answered; I will not come
into thy presence any more.

11 The Lord had told Moses, I mean
to send one more plague on Pharaoh,
and Egypt with him; after that he will let
you go, nay, he will drive you out with all
2 eagerness. Give the word, then, to all the
people, men and women alike, that they
are to claim gold and silver trinkets from
3 their neighbours; the Lord will let you
have your way with the Egyptians.¹

Soe adread of Moses the Egyptians
were, both Pharaoh's servants and all the
4 people. And now he said, The Lord sends
you this message: At midnight I will make
5 my way through the midst of Egypt, and
with that every first-born thing in the land
of Egypt will die, whether it be the first-
born of Pharaoh, where he sits on his throne,
or the first-born of the slave-woman work-
ing at the mill; all the first-born, too, of

your cattle. All over the land of Egypt 6
there shall be loud lament, such as never
was yet, never shall be again. But where 7
the Israelites dwell, all shall be still, man
and beast, not a dog shall howl; you will
know at last how signal a difference the
Lord makes between Egypt and Israel. 8
Then all these servants of thine shall come
bowing down to me in entreaty, praying
to be rid of me, and of all the people under
my command; and when that happens, we
will depart. So he left Pharaoh's presence, 9
full of anger. It was a true word the Lord
had said to Moses, Pharaoh will refuse you
a hearing, to give occasion for those many
signs I mean to do in Egypt. Moses and 10
Aaron had done all the miracles here re-
corded, all in Pharaoh's presence, and still
the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he
would not let the Israelites leave his
country.

12 It was while they were still in the
land of Egypt that the Lord said
to Moses and Aaron, For you, this month
is to lead in all the months, to be the first
month of the year. Make this proclama- 3
tion to the whole assembly of Israel: On
the tenth day of this month, each family,
each household, is to choose out a yearling
for its own use. Or, if there are not 4
enough of them to eat a whole lamb, the
head of the family must call in some neigh-
bour who lives close by, so that a lamb shall
not be too much for their needs. It must 5
be a male yearling lamb, or a male yearling
kid, that you choose, with no blemish on
it. These victims must be kept ready till 6
the fourteenth day of the month, and on
the evening of that day the whole people
of Israel must immolate.² They must take 7
some of the blood, and sprinkle it on the
doorway, jambs and lintel alike, of the
house in which the lamb is being eaten.
Their meat that night must be roasted 8
over the fire, their bread unleavened; wild
herbs must be all their seasoning. No part 9
must be eaten raw, or boiled, it must be
roasted over the fire; head, feet, and en-
trails, all must be consumed, so that no- 10
thing remains till next day; whatever is
left over, you must put in the fire and burn

¹ Verses 1-3 seem awkwardly placed, so as to interrupt what appears to be one continuous narrative describing one continuous interview, 10. 24-11. 8. It is not clear in what sense.

² The Hebrew text has 'between the evenings'.

- 11 it. And this is to be the manner of your eating it; your loins must be girt, your feet ready shod, and every man's staff in his hand; all must be done in haste. It is the night of the Pasch, the Lord's passing by;¹
- 12 the night on which I will pass through the land of Egypt, and smite every first-born thing in the land of Egypt, man and beast alike; so I will give sentence on all the powers of Egypt,² I, the Lord. The blood on the houses that shelter you will be your badge; at sight of the blood, I will pass you by, and there shall be no scourge of calamity for you when I smite the land of Egypt.
- 14 You are to observe this day as a memorial of the past, a day when you keep holiday in the Lord's honour, generation after generation; a rite never to be abrogated.
- 15 For a whole week you will eat unleavened bread; from the first day of it, yeast is to disappear from your houses, and the man who eats any leavened thing between the first day and the seventh, is lost to Israel.³ That first day shall be solemnly set apart, and the seventh observed with no less honour; on neither of them shall you do any work, except to prepare your food. Mark well this day of unleavened bread; for this is the day on which I will lead your whole muster away out of Egypt, and you are to observe it, generation after generation, a rite never to be abrogated.
- 18 From evening on the fourteenth day of the first month to evening on the twenty-first day of it, the bread you eat must be unleavened; no yeast to be found in any house for a whole week. If anyone, stranger or native, eats leavened bread during that time, there is one soul lost to Israel. There must be no food cooked with yeast; there must be no house in which leavened bread is eaten.
- 21 Thereupon Moses called the elders of Israel together, and gave them the command: Set about choosing victims for each family to immolate at the paschal feast.
- 22 Take bunches of hyssop, too, and dip them in the blood which stands at your doors, and sprinkle it over the doorway, lintel and jambs alike. None of you must cross the threshold of his house till morning comes.

The Lord will pass on his way smiting down the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and the jambs of a doorway he will pass by that house, and will not let the destroying angel enter your homes to do them injury. And this command is to be kept as an observance by you and your sons for ever. When you reach the land which the Lord will give you in accordance with his promise, you are to keep these ceremonies alive; and if your children ask, What is the meaning of this rite? then you shall tell them, This is the victim that marked the Lord's passing-by, when he passed by the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, smiting only the Egyptians, and leaving our homes exempt. Upon hearing this, the whole people bowed down in worship, and the Israelites went away to carry out the divine commands which Moses and Aaron had received.

Then, at midnight, the Lord's stroke fell; fell on every first-born thing in the land of Egypt, whether it were the first-born of Pharaoh, where he sat on his throne, or the first-born of some captive woman where she lay in her dungeon; all the first-born, too, of their cattle. So Pharaoh and all his servants and all Egypt rose up at dead of night, and all over Egypt there was loud lament; in every house a man lay dead. And it was still night when Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, Up, out of my kingdom, you and all the people of Israel with you; go and offer this Lord of yours the sacrifice you spoke of. You shall have your way, and take your flocks and herds with you; leave me only your blessing, and begone.

The Egyptians, too, urged the people to hasten their departure; We are dead men else, they said. So the Israelites carried away the dough in their kneading-troughs before they had time to leaven it, tying it up in cloths and carrying it on their shoulders. Nor did they forget to do what Moses had bidden them; they asked the Egyptians for gold and silver trinkets, and a great store of garments. And the Lord let his people have their way with the Egyptians, claiming as they would; so

¹ 'The Pasch'; the Vulgate here, and in the Old Testament generally, transliterates the Hebrew name of this feast as 'Phase'. The alternative form 'pasch' is given here as being more familiar to the modern reader, and universal in the Vulgate rendering of the New Testament. ² 'The powers'; literally, 'the gods', but it seems possible that human powers are meant, cf. note on Ex. 21. 6 below. ³ 'Lost to Israel'; cf. note on Gen. 17. 14.

7 they took toll of Egypt. The Israelites, then, set out from Rameses to Socoth, about six hundred thousand men on the march, not reckoning in the children; and with them a mingled array of other folk, past counting; they had flocks and herds, too, and beasts of all kinds, in great numbers. For cooking they used the dough which they had brought with them all the way from Egypt, making girdle-cakes without any yeast in them; they had had no time to leaven it, no chance of making provision for their journey, with the Egyptians eagerly bidding them begone, and allowing them no respite. It was four hundred and thirty years since the Israelites had first dwelt in Egypt; at the end of that time, the whole muster of the Lord's people left Egypt in a single day.

It is a night for keeping vigil in the Lord's honour, this night when he led them away out of the land of Egypt; the sons of Israel, age after age, must needs observe it. And these are the rules for keeping the Pasch, as the Lord gave them to Moses and Aaron. No alien is to partake of it; a slave acquired by purchase may do so, if he will be circumcised, but not a foreign resident, not a hired servant. All of it must be eaten under the same roof; you must not take any of the victim's flesh elsewhere, or break it up into joints.¹ Every Israelite is bound to keep the observance. If any stranger that lives among you wishes to be of your company, and to eat the pasch, all the males of his household must be circumcised before he can lawfully celebrate the rite. That done, he takes rank as an inhabitant of the country; whereas the uncircumcised are not allowed to partake of it. Native-born, or foreign resident, the same rules are binding on everyone.

So all the sons of Israel carried out the divine commands Moses and Aaron had received; and that same day the Lord led them away out of the land of Egypt, company by company.

13 And this was another command the Lord gave to Moses: Dedicate to me every first-born thing that Israel

yields, whether it be man or beast, the first-fruits of every womb; all these are forfeit to me.

And now Moses said to the people, 3 To-day you have left Egypt, your prison-house, and it is the Lord's constraining power that has won you your freedom; mark out this day by eating no bread that has leaven in it, this day of early spring which sees your departure. When the Lord 4 has given thee a home in the land of Chanaanite and Hethite, the Amorrhite, Hevite and Jebusite, that land, all milk and honey, which he promised thy fathers he would give thee, thou shalt keep alive, this month, the old custom. For a whole week 6 thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and the seventh day of it shall be kept as a feast in the Lord's honour. During those seven 7 days you shall eat, all of you, bread without yeast in it; nothing leavened shall be seen anywhere within the frontiers of thy domain. And thou shalt tell thy children in 8 those after times all the Lord did for thee when thou madest thy escape from Egypt. This custom is to endure like a mark 9 branded on the hand, to be kept in view like a badge worn on the forehead; the law of the Lord shall be continually on thy lips; was it not the Lord's constraining power that rescued thee from Egypt? 10 Thou shalt keep it alive, year after year, when the appointed time comes round.

And when the Lord has made good his 11 promise to thee and to thy fathers, by bringing thee into the Chanaanite land and giving it to thee for thy own, thou shalt 12 dedicate to the Lord the first-born of every womb, the first-fruits of all thy cattle; every such thing, if it be of the male sex, is forfeit to him. When an ass has its first 13 foal, thou shalt offer a sheep in payment of its ransom; if not, it must be killed.² And every first-born man child of thy own race shall have a price paid for his ransom. When, in after times, thy sons ask thee 14 what is the meaning of this, thou shalt tell them how the Lord's constraining power rescued you from your prison-house in Egypt; how Pharaoh's heart was hardened, 15 and he would not let you go free, until the Lord slew every first-born male thing,

¹ 'Or break it up into joints'; literally, 'no bone of it shall be broken'; cf. Jn. 19. 36.

² An ass could not (like a sheep or an ox) be offered in sacrifice; the first foal of a she-ass must have its neck broken (this is the meaning of the Hebrew verb), or else a sheep must be sacrificed in its stead.

man or beast, in the land of Egypt. That (thou shalt say) is why I immolate to the Lord every first-born thing, the first-fruits of every womb, except among my own children; and for these I must pay ransom;

16 this custom is to endure like a mark branded on the hand, to be kept in view like a badge worn on the forehead, to remind you, too, how the Lord's constraining power rescued us from Egypt.

17 Thus the people had Pharaoh's leave to go on their way; but God did not lead them by the nearest road, the road through Philistia. Here they would have found themselves met by armed resistance, and perhaps, in despair of their enterprise, returned to Egypt. He took them round, instead, through the desert which borders on the Red Sea; and yet the Israelites left

18 Egypt in war-like array. Nor did Moses forget to take with him the body of Joseph, who had bound the sons of Israel by an oath to carry his bones away with them

20 when God shewed mercy to them. Their first encampment after leaving Sochoth was at Etham, on the very frontier of the desert.

21 And the Lord went on before, to guide them on their journey; by day, in a pillar of cloud, by night, in a pillar of fire; he was their guide at all times; every day a pillar of cloud, every night a pillar of fire moved on before the people.

2 **14** Then the word of the Lord came to Moses, bidding him give the Israelites fresh orders. They were to turn back and encamp round Pihahiroth, between Magdal and the sea, opposite Beel-sephon, pitching their tents close to the

3 western shore of the sea.¹ Pharaoh (the Lord told them) will think that the Israelites have no room to move, caught

4 there in the desert; and I will harden his heart, so that he will give pursuit. Then I will win victory over Pharaoh and all his armies, and Egypt will learn to know me, the Lord, for what I am.

The people did as they were bidden.

5 And now, when the news of their escape reached the Egyptian court, Pharaoh and his servants changed their minds about the Israelites; What madness was this, they

said, to let our slaves go free! So Pharaoh harnessed his chariot, and took all his troops with him; not only his best chariots, six hundred in number, but all that were to be found in Egypt, and all the captains of his army. Thus the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he pursued the Israelites in the hour of their triumphant escape. All Pharaoh's horses and chariots, and the whole of his army, followed close on the track of the fugitives, and came upon them where they lay encamped by the sea, at Pihahiroth, opposite Beel-sephon. What fear fell upon the Israelites, how they cried out to the Lord, when they looked round at Pharaoh's approach, and saw the Egyptians close behind them! Were there no graves for us in Egypt, they asked Moses, that thou hast brought us here, to die in the desert? Was it not ill done, to bring us away from Egypt at all? And did we not tell thee as much while we were still there? Leave us, we said, to our Egyptian bondage; better slavery here, than death in the desert. But Moses said to the people, Have no fear; wait patiently; the Lord means to do a miracle to-day under your eyes. The Egyptians you see now, you are seeing for the last time; they will disappear from your sight for ever. It is the Lord that will do battle for you; your part is silence.

And the Lord's word came to Moses, No need to cry to me for aid; bid the Israelites march on. And do thou, meanwhile, lift up thy staff, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, parting it this way and that, so that the Israelites can walk through the midst of the sea dry-shod. Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will give pursuit, and I will win victory over Pharaoh and all his army, over his chariots and horsemen. Vain the chariot, vain the horseman; I will teach the Egyptians to know me, the Lord, for what I am. And with that, God's angel, that went on before the host of Israel, moved to their rear; the pillar of cloud, too, left its place in the van and came behind them. It stood there between the Egyptian camp and the camp of Israel, a cloud that shed light in the darkness, yet was itself deep mist, so that

¹ 'Close to the western shore of the sea'; literally, 'close to the sea facing it', that is, Beel-sephon. It is clear from the context that this place must have been to the east of the Red Sea, and Israel encamped on the shore just opposite, cut off from their line of flight.

neither army could approach the other all
11 that night. Meanwhile, Moses stretched
out his hand over the sea, and the Lord
cleared it away from their path. All night
a fierce sirocco blew, and the Lord turned
the sea into dry land, the waters parting
12 this way and that.¹ So the Israelites went
through the midst of the sea dry-shod,
with its waters towering up like a wall to
right and left.

13 And the Egyptians, still in pursuit,
pressed on after them, all Pharaoh's
mounted troops, his chariots and horse-
men, driving on through the midst of the
14 sea. It was already the first watch of the
morning, when suddenly, through the
pillar of fire and mist, the Lord looked
down upon the Egyptians, and brought
15 their army to its doom. He turned the
wheels of their chariots aside, so that they
drove through deep places, and the Egyp-
tians began to say, Back, back! There is
no facing Israel; the Lord is fighting on
16 their side against us. Then the Lord said
to Moses, Stretch out thy hand over the
sea, so that its waters shall recoil on the
Egyptians, on all their chariots and their
17 horsemen. And when Moses stretched
out his hand towards the sea, at early
dawn, it went back to its bed, so that its
waters met the Egyptians in their flight,
and the Lord drowned them amid the
18 waves. Back came the water, overwhelm-
ing all the chariots and horsemen of
Pharaoh's army that had entered the sea in
19 their pursuit; not a man escaped. But the
sons of Israel made their way through the
midst of the sea where it had parted, its
waters towering like a wall to right and
left.

20 So the Lord rescued Israel that day
from the assault of the Egyptians; and
when they saw the dead Egyptians washed
up on the shore, and the great defeat the
Lord had inflicted upon them, the people
learned to fear the Lord, putting their
trust in him and in his servant Moses.

15 Then Moses and the Israelites
sang praise to the Lord, and this
was their song: A psalm for the Lord, so

¹ See note on 10. 13.

² 'Whose very name tells of omnipotence'; in the Hebrew text, 'his name is Yahweh'. This was the divine name communicated to Moses in Ex. 3. 14; commonly in the Latin version this is translated 'the Lord', but here 'the omnipotent' as if to stress that it is a significant word, and not a mere title.

³ The Hebrew text has, 'The nations heard and were afraid'; the Latin version, 'The nations went up and were angry'; it is not clear in what sense.

great he is and so glorious; horse and rider
hurled into the sea! Who but the Lord is
2 my protector, the pride of my song; who
but the Lord has brought me deliverance?
Shall I not praise him, my own God; shall
I not extol him, the God of my father
before me? The Lord, the warrior God,
3 whose very name tells of omnipotence!²
That power could hurl Pharaoh's chariots,
4 Pharaoh's army, into the sea; drowned in
the Red Sea, the flower of all his chivalry;
the depths closed over them, and they
5 sank to the bottom like a stone. How mag-
nificent, Lord, is the strength of thy right
6 hand; that right hand which has shattered
the enemy! Against such majesty rose they
7 but to fall; the hot breath of thy anger
burnt them up like stubble. The waters
8 were piled high through the blast of thy
fury; the waves were still, at the sea's heart
the depths congealed.

After them, seize them! the enemy
9 cried; there will be spoils for all, to our
heart's content; now to unsheathe my
sword, and deal the fatal blow! A breath
10 from thee, and the sea closed over them;
they sank in the raging waters like lead.
What power is there, Lord, that can match
11 thee? Who, as thou art, is august in holi-
ness, who so worthy of fear and of praise,
who so wonderful in his doings? Thou
12 hadst but to stretch out thy hand, and the
earth swallowed them up.

Thy mercy had delivered Israel; thy
13 mercy should be their guide; thy strong
arms should carry them to the holy place
where thou dwellest. The heathen raged
14 in their hill-fastnesses;³ anguish came
upon Philistia's citizens, the chieftains of
15 Edom were dismayed, the warriors of
Moab overcome with fear; a numbness
seized upon all that dwelt in Chanaan.
Terror and dread must needs fall upon
16 them; still as a stone, under the threat of
thy powerful arm, they must watch thy
people go by, thy ransomed people, Lord,
go by unharmed. Entry thy people should
17 have, and a home on the mountain thou
claimest for thy own, the inviolable dwell-
ing-place, Lord, thou hast made for thy-
self, the sanctuary thy own hands have

18 fashioned!¹ The reign of the Lord will
 19 endure for ever and ever. To horse! cried
 Pharaoh, and swept chariots and horsemen
 on into the sea; and the Lord brought the
 waters of the sea back over them, while the
 sons of Israel went through the midst of
 it dry-shod.²

20 Hereupon Mary the prophetess, Aaron's
 sister,³ went out with a tambour in her
 hand, and all the women-folk followed
 21 her, with tambour and with dances, and
 took up from her the refrain, A psalm for
 the Lord, so great he is and so glorious;
 horse and rider hurled into the sea!

22 And now Moses led Israel away from
 the Red Sea, and they went out into the
 desert of Sur, where they found no water
 in three days' marching over waste ground.

23 So they came to Mara, and even here they
 could not drink the water, so brackish it
 was to the taste; it was with good reason
 he called it Mara, for Mara means Bitter-

24 ness. Here the people were loud in their
 complaints against Moses; What shall we
 25 do for water? they said. Whereupon he
 cried out to the Lord, and the Lord shewed
 him a tree whose wood turned the waters
 sweet when it was thrown into them. Here,
 too, he gave them laws and decrees to live
 by,⁴ and issued this challenge to them: If
 thou wilt listen to the voice of the Lord
 thy God, his will doing, his word obeying,
 and all he bids thee observe, observing
 faithfully, never shall they fall on thee, the
 many woes brought on Egypt; I am
 the Lord, and it is health I bring thee.

27 After this the Israelites came to Elim,
 where they found twelve springs of water
 and seventy palm-trees, and pitched their
 tents beside the water.

16 Then, leaving Elim, the Israelite
 people marched to the desert of
 Sin, between Elim and Sinai. It was now
 the fifteenth day of the second month since
 2 they had left Egypt, and the Israelites, one
 and all, there in the desert, were loud in

their complaints against Moses and Aaron.
 It would have been better, they told them,
 if the Lord had struck us dead in the land
 of Egypt, where we sat down to bowls of
 meat, and had more bread than we needed
 to content us. Was it well done to bring us
 out into this desert, and starve our whole
 company to death? But the Lord said to
 Moses, I mean to rain down bread upon
 you from heaven. It will be for the people
 to go out and gather enough for their needs
 day by day; and so I shall have a test,
 whether they are ready to follow my orders
 or not. Only when the sixth day comes
 must they lay in a store twice as large as
 they gathered on any of the others.

So Moses and Aaron told all the people
 of Israel, This night shall bring proof it
 was the Lord that rescued you from Egypt,
 and to-morrow you shall witness his glory.
 He has heard your complaints against him-
 self—not against us, we are nothing. The
 Lord (said Moses) means to give you meat
 for your food this evening, and bread to-
 morrow to your heart's content. Not un-
 heard, the complaints you have brought
 against him; we count for nothing, it is the
 Lord's dealings you complain of, not ours.
 And Moses would have Aaron summon
 the whole people into the Lord's presence,
 that had heard them talk so rebelliously.⁵
 Even as Aaron was speaking to the as-
 sembled Israelites, they looked round to-
 wards the desert, and saw the glory of the
 Lord revealed there in a cloud. And the
 Lord said to Moses, This be thy answer
 to the rebel talk I hear: This evening you
 shall have meat, and bread to-morrow to
 your hearts' content; will you doubt, then,
 that I am the Lord your God?

Evening came, and brought with it a
 flight of quails, that settled in every part
 of the camp. And at morning, all about
 the camp, dew was lying; dew that covered
 the earth's surface, there in the desert,
 powdered fine as if it had been brayed by
 a pestle, lying on the ground like hoar-

¹ Some of the verbs in this passage may refer either to the future or to the past and it has been suggested that it was added to the song at a later period, after the conquest of Chanaan. But it seems more natural to understand it as an anticipation, on the part of the Israelites, of an unlaborious victory over Chanaan, which was in fact denied them.

² Some regard this verse not as part of the song, but as an historical *resumé* leading up to verse 20. According to the Hebrew text, it was 'the horses of Pharaoh' that went into the sea; the Latin implies that Pharaoh himself went into the sea on horseback, but this is probably due to a textual error.

³ And sister, also, of Moses, but the mention of the elder brother's name is a genealogical formality, cf. Gen. 36. 22.

⁴ 'He gave them'; literally, 'he gave it', i.e. the people, or (less probably) 'he gave him', i.e. Moses.

⁵ 'Summon... into the Lord's presence'; here, as often, the word seems to have something of a legal sense; the Israelites are to be arraigned for their infidelity.

frost.¹ The Israelites could not tell what it was when they went to look at it; Man-hu, they said to one another, What is it? And Moses told them, This is the bread which the Lord has sent for your eating. And this is the command the Lord gives you; everyone is to gather enough for his needs; a gomor a head is the measure he is to take up, just so much for each person living in his tent. So the children of Israel did as they were bidden, gathering up one more, another less, and each of them measuring it by the measure of a gomor. The man who gathered more did not gather too much for his household, or the man who gathered less too little; each gathered according to the number of mouths that must be filled. None of you, Moses told them, must keep any of it for the morrow. Little heed they gave him, but when some of them left part of it over till morning, it bred worms and corrupted, and Moses rebuked them for their disobedience. So, every morning, each man gathered what would suffice for his needs; whatever was left till the sun grew hot, melted away.

When the sixth day came, they gathered a double allowance of two gomors a head. And when this was reported to Moses by those who were in command of the people, he told them, Why, that is the direction the Lord has given us. To-morrow is the sabbath, a day of rest consecrated to the Lord; prepare all you need to prepare, cook all you need to cook, for to-day, and leave what is over for to-morrow. And when they did as Moses had bidden them, they found that what they had left overnight did not corrupt or breed worms at all. That is your food for to-day, Moses told them, because it is the Lord's sabbath; go out to-day, and you will find nothing. You have only six days to gather it in; you will find none on the seventh, the Lord's day of rest forbids it. And sure enough, when some of the people went out to gather it on the seventh day, they could find none. Hereupon the Lord said to Moses, Will you never learn to do as my law commands you? Can you not see that the sabbath is

the Lord's gift to you, and if he gives you a double allowance on the sixth day, it is because you must all stay within doors, not leaving your homes, on the seventh? So on the seventh day the people kept the sabbath rest.

This food, which the Israelites called Mán, was white in colour and looked like coriander seed; its taste was like that of flour mixed with honey. And now Moses told them a fresh command he had had from the Lord; he was to fill a gomor with it, and this was to be kept, so that later generations might know what kind of nourishment it was I gave them in the desert, when they had been rescued from the land of Egypt. Take a jar, Moses said to Aaron, put into it as much of the manna as a gomor measure will contain, and leave it to lie in the presence of the Lord, as a treasure for after ages to keep. Such was the Lord's command to Moses; so Aaron left the jar to lie in the tabernacle, where it was to be kept.² The Israelites fed on this manna for forty years, while they were far from the haunts of men; this was their nourishment until they reached the frontiers of Chanaan. (Note that the gomor measures a tenth of a bushel.)

17 Then the whole people of Israel left the desert of Sin, moving on from stage to stage as the Lord directed them, and encamped at Raphidim. But here they had no water to drink, so they turned upon Moses crying out, We have nothing to drink; find water for us. Why do you turn upon me? asked Moses. Will you challenge the Lord? But the people, thirsting for lack of water, grew loud in their complaints against Moses; Didst thou bring us away from Egypt, they said, only to let us die here, with our children and our cattle, of thirst? Moses had recourse to the Lord; What can be done with them? he asked. A little more of this, and they will begin stoning me. So the Lord bade Moses march out at the head of the people, taking some of the elders of Israel with him; and as he went, he was to carry in his hand the staff which he had

¹ 'Dew that covered the earth's surface'; the Hebrew text has a different sense, 'When the dew (or perhaps, the mist) had cleared, there lay in the desert (something) powdered fine', etc. ² 'In the tabernacle'; according to the Hebrew text, 'in face of the Law', that is, of the two stone tablets kept in the Ark. The sacred narrative seems here to anticipate; the command could not be carried out until the tabernacle had already been set up (chapter 40 below).

- 6 used to smite the river. I will meet thee, he said, at the rock of Horeb; thou hast but to smite that rock, and water will flow out of it, to give the people drink. All this Moses did, with the elders of Israel to witness it; and the name he gave to that place was Challenge,¹ because it was there the Israelites turned on him and challenged the Lord, by asking whether the Lord still went with them or not.
- 8 And while they were at Raphidim, the Amalecites came and offered the Israelites battle. So Moses said to Josue, Muster me an army, and go out to fight against Amalec; I will take my stand to-morrow on the hill top, with the miraculous staff in my hand. And Josue did as Moses bade him, going out to do battle with Amalec, while Moses, Aaron and Hur went up to the hill top. Whenever Moses lifted up his hands, Israel had the better of it; only when he rested for a little did the victory go to Amalec. But now Moses' arms grew weary; so they found him a stone to sit on and bade him be seated on it; then, one on each side, Aaron and Hur kept his hands lifted up. In this way, the strength of his arms held out until set of sun, while Josue routed Amalec, and all the forces Amalec could rally, at the sword's point. Put this on record in writing, the Lord said to Moses, and recite it in Josue's hearing: I mean to efface the very name of Amalec from this earth. Moses, too, built an altar there, and called it The Lord raises me up;² and he cried out, Lift up your hands to the Lord's throne! The Lord declares war against Amalec, for all ages to come.³

- 18** And now news reached Jethro, priest of Madian, Moses' father-in-law, of all that God had done for Moses and for his people Israel, and how the Lord had rescued Israel from Egypt. So he brought Moses his wife Sephora (for Moses had sent her back home), and his two sons. The elder of these was called Gersam, because his father said, I have been a stranger, Ger, in an alien land, and

the younger Eliezer, Help from God, because, said Moses, the God of my father has helped me to escape from the power of Pharaoh. So, here in the desert, where he lay encamped close to God's mountain, Moses was visited by his father-in-law Jethro, and his sons, and his wife. Jethro had sent word on to tell Moses who it was that came, and that he had Sephora and her two sons with him; so Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowing low and greeting him with a kiss, and words of peaceful welcome passed between them. Then, within the shelter of his tent, Moses told his father-in-law how the Lord had avenged Israel on Pharaoh and the Egyptians; what hardships they had met on the journey, and how the Lord had sent them relief. The story of the Lord's mercies to an oppressed people in delivering them from the power of Egypt rejoiced Jethro's heart; Blessed be the Lord, he said, who has brought you deliverance when you lay in the power of Pharaoh and of the Egyptians! Blessed be the Lord, who has put an end to your slavery in Egypt! Now I know for certain that the Lord is greater than all other gods! An ill day for the Egyptians when they wronged you!⁴ So Moses' father-in-law Jethro brought offerings and sacrificed to God; and Aaron, with all the elders of Israel, came to sit at meat with him, there in God's presence.

Next day, Moses was in his place deciding disputes among the people, who must stand there from morning till evening waiting for an audience with him; and when Jethro saw how he busied himself over the people's needs, he asked, What maketh thou here among the people? Why dost thou sit there alone, with all the people waiting upon thee from morning till evening? They come to me, answered Moses, to find out what God's decision is. Some dispute arises among them, and they come to me so that I may make a just award between them, telling them of the decrees which God issues, and of his law. It is ill conceived, said Jethro, this practice

¹ According to the Hebrew text, Moses gave the place two names, Challenge and Strife. ² The meaning given in the Hebrew text is, 'The Lord (is) my banner'. ³ Literally, 'the hand of the throne of the Lord, and the war of the Lord, will be against Amalec from generation to generation'; the phrase would appear to imply the taking of a solemn oath. The phrase given in the Hebrew text, 'A hand on the throne of the Lord' probably refers to the lifting up of the hand in atestation. ⁴ 'An ill day for the Egyptians when they wronged you'; literally, 'for the reason that they acted proudly against them'. The Hebrew text perhaps means 'because in the very matter in which they acted proudly (he was) above them', but it seems probable that it is slightly corrupt.

of thine. Thou wilt wear out thy own strength, and the patience of this people that goes with thee, and to no purpose; it is beyond thy powers to sustain this office all alone. Here is a word of advice for thee; do but listen, and God will speed thee. Thy part is to be the representative of this people with God, referring all their affairs to him, prescribing to them rite and observance, custom to be kept and duty to be done. Meanwhile, choose out here and there among the people able men, God-fearing, lovers of truth and haters of gain; put each of these in charge of a tribe, or of a hundred families, or fifty families, or ten.' These will administer justice to the people from day to day, referring graver matters to thee, but deciding for themselves all that is of less moment. Share thy burden with others, and find relief; so thou wilt be able to carry out God's commands, and endure the weight of all his claims upon thee, and yet all these folk will go home satisfied.

Moses listened to all that he proposed, and carried it into effect. He chose out here and there among the Israelites active men, and made them rulers of the people, with the charge of a tribe, or a hundred families, or fifty families, or ten; and these administered justice to the people day after day, referring graver matters to him, and deciding for themselves all that was of less moment. And so he took leave of his father-in-law, who now went back to his own country.

19 The third new moon was rising since they left the land of Egypt, on the day when the Israelites reached the wilderness of Sinai.² They set out from Raphidim, and marched all the way to the Sinai desert before they encamped, pitching their tents there in full view of the mountain. Here Moses went up to meet God, and the voice of God came to him from the mountain, A message to the race of Jacob; to Israel's sons proclaim it: You have seen for yourselves what I did to the Egyptians, how I carried you as if on eagle's wings, and took you up into my

care. Listen, then, to my voice, and keep your covenant with me; and I, to whom all the earth belongs, will single you out among its peoples to be my own. You shall serve me as a royal priesthood, as a consecrated nation;³ tell the Israelites this. So, when Moses came back, he summoned the elders of the people, and told them what message it was the Lord had entrusted to him; whereupon the whole people answered with one voice, We will do all the Lord has said.

Moses went back to the Lord with this promise from the people, and the Lord said to him, The time has come now when I mean to visit thee, wrapped in a dark cloud, so that all the people may hear me talking with thee, and obey thee without question henceforward. And when Moses had told him of the people's promise, he said, Go back to the people, and spend to-day and to-morrow ridding them of defilement. Let them wash their clothes, and hold themselves in readiness for the third day; two days from now, the Lord will come down on to mount Sinai in the presence of all the people. Keep them within bounds along the whole circle of it, and bid them beware of going up on to the mountain, or touching even the fringes of it; if anyone touches the mountain, his life must pay for it. No hand must be laid on him, he must be stoned, or shot down with javelins; beast or man that touches the mountain is to die. All this, until they hear a blast on the ram's horn; then let them go up on to the mountain. So Moses went down again to the people, and rid them of defilement. First they must wash their clothes; then he bade them hold themselves in readiness for the third day, and have no commerce with their wives.

And now the third day had come. Morning broke, and all at once thunder was heard, lightning shone out, and the mountain was covered with thick mist; loud rang the trumpet-blast, and the people in the camp were dismayed.⁴ But Moses brought them out from the camp itself to meet the Lord, and they stood

¹ The word 'families' is not expressed in the original, but this seems the most probable account of what is meant. ² The Latin here interprets the Hebrew as meaning simply 'in the third month', but this does not explain the words 'on that day' which follow. ³ 1 Pet. 2. 9. ⁴ The noise of a trumpet here mentioned was probably supernatural in origin; the word used in the Hebrew text is not the same as in verse 13 above.

- there close by the spurs of the mountain.
- 18 The whole of mount Sinai was by now wreathed in smoke, where the Lord had come down with fire about him, so that smoke went up as if from a furnace; it was
- 19 a mountain full of terrors. Louder yet grew the noise of the trumpet, longer its blast; and then Moses spoke to the Lord, and the Lord's voice was heard in answer.
- 20 It was on the very top of mount Sinai that the Lord had come down, and now he called Moses up to the summit. When he had climbed up there he was bidden go down again, and warn the people not to pass beyond their bounds in their eagerness to see the Lord; or it might be that a great multitude of them would incur death.
- 22 Even the priests who came into the Lord's presence were to come sanctified, for fear
- 23 he should smite them.¹ But, Lord, said Moses, the common folk will be in no danger of climbing up on to Sinai; thou thyself hast warned them, and bidden us set bounds, to keep the mountain inviolable. Go down, the Lord said to him, and come back with Aaron alone; neither priests nor people are to go beyond their bounds, and come into the Lord's presence, or he will slay them. So Moses went back to the people, and told them all he was bidden.

- 20 And now God spoke all these words which follow. I, the Lord, am thy God (he said); I, who rescued thee from the land of Egypt, where thou didst dwell in slavery.
- 3 Thou shalt not defy me by making other
- 4 gods thy own. Thou shalt not carve images, or fashion the likeness of anything in heaven above, or on earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, to bow down and worship it. I, thy God, the Lord Almighty, am jealous in my love; be my enemy, and thy children, to the third and fourth generation, for thy guilt shall make
- 6 amends; love me, keep my commandments, and mercy shall be thine a thousandfold.
- 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God lightly on thy lips; if a man uses that name lightly, the Lord will not acquit him of sin.

¹ Some would render 'chieftains' instead of 'priests'. The leading men in Israel perhaps had certain religious functions before the Aaronic priesthood was instituted. Cf. II Kg. 8, 18.

Remember to keep the sabbath day holy. Six days for drudgery, for doing all the work thou hast to do; when the seventh day comes, it is a day of rest, consecrated to the Lord thy God. That day, all work shall be at an end, for thee and every son and daughter of thine, thy servants and serving-women, thy beasts, too, and the aliens that live within thy gates. It was six days the Lord spent in making heaven and earth and sea and all that is in them; on the seventh day he rested, and that is why the Lord has blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Honour thy father and thy mother; so thou shalt live long to enjoy the land which the Lord thy God means to give thee.

Thou shalt do no murder.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, or set thy heart upon thy neighbour's wife, or servant or hand-maid or ox or ass or anything else that is his.

All the people stood watching while thunder rolled and lightning flashed, while the trumpet sounded and the mountain was wreathed in smoke, terrified and awestricken so that they kept their distance, and cried out to Moses, Do thou tell us the message; we are ready to obey thee. Do not let us hear the Lord speaking; it will cost us our lives. But Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid; God has come here to make trial of your obedience; he would have you possessed with the fear of him, to preserve you from sin. So the people stood their ground far off, while Moses went up into the darkness where God was.

And the Lord gave Moses this further message for the Israelites: You stood watching while I spoke to you out of heaven; it is not for you to make yourselves gods of silver or of gold. It is enough to build me an altar of turf, on which to present burnt sacrifices and welcome-offerings, of sheep or oxen, wherever my name is honoured; so I will come to thee, and give thee my blessing. Even if thou shouldst make me an altar of stone, thou

shalt not build it of hewn stones; to use any tool in the making of it is to profane it. And when thou goest up to my altar, thou shalt not mount by steps, for fear of exposing thy body's nakedness.

21 And these laws, he said, thou shalt promulgate to them.¹ If thou dost buy a slave that is a Hebrew by race, he shall do thee six years' service, and in the seventh year, without any ransom paid, he shall go free. He shall leave thy service in the same guise in which he entered it;² if he came to thee married, his wife shall go free with him. But if his master has assigned a wife to him, and she has borne sons and daughters, this woman and her children shall belong to the master; the slave shall go free in the same guise as before. It may be that the slave, for love of his master, and of his own wife and children, will refuse to take his leave; if so, his master shall bring him before the judgement-seat, and then fasten his ear with an auger to door or door-post, in token that the man is his slave in perpetuity.³ If anyone sells his daughter into a man's service, she is not to go free on the same conditions as a slave.⁴ The master to whom she has been made over may send her away, if he has no liking for her, but he may not sell her to foreign masters; he has done her despite enough already. He may betroth her, if he will, to his son; but if he does that, he must treat her as his daughter; and if he finds his son another wife instead, he must marry the girl off, and give her clothes, and make all amends for the loss of her virginity.⁵ If he is not prepared to do these three things, then she must go free, with no ransom paid for her.

Whoever kills a man with intent to kill, must pay for it with his life. But where there was no malice aforethought, and God

provides the occasion,⁶ he shall be allowed to find refuge in such place as I shall appoint for thee. One who lies in wait on purpose to kill his neighbour shall be torn away even from my altar to die. Death is the penalty for one who kills his father or his mother; death is the penalty when a man is shewn to have carried off his fellow-man and sold him; death is the penalty for one who curses father or mother.

Two fall out, and one is struck with a stone, or with the fist, not fatally, but so that he must take to his bed; must the man who struck the blow be held guilty? Only till the other is well enough to get up and walk abroad with a stick; but he must compensate him for his loss of work, and for the doctor's charges. When a man beats his servant or his handmaid to death, if death follows at once, he must pay the full penalty; but if they survive for a day or more, he shall go unpunished; the loss is his. If men fall out, and one of them strikes a woman who is pregnant, so that the child is still-born, but she herself lives, he must pay whatever sum the woman's husband demands, and the judges agree to; if her death follows, then life must pay for life.⁷ So it is to be; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,⁸ a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot; burning for burning, wound for wound, bruise for bruise. If anyone gives servant or handmaid a blow on the eye, so that the sight of it is lost, he must set them free in return for the sight he robbed them of; or if he knocks out a tooth, he must let servant or handmaid go free by the same title.

If an ox gores a man or woman to death, it shall be stoned, and the flesh of it is not to be eaten. But the owner of the ox shall be held innocent, unless the ox has been using its horns for some time past, and he has refused to shut it away when appeal was made to him. Then, if the ox gores

¹ The code of laws which occupies this and the two following chapters was known as the Book of the Covenant. ² 'In the same guise'; the Latin here translates as if it were a question of the slave's clothing. But the meaning of the Hebrew text is, that if the slave entered service all by himself, he is to leave it all by himself; and so also in verse 4. ³ 'Before the judgement-seat'; literally, 'before the gods', perhaps meaning 'before the judges'; cf. Ps. 81. 6. ⁴ 'As a slave'; a woman slave, according to the Latin translation, which perhaps means to indicate a distinction between concubines and bond-women. But the Hebrew text, more intelligibly, gives 'as a man slave'. ⁵ The sense of the Hebrew text is rather that if the owner himself takes a new wife, he must provide the concubine with food and clothing, and must still live with her. ⁶ 'Provides the occasion'; literally, 'delivers him into his hand'. This could mean a chance encounter, followed by a murder in hot blood, which would be classed as manslaughter; cf. I Kg. 26. 23. But accidental killing may be meant (cf. Num. 35. 22, 23; Deut. 19. 4), the accident being represented as a Providential interference. ⁷ 'She herself lives', 'if her death follows'; in the Hebrew text, 'no harm is done', 'if harm follows'. ⁸ Cf. Mt. 5. 38.

man or woman, it shall be stoned, and he too shall be put to death, unless a fine is imposed on him instead; if so, he shall pay whatever ransom is demanded for his life.

The parents shall have the same claim upon him, whether it be a son or daughter of theirs the ox has gored; if it has attacked man-servant or woman-servant, the owner must pay thirty silver pieces, and the ox must be stoned. If a man who has opened an old well, or is digging a new one, does not cover it up, and ox or ass falls into it, the owner of the well shall pay the full value of the beasts; the carcass he may keep for himself. If one man's ox is wounded by another's, and dies of it, they shall sell the live ox and share the price of it, dividing the carcass of the dead ox between them; unless it has been known for some time past that the live ox was using its horns, and the owner has not kept it under control. If so, he shall restore ox for ox, and keep the whole carcass for himself.

22 The man who steals ox or sheep and slaughters or sells it, must make restitution at the rate of five oxen for one, and four sheep for one.

When a thief is caught breaking into a house, or digging under the walls of it, the man who deals him a fatal wound is not guilty of murder, unless the deed was done after sun-rise. If the sun be risen, there is murder done, and life must pay for life.¹

The thief who has no money to make restitution with, must himself be sold as a slave.

If something stolen, ox or ass or sheep, is found alive in the possession of the thief, he shall make restitution twofold.

If anyone damages field or vineyard by letting some beast of his feed on another man's property, he must make good the estimated loss out of the best crop in his own field or vineyard. If a fire breaks out and catches among thorn-bushes, setting light to heaps of grain or to corn standing in the fields, the man who lit the fire must make good the loss.

Where money or goods entrusted to a

friend's keeping have been stolen, the thief, if he is found, must make twofold restitution. If he cannot be found, the owner of the house where they lay in keeping shall be brought before the judgement-seat.² He must swear that he laid no hands on his neighbour's property with malicious intent. Be there a loss of ox or ass or sheep or clothing or any other kind of property, the two parties shall come before the judgement-seat, and the defendant, if he is found guilty, shall make twofold restitution. If a man entrusts his neighbour with ass or ox or sheep or any other beast for safe keeping, and it is killed or wounded or carried off by enemies, with no witness to the fact, the matter shall be settled by an oath, which the owner shall accept, that the other did not lay hands on his property; there is no restitution to be made. But where the loss is due to theft, the owner shall be compensated. If it has been killed by a wild beast, the carcass must be brought before the owner, and no amends made. Where a man has borrowed any such beast of his neighbour, and it is maimed or killed in the owner's absence, compensation must be made to him; but not if the owner himself was present, and especially if hire was being paid for the work the beast did.

One who seduces a virgin not yet betrothed, and beds with her, must give her a dowry and marry her, unless the father will not give her in marriage; then amends must be made, equivalent to the dowry which a virgin customarily receives.

Sorcerers' must not be allowed to live. The man who is guilty of bestiality must pay for it with his life. Sacrifice is for the Lord alone; he who offers it to other gods must be put to death.

There must be no harrying or oppression of the aliens that dwell among you; time was when you too dwelt as aliens in the land of Egypt. You must not wrong the widow and the orphan; wronged, they will cry out to me for redress, and their cry will be heard. My anger will blaze out against you, and I will smite you with the sword, making widows of your own wives, orphans of your own children.

¹ In Jewish as in Roman law, housebreaking by night was counted a more serious offence than open robbery by day. The text here is perhaps inaccurate; verse 4 would fit in better after verse 1. ² Literally, 'the gods', as above.

³ In the Hebrew the word is feminine, 'witch'.

25 If thou dost lend money to some poorer
neighbour among my people, thou shalt
not drive him hard as extortioners do, or
burden him with usury. If thou takest thy
neighbour's garment for a pledge, thou
shalt give it back to him by set of sun; it
is all he has to cover himself with, his body's
protection, all he has to sleep under. He
has but to cry for redress, and I, the ever
merciful, will listen to him.

28 Thou shalt not revile the powers above
thee, or speak ill of him who rules thy
people.¹

19 There must be no delay in paying tithes
and first-fruits. Thou shalt make me an
offering of the first son that is born to thee,
and with thy oxen and sheep thou shalt do
the like; for seven days the dam may keep
her first-born, after that it must be offered
to me.

11 You are to be men marked out for my
service. Meat that has once been tasted
by wild beasts shall not be used for food;
it must be thrown to the dogs.

23 Never must thou take up a false
cry, or join hands with the guilty
by giving false witness in their favour.

2 Never must thou follow with the crowd in
doing wrong, or be swayed by many voices
so as to give false judgement; even pity for
the poor must not sway thee when judge-
ment is to be given.²

4 If thou hast an enemy, and findest his
ox or his ass going astray, take it back to
him. Here is one that hates thee, and his
ass has fallen under its burden; do not pass
by, help him to lift it up.

6 Do not give false judgement when the
cause of the poor is tried. Keep clear of
untruth. Do not bring death on an inno-
cent man that has justice on his side; I give
no countenance to the wrong-doer. Be-
ware of accepting bribes; they blind even
the prudent, and disturb the judgement
even of just men. Do not oppress the
alien; you know what it is to be an alien,
since you yourselves were exiles in the land
of Egypt.

¹ 'The powers above thee'; literally, 'the gods', but it seems clear from the second half of the sentence that earthly rulers are here referred to. Cf. Ac. 23. 5.

² Literally, this verse reads 'And thou shalt not pity (in the Hebrew text, adorn) the poor man in his judgement'. Some think that there is an error of transcription, which has changed the word 'great' into the word 'poor', a difference of only one letter in the Hebrew. Cf. Lev. 19. 15.

³ 'In obedience to my command'; cf. Ex. 12. 15. The latter part of this verse reads literally, 'Thou shalt not present thyself before me empty-handed'; a direction which is awkwardly placed here, since it applies to all three feasts. Cf. Deut. 16. 16.

⁴ The reference seems to be to a practice connected with local superstition, of which we have record elsewhere.

For six years together thou mayst sow
thy land, and gather the crop from it; in
the seventh year leave it alone, to lie fallow,
and give thy poorer neighbours food; all
that is left, the wild beasts may eat. And
thou shalt do the like with thy vineyard
and thy oliveyard. For six days together
thou shalt do the tasks thou hast to do, and
on the seventh leave off working; so shall
ox and ass of thine have rest, home-born
slave and alien that works for thee revive
their spirits.

Observe all these commandments of
mine, and never take an oath by the names
of alien gods, or let such names be heard
on your lips.

Thrice a year keep holiday in my
honour. There is the feast of unleavened
bread to be observed; for seven days, in
the first month of spring, the month of thy
rescue from Egypt, thou shalt eat un-
leavened bread in obedience to my com-
mand. Then thou shalt present thyself
before me with gifts.³ And there is the
feast of harvest, when the fields thou hast
sown reward thy labour with first-fruits;
and another feast at the end of the year,
when the last of thy crops has been gar-
thered in. Thrice, then, in the year all thy
men folk must present themselves before
the Lord thy God.

When thou offerest living things in
sacrifice to me, the bread that goes with
them shall not be leavened, nor shalt thou
leave the fat of my victims unconsumed
till the morrow.

The first-fruits of thy land must be
brought to the house of the Lord thy God.

Seething a kid in its dam's milk is a rite
forbidden thee.⁴

And now I am sending my angel to go
before thee and guard thee on thy way,
and lead thee to the place I have made
ready for thee. Give him good heed, and
listen to his bidding; think not to treat him
with neglect. He will not overlook thy
faults, and in him dwells the power of my
name. If thou wilt listen to his warnings,
and do all I bid thee, then thy enemies

shall find an enemy in me, and those who shew thee no mercy shall find me merciless. So this angel of mine will go on before thee, leading thee on into the land of Amorrhite and Hethite, Pherazite and Chanaanite, Hevite and Jebusite; and all these I will destroy. Do not bow down to their gods and worship them, or follow their customs; sweep them away, and break down their monuments. All your loyalty must be for the Lord your God. So I will enrich thee with the bread and the water thou needest, and keep sickness far away from thy company; there shall be no unfruitfulness in thy land, no barrenness; and I will grant thee a full span of days.

I mean to make the fear of me go in front of thee, bringing destruction upon the whole people thou goest to meet; all thy enemies shall turn their backs before thee. I will send in hornets first, to make cowards of Hevite and Chanaanite and Hethite before ever thou goest in. Only I will not drive them out before thee all in one year; that would make a wilderness of the land, and the wild beasts in it would multiply, to thy harm. I will make them yield little by little before thy onset, so that thou wilt have time to increase, and populate the land. The frontiers I give thee are the Red Sea and the sea of the Philistines, the desert and the river Euphrates.¹ All the inhabitants of the land shall be at your mercy, and I will drive them out before you. Thou shalt make no treaty with them, nor with their gods. They must not share thy territory, or they would persuade thee to commit sin against me, by worshipping their gods; no doubt of it, they will ensnare thee.

24 Then Moses was told, Do thou and Aaron and Nadab and Abi, with seventy elders of Israel, come up to meet the Lord, and worship from afar. Only Moses must enter the Lord's presence, the rest are not to draw near, and none of the people are to come up with

him. So Moses went and told the people all the Lord had said, all the commands he had given; and the whole people answered with one voice, We will do all that the Lord has bidden us. Then Moses committed everything the Lord had said to writing; and when he rose next morning, he built an altar close to the spurs of the mountain, and twelve memorial stones answering to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he directed some of the younger Israelites to make burnt-sacrifice there and bring welcome-offerings to the Lord, with bullocks for their victims. After this Moses took half of the blood, and set it aside in bowls; the other half he poured out on the altar. Then he took up the book in which the covenant was inscribed, and read it aloud to the people. We will do all the Lord has bidden us, said they; we promise obedience; and Moses took the blood and sprinkled it over the people, crying out, Here is the blood of the covenant which the Lord makes with you, in accordance with all these words of his.²

Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abi, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up the mountain, and had a vision of the God of Israel, with a pavement about his feet that might have been made of sapphire, bright as the fashioning of the heavens. There they stood, far removed from the rest of Israel, and the hand of the Lord never smote them down; they had sight of him, and lived to eat and drink like mortal men.³ And the Lord said to Moses. Come up to the mountain and abide with me there; I have still to give thee tablets of stone on which I have written down the law and the commandments thou art to teach them. At that, Moses rose up, and his servant Josue with him; and Moses, as he began climbing God's mountain, said to the elders, Wait here till we come back to you. You have Aaron and Hur with you; to them refer all matters of dispute. When Moses had gone, the mountain was veiled in cloud; for six days the glory of the Lord abode there on Sinai, wrapping it in cloud.

¹ The frontiers indicated seem to represent the southern, western, eastern and northern frontiers of the Jewish territory, in that order (the upper reaches of the Euphrates being north of Syria). ² Mt. 26. 28; Heb. 9. 19. ³ Literally, 'Nor did he lay his hand upon those of the children of Israel who had withdrawn far away; and they saw God, and ate and drank'. It is possible to understand this phrase as referring to the main body of the Israelites, who had remained at the foot of the mountain, cf. Ex. 32. 6. But this is not the sense of the Hebrew text, which alludes (most probably) to the 'leading men among the children of Israel'.

and on the seventh day, from the heart of
 17 that darkness, the Lord called to him. To
 the Israelites, as they looked upon it, this
 glory of the Lord wore the semblance of
 a fire, burning there on the summit of the
 18 mountain. So Moses climbed higher up
 the mountain, into the heart of the cloud;
 for forty days and forty nights the moun-
 tain was his home.

25 And now the Lord gave Moses
 2 this message, Bid the Israelites
 bring me gifts in kind, each man offering
 what his heart prompts him to offer, for
 3 your acceptance. And these are the gifts
 you will declare to be acceptable, gold,
 4 silver and bronze; threads of blue and
 purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and lawn,
 5 and goats' hair, and rams' fleeces dyed red,
 6 and skins dyed violet; ¹ acacia wood,
 and oil to feed lamps, spices for the anointing-
 7 oil, and sweet-smelling incense; onyx-
 stones, too, and jewels, to be set in the
 8 priestly mantle and burse. I mean them
 to build me a sanctuary, so that I can dwell
 9 among them; this tabernacle-dwelling it-
 self and the appurtenances to be used in it
 must be of the pattern which I will now
 shew thee. Listen, then, to the fashion
 of it.

10 Make me an ark of acacia wood, two and
 a half cubits long, with a breadth and height
 11 of one and a half cubits. Give it a covering
 and a lining of pure gold, and put a coping
 12 of gold all round the top of it; a ring of
 gold, too, at each of the four corners, two
 13 on either of the flanks. Then make poles
 14 of acacia wood, gilded over, and pass them
 through the rings on the sides of the ark,
 15 so as to carry it; these poles are to remain
 16 in the rings, never taken out. In this ark
 thou wilt enshrine the written law I mean
 to give thee.

17 Make a throne, ² too, of pure gold, two
 and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits
 18 broad, and two cherubs of pure beaten
 19 gold for the two ends of this throne, one
 20 to stand on either side of it; with their
 wings outspread to cover the throne,

guardians of the shrine. They are to face
 one another across the throne. And this
 21 throne is to be the covering of the ark, and
 the ark's contents, the written law I mean
 to give thee. Thence will I issue my com-
 22 mands; from that throne of mercy, be-
 tween the two cherubs that stand over
 the ark and its records, ³ my voice shall
 come to thee, whenever I send word
 through thee to the sons of Israel.

Make a table, too, of acacia wood, two
 23 cubits long, a cubit broad, and a cubit and
 a half in height; gild it with pure gold, and
 24 make a rim of gold about its edge, with an
 25 embossed coping four inches high, and a
 second coping of gold over that. Make
 26 four rings of gold, and fix them to the four
 corners of the table, one by each leg of it.
 The rings must be below the coping, to
 27 let poles pass through, that will carry the
 table; these poles too thou shalt make of
 acacia wood, and gild them over; so the
 table shall be carried. So with the cups,
 29 too, and the bowls, and the dishes, ⁴ and
 the goblets for pouring out libations; all
 of them must be of pure gold. The table
 30 is to hold the loaves of bread which are to
 be set out continually in my presence.

Make a lamp-stand, too, of pure beaten
 31 gold, stem and branches, cups and bosses,
 and fleurs-de-lis that spring from them. ⁵
 Six branches are to come out of the stem,
 32 three on each side; and on each branch
 33 there are to be three cups shaped like
 almond-flowers, then a boss, then a fleur-
 de-lis, balanced by three cups and a boss
 and a fleur-de-lis on the opposite branch;
 such is to be the fashion of all the six
 branches that come out of the stem. But
 34 the stem itself is to have four cups, shaped
 like almond-flowers, each with its boss
 and its fleur-de-lis; there will be six
 35 branches altogether coming out of a single
 stem, and under each pair of them there
 will be an additional boss. The bosses and
 36 the branches must be of a piece with the
 main stem, and all alike must be of pure
 beaten gold. Make seven lamps, too, and
 37 mount them on the lamp-stand, so as to

¹ The word used in the Hebrew text is of uncertain significance, and may perhaps indicate the name of the animal whose skin is referred to.

² Literally, 'a place of atonement'; in the Latin it is also called 'the oracle' or shrine. This was evidently a kind of shelf or roof above the ark, regarded in some way as the focal point of the Divine Presence in the tabernacle.

³ Literally, 'the ark of the testimony'. Presumably the ark was so called as containing the tablets of the Law; the tabernacle itself is called the tabernacle of testimony, or record, in 27. 21 below.

⁴ Literally, in the Latin version, 'censers'.

⁵ 'Fleurs-de-lis'; in the Hebrew text simply 'flowers'. They were perhaps sockets spread out like open flowers to receive the seven lamps.

throw their light on the opposite wall.¹

- 38 Even the snuffers, and the trays for the burnt wick, must be made of pure gold.
 39 The whole weight of the lamp-stand, together with its appurtenances, must be a talent of pure gold.
 40 Look well, and make everything in due accord with the pattern which has been shewn to thee on the mountain.

26 And this is how the tabernacle is to be fashioned. Make ten curtains of twisted linen thread, worked in threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, with all the embroiderer's art.² All the curtains are to be of the same size, twenty-eight cubits in length and four in width. Five of these must be joined to each other, and then the remaining five in the same way; the sides, the extreme edges of the curtains must be fitted with loops of blue cord, to fasten one to the next, fifty loops at the edge of either set of curtains, so let in that loop meets loop and can be fastened to it. Then make fifty gold clasps, and join the two widths of curtain together, to make a single tent of them.³

- 7 Next, make eleven coverings of goats' hair, to protect the tapestry over the tabernacle. The measurements of all these coverings are to be the same; each will be thirty cubits long and four cubits wide. Join together first five of the coverings, then the other six; the sixth of these is to hang double over the front of the tapestry.
 10 Make fifty loops at the edge of the first set of coverings, then fifty at the edge of the

other, to join them together, and fifty brazen clasps, to hold these loops together, so that the whole may form a single protecting roof. Since there is one more of these coverings than is needed for the protection of the tapestry, fold it double and use it to protect the back of the tabernacle. The coverings are a cubit longer on the north and south than the tapestry, and this additional cubit will hang down, to protect the tabernacle itself on either side. Then make another canopy over the roof, of rams' fleeces dyed red, and yet another, of skins dyed violet.⁴

Then make upright frames of acacia wood to support the tabernacle. Each must be ten cubits high, and a cubit and a half wide; and at the sides of it, two tenon-pieces must jut out, so that each frame can be mortised to the next; all the frames are to be made in this manner.⁵ Twenty of these will be on the south, facing the midday sun, with forty silver sockets, two at the foot of each frame, close to the corners; and twenty more on the opposite side, that looks northwards; these again will have forty silver sockets, two at the foot of each frame. And for the western end of the tabernacle there will be six frames, and two in addition, which must be set up in the corners at the extreme end of the tabernacle.⁶ All these will be joined together, from bottom to top, with a single kind of fastening to hold them all; the two frames which are to be set up in the corners will be joined in the same way as the others.⁷ Thus there will be eight frames

¹ See note on Num. 8. 3.

² According to the Hebrew text, here and in verse 31 but not in verse 36, the embroidery was a pattern of cherubim.

³ It is clear from verses 15 sqq. that the main structure of the tabernacle was a wooden framework, unroofed, and open at the eastern end, ten cubits high, ten cubits wide (from north to south), and thirty cubits long (from east to west). Over this a huge piece of tapestry, made in strips, and measuring forty cubits by twenty-eight, appears to have been spread like a tablecloth, covering the top and the western end, but falling short of the ground by one cubit on the north and south. The tapestry, like all the structure of the tabernacle, was made of adjustable pieces, for convenience of transport.

⁴ The outer covering of goats' hair, being thirty cubits wide, reached the ground on the north and south. Its length exceeded that of the tapestry by four cubits, and verse 9 seems to imply that these extra four cubits hung looped over the eastern, open end of the structure. Confusingly, verse 12 appears to speak of this loop as being at the back of the tabernacle; but perhaps the reader is here expected to place himself in imagination inside the building, facing west. The size and position of the two coverings mentioned in verse 14 are a matter of conjecture.

⁵ The Latin version evidently thinks of the frames as mortised to one another; some interpret the Hebrew text as meaning that each frame consisted of two uprights joined together by cross-pieces.

⁶ The six frames give a width of nine cubits, where ten cubits are required. It seems natural to suppose that the gap was filled by the two frames mentioned in verse 23. These may have had a width of nine inches instead of eighteen; or they may have jutted out to north and south of the building; or they may have been put in a slanting position (so as to face north-west and south-west respectively) by way of joining the west end to the north and south sides—a need for which no provision is made in the text. Some think they acted as lean-to buttresses at the west end, but (i) the mention of sockets suggests that they stood perpendicular, and (ii) it is difficult in that case to see what filled the gap in the western wall; we can hardly suppose that the frames on the north and south sides were nine inches thick.

⁷ The Latin text here differs considerably from the Hebrew, which is too obscure to admit of any certain interpretation.

in all, with sixteen silver sockets, two to each frame.

26 Then make five poles of acacia wood, to hold the frames together on one side of
27 the tabernacle, and five more to hold it together on the other side, and the same
28 number for the western end; these will be passed right along the frames from end to
29 end.¹ Gild the frames themselves, and furnish them with gold rings, by which the
30 poles can hold the frames together; these poles, too, must be plated with gold. So
31 thou shalt set up the tabernacle, in conformity with the pattern that has been
shewn to thee on the mountain.

31 Make a veil, too, out of twisted linen thread, worked in threads of blue and
purple and scarlet twice-dyed, with all the embroiderer's art, and let it hang down
32 from four posts of acacia wood, gilded and with gilt capitals;² but set in silver sockets.
33 This veil will be held up by rings. The ark is to be set down behind it, and thus it will
34 be a division between the sanctuary and the inner sanctuary. The throne, too,
35 which rests above the ark and its records, will be in the inner sanctuary; on the outer
side of the veil, the table will stand on the north, and the lamp-stand on the south
side of the tabernacle, opposite the table.

36 Make a screen, too, out of twisted linen thread, embroidered with threads of blue
and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, for the entrance of the tabernacle; it must hang
37 from five gilded posts of acacia wood, with gilt capitals and sockets of bronze.

27 Make an altar, too, of acacia wood, with a surface five cubits
2 square, and a height of three cubits. It must have horns at the corners, all of a
piece with it, and it must be plated with bronze. Provide it with ash-pans, tongs,
3 forks, and braziers, making all its appurtenances of bronze; and make a bronze
4 grating, of network, with bronze rings at its four corners, sunk in the hearth³ of
5 the altar; this grating must reach to half the altar's height. Then make two poles of

acacia wood, plated with bronze, which
7 can be put through the rings on either side of the altar, so as to carry it. The altar is
8 not to be made solid, but to have a hollow space within, after the manner shewn thee
on the mountain.

9 Make a court, too, round the tabernacle. At the south side of this, towards the mid-
day sun, there will be hangings made of twisted linen thread, a hundred cubits
10 long on this side, and twenty posts, each with its socket made of bronze, its en-
11 graved capital of silver.⁴ So, too, on the north side, hangings a hundred feet long,
twenty posts with bronze sockets and engraved silver capitals. On the short side,
12 westwards, the line of hangings will be only fifty cubits long, and there will be
only ten posts in ten sockets. The side which looks eastward will also be fifty
13 cubits in length; of these, fifteen at one end will be protected by a line of hangings
14 fifteen cubits long, with three posts and as many sockets, and there will be fifteen
15 cubits' length of hangings, with three posts and as many sockets, at the other
end too; in between, at the gateway of the court, there will be hangings of twisted
16 linen thread, embroidered with threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed,
twenty cubits in length; these will have four posts, and as many sockets. All the
17 posts of the court must be plated with silver, and have capitals of silver, and
sockets of bronze. Thus the court will occupy a space a hundred cubits long and
18 fifty wide, and the enclosure, of twisted linen thread with bronze sockets under-
neath, will be five cubits in height.

19 All the appurtenances the tabernacle needs for its various purposes and ceremonies, and all the pegs for making the
enclosure and the tabernacle itself fast, must be made of bronze.

20 Bid the Israelites supply thee with olive oil, pure as when the pestle brayed it, so
that there may be a lamp burning perpetually in the tabernacle that bears record
21 of me,⁵ before the veil that hides the place

¹ The Hebrew text appears to mean 'And the middle pole along the middle of the frames (shall be) reaching from end to end'; see the description in 36, 33 below. ² The rare word used in the Hebrew text is thought to mean 'hooks'.

³ 'The hearth'; the word used here in the Hebrew is of quite uncertain significance. ⁴ The word given in the Latin as 'engraving', in the Hebrew text appears to mean 'plates' of metal. So in verses 11 and 17, lower down. ⁵ Here, and wherever it appears, the phrase used in the Hebrew text means rather 'the tabernacle, which is the meeting-place (between God and man)'.

of record. Aaron and his sons are to set it out there, so that it may burn in the Lord's presence till daybreak. This is a custom the Israelites are to observe in every generation.

28 And now, that I may have priests to serve me among the sons of Israel, summon thy brother Aaron, with his sons, Nadab, Abiu, Eleazar and Ithamar, to thy presence. Thou shalt have sacred vestments made for thy brother Aaron, to his honour and adornment, bidding all those cunning workmen, whose art is the gift of my spirit, so clothe him as to set him apart for my service. And these are the vestments they shall make; a burse, a mantle, a tunic, a pleated robe, a mitre, and a girdle. Such sacred vestments must be made for thy brother Aaron and his sons, before they can minister as my priests.

The workmen must provide themselves with gold, with threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and with linen thread. Of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and of twisted linen thread, the mantle is to be made, all embroidered work. At the top, on either side, it shall have the two shoulder-pieces joined together so as to make one garment. The whole of its embroidered texture shall be of gold, blue, purple, scarlet twice-dyed, and twisted linen thread.¹ Then thou shalt take two onyx-stones, and inscribe them with the names of Israel's twelve sons, six on one stone and six on the other, in the order of their birth; and these stones, graven with all the skill of the gem-carver, and set in clasps of gold, thou shalt let into the mantle, one on either side, to perpetuate the memory of Israel's sons. Aaron shall carry those names on his two shoulders, when he goes into the Lord's presence, and so remind him of them.

Then make two golden hooks, and two chains of pure gold, with closely fitted

links, which thou wilt fasten to the hooks. And make a burse,² from which thou wilt take counsel; it is to be of the same texture as the mantle itself, embroidered work of gold, and threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and twisted linen threads. It is to be made double, and either part of it square, a palm's length by a palm's breadth. And thou shalt set in it four rows of stones; in the first row will be a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; in the second, a carbuncle, a sapphire, and a jasper-stone; in the third, a jacynth, an agate, and an amethyst; in the fourth, a chrysolite, an onyx-stone, and a beryl; each row is to be set in gold. And they will contain the names of the sons of Israel, each stone being engraved with the name of one of the twelve tribes, in their order.

The burse, then, must have two chains of pure gold, their links closely fitted, and two rings of gold, attached to its two edges; with these two rings at the edges thou wilt couple the two chains, making fast the other ends of the chains to the two hooks, which will be fixed on either side of the mantle, where it faces towards the burse. Then make two gold rings, which must be attached to the edges of the burse, to that part of its lining which looks towards the mantle, that is, inwards; and two other gold rings, which must be attached to either side of the mantle underneath, facing the lower point where burse meets mantle, so that the two can be tied together. Thou shalt use blue cords to make the rings of the burse fast to the rings of the mantle; thus the two will be joined in a workmanlike fashion, and will never come apart. And whenever Aaron goes into the sanctuary, he will carry on his breast, on the burse that gives counsel, the names of Israel's sons, putting the Lord in mind of them eternally.³

And within the burse that gives counsel thou wilt put the touchstones of wisdom

¹ According to the Hebrew text, this refers, not to the mantle itself but to the band which was a part of it.

² The significance of the Hebrew word used here is quite uncertain, but the context suggests a kind of pouch or wallet. 'From which thou wilt take counsel'; it is clear from various references that in some way the burse was used for the taking of omens, by a system provisionally prearranged, when difficult decisions were to be made; hence it is called 'the burse of judgement'. Cf. note on verse 30. The precious stones named in the verses which follow cannot be identified with certainty.

³ The Latin version differs at several points from the Hebrew text, but the general picture they give is the same; the burse was secured by four rings, two of which were attached by gold chains to a couple of hooks high up on the mantle, and two by blue cords to a couple of rings let into the mantle lower down.

and of truth.¹ These shall be on Aaron's breast, when he enters the Lord's presence; as long as he is there, he will be carrying on his breast the arbitrament of the sons of Israel.

131 The tunic that goes with the mantle is
132 to be made all of blue, and in the middle
of it there is to be an opening for the head,
with a woven border round it, such as is
commonly put round the edges of gar-
133 ments, to prevent tearing. Underneath,
round the skirt of this tunic, thou shalt
hang ornaments of blue thread and purple,
and of scarlet twice-dyed, pomegranate-
134 shaped, with bells between them; a golden
bell, then a pomegranate, then another
135 golden bell, then another pomegranate. In
this Aaron shall ever be clothed when he
performs his priestly office; with the
ringing of bells he must announce his
comings and goings in the sanctuary, there
in the Lord's presence, on pain of death.

136 And thou shalt make a plate of pure
gold, inscribed with all the engraver's
skill, with the words, Set apart for the
137 Lord. This is to be bound with a blue cord
138 on to the mitre, and will hang over the
priest's forehead. Whatever fault is found
in offering and gift, by Israel's sons dedi-
cated and hallowed, Aaron must charge
himself with it; and the Lord will over-
look it, so long as the plate hangs ever on
Aaron's forehead.

139 The robe must be of pleated linen, the
mitre also of linen, and the girdle of em-
140 broided work. For Aaron's sons, too,
thou shalt make linen robes and girdles
and mitres; to their honour and adorn-
141 ment; in all these vestments Aaron thy
brother shall be clad, and his sons with
him. And thou shalt consecrate their
hands, and set them apart to serve me in
142 the priestly office. Breeches of linen, too,
shall be made for them, to cover all that
must not be seen naked, from loin to thigh;
143 these Aaron and his sons shall wear when-
ever they enter the tabernacle that bears
record of me, or draw near the altar to
do me service in the sanctuary, on pain of
death. Such observance Aaron, and his
sons after him, shall maintain perpetually.

29 And there is more for thee to do,
before they can be my con-
secrated priests. Choose a bullock out of
the herd, and two rams without blemish.
Then make unleavened bread, and un-
2 leavened pastry baked with oil, and un-
leavened cakes soaked in oil, all of pure
wheat flour, and put them in a basket
3 ready to be offered up. The bullock and
the two rams thou shalt drive to the door
4 of the tabernacle which bears record of
me. Thither, too, thou shalt bring Aaron
and his sons; and when thou hast washed
them, father and sons in water, clothe
5 Aaron in his vestments, the robe, the tunic,
the mantle, and the burse made fast to his
mantle's band, and put the mitre on his
6 head, and the holy plate over the mitre.
And then anoint his head with oil; so shall
7 he be consecrated. Then it is the turn
8 of his sons to approach, and be clothed in
their linen robes, and have their girdles
tied and their mitres put on, like Aaron
9 himself; so they shall be my priests, hal-
lowed eternally.

When thou hast consecrated their
hands, bring out the bullock in front of
10 the tabernacle that bears record of me;
there, when Aaron and his sons have laid
their hands upon its head, thou shalt slay
11 it in the Lord's presence, at the tabernacle
door. Some of its blood thou shalt smear,
12 with thy hand, upon the horns of the altar;
the rest thou shalt pour out at the altar's
foot. Then take all the fat about its entrails,
13 the membrane of its liver, and the two
kidneys with the fat on them and offer
them as a burnt-sacrifice on the altar; the
14 flesh, skin and dung of the bullock thou
shalt burn beyond the confines of the
camp, as an offering for sin.

Take one of the rams, too, and bid
15 Aaron and his sons lay their hands upon
its head; then kill it, and pour out some of
its blood round the altar. Cut up the ram
17 itself into pieces; put these and the head
underneath, the entrails (when thou hast
washed them) and the feet above, and so
18 make a burnt-sacrifice of the whole ram
upon the altar; the scent of the victim so
offered to the Lord will find acceptance

¹ Literally, 'the Doctrine and the Truth'. In the Hebrew text, the words used are of doubtful significance: the former probably means 'lights'. Some think the precious stones enumerated above afforded omens, e.g., by their brightness or dullness; others, that the pouch contained sacred objects, not further specified, which were used for the same purpose. Cf. Num. 27. 21; 1 Kg. 14. 41 and note.

19 with him. Then take the other ram, Aaron and his sons laying their hands on its head
20 meanwhile; and when thou hast killed this ram, put some of the blood on the tip of Aaron's right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot, and do the same by his sons. Pour blood,
21 too, all round the surface of the altar, and then sprinkle with this, and with the oil used for anointing, Aaron and his sons, and the vestments they wear.

22 So hallowing all alike, take the fat, the tail, the covering of the entrails, the membrane of the liver, the two kidneys with the fat on them, and the right shoulder from this ram, the victim of their consecration; take a loaf of bread, too, a piece of pastry cooked in oil, and one of the cakes, out of the basket that lies there
24 before the Lord; and put all this in the hands of Aaron and his sons. Then raise it aloft in the Lord's presence, and by that act they shall be consecrated, Aaron and his sons both. Then take all the offerings out of their hands again, and make a burnt-sacrifice of them upon the altar; the scent of them will be acceptable to the Lord, in
26 whose honour they are offered up. The breast of the ram that is used in Aaron's hallowing thou shalt remove, and sanctify it by holding it up in the Lord's presence; this shall be thy own share.¹

27 Thou shalt set apart this consecrated breast and shoulder, taken from the ram
28 by which Aaron and Aaron's line are hallowed, to be their lot, a fixed privilege the people of Israel will grant to them; these are the earnest and the first-fruits of those welcome-offerings which they make to the
29 Lord. The sacred vestments which Aaron wore shall be worn by his sons after him when they are anointed and consecrated; whatever son of his shall succeed him,
30 entering the tabernacle that bears record of me and ministering before me in the sanctuary, shall wear them for seven days
31 continuously. As for the ram with which they were hallowed, it must be taken away
32 and cooked in a holy place; and so Aaron and his sons will eat it. They, too, will eat the bread from the basket, in the porch of the tabernacle that bears record of me, so
33 that the sacrifice of it may atone for them,

and their hands be hallowed by the offering of it; these things are too holy to be eaten by anyone not of their family. Whatever
34 remains till morning of the consecrated meat or bread must be burnt in the fire; it is too holy to be eaten. All this that I
35 have told thee must be done to Aaron and his sons; thou art to spend seven days in consecrating their hands, and on each of those days a bullock must be sacrificed as a sin-offering to atone for them. So offering a victim to make atonement, thou wilt cleanse the altar, and sanctify it by anointing. Seven whole days thou must spend
37 in winning favour for the altar and consecrating it; so it shall be all holiness, and whoever touches it shall become holy thereby.

On this altar thou shalt sacrifice two
38 lambs day by day, with no intermission; one is to be offered in the morning, the
39 other in the evening. One lamb each morning, with a tenth of a bushel of flour, kneaded in three pints of pure oil, and as much wine for a libation; and another
41 offered in the evening with the same rite and all the additional offerings aforesaid, a fragrance acceptable to the Lord. This
42 is his sacrifice, to be performed day after day, by one generation of you after another, in the Lord's presence, there at the door of the tabernacle that bears record, the appointed place where I will give thee
43 audience. There I will issue my commands to the sons of Israel; that altar shall be hallowed by my glorious presence. Hallowed it shall be, and hallowed the
44 tabernacle that bears record of me; hallowed shall Aaron be and his sons, for their priestly office. And I will dwell in the
45 midst of the Israelites, and be their God; and they shall know me for the Lord God
46 that rescued them from the land of Egypt, so as to abide among them, their Lord and their God.

30 For burning incense, thou shalt make an altar of acacia wood, a cubit square in surface, and two cubits high; it must have horns going out of it. The whole must be covered with pure gold, the grate and the walls around it and the horns too. It is to have a rim of gold

¹ The special privilege here granted to Moses was to belong in future (verse 28) to the high-priestly family. In the Hebrew text there is some doubt about the meaning of verse 28.

4 about it, and close under the rim two gold rings on either side, with poles in them, 5 so that the altar can be carried; these poles, too, must be of acacia wood, gilded over. 6 Its position is to be facing the veil that hides the ark and its records, facing, too, the throne that overshadows them, my 7 trysting-place with thee. Aaron, when he trims the lamps each morning, shall burn 8 fragrant incense on it, and again when he lights them at evening he shall burn incense in the Lord's presence; a custom 9 you are to preserve age after age. You are to offer no incense there but what is of my own prescription; there is to be no sacrifice, no victim, no pouring of libations. 10 Once a year Aaron shall make intercession at the horns of it, with the blood that is offered in atonement for sin, winning pardon for you there, age after age; it shall be all holiness in the Lord's honour. 11 This, too, was the Lord's word to 12 Moses: When thou dost pass the Israelites in review and count their number, each shall pay the Lord a forfeit for his life, to avert all plague at the time of their numbering.¹ As each man is added to the count, he must pay half a sicle by sanctuary reckoning (note that the sicle, half of which must be paid to the Lord, is worth thirty pence). The forfeit must be paid by all those, above the age of twenty, who are registered, the rich giving no more than half a silver piece, and the poor no less. 13 The money taken up in this contribution from the Israelites is to be devoted to the needs of the tabernacle which bears record of me, to put the Lord in mind of them, and win ransom for their lives. 14 This, too, was the Lord's word to 15 Moses: Make a washing-basin of bronze, with a stand, and set it between the tabernacle that bears record of me and the brazen altar. Water shall be poured into it for Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet before they enter the tabernacle that bears record of me, or approach the altar to kindle their sacrifice before the 16 Lord. This they must do on pain of death;

it is an observance that must be kept alive by him and by all his sons that succeed him.

This, too, was the Lord's word to 22 Moses: Provide thyself with spices, a stone 23 of the best and choicest² myrrh, and half a stone of cinnamon, and half a stone of scented cane, a stone, too, of cassia, all 24 reckoned by sanctuary weights; and with these, three quarts of olive oil. And so 25 make the holy oil to be used for anointing, an ointment mixed with all the perfumer's art. This thou must use to anoint the tabernacle that bears record of me, and the ark where that record lies; the table with its appurtenances, the lamp-stand with its appurtenances, the altar used for incense, and that used for burnt-sacrifice, and all the instruments belonging to them.³ All 29 these thou shalt sanctify, and they shall be all holiness; whoever touches them shall become holy thereby. Aaron himself and his sons thou shalt anoint and hallow, before they can minister as my priests.

This, too, tell the Israelites: The oil used for anointing is a thing you must keep set apart for me, age after age. It is not 32 to be used for anointing the flesh of man; nor are you to compound oil for yourselves as this is compounded; it is a thing set apart, and you must keep it holy. Whoever 33 compounds such, though it be to give it to a stranger for his use, is lost to his people.⁴

This, too, was the Lord's word to 34 Moses: Provide thyself with spices, storax, and burnt shell, and sweet-smelling galbanum, and pure frankincense, all in equal weight, and make incense compounded with all the perfumer's art, well tempered together, unadulterate, fit for hallowing. All this thou shalt beat into fine powder, 36 and keep a store of it before the tabernacle that bears record of me, my trysting-place with thee. For you, this incense shall be 37 all holiness; you must not compound it so for your own use, it is set apart for the Lord. Whoever compounds the like, to 38 make perfume for his own enjoyment, is lost to his people.

¹ Cf. II Kg. 24.

² The word used in the Hebrew text seems to mean 'liquid', although the reckoning is made by weight. The figures here only correspond roughly with those in the original, which are besides uncertain; some think that the weight was twice that here indicated.

³ The Hebrew text adds at the end, 'and the basin and its stand'.
⁴ This appears to be the sense of the Latin; the Hebrew text is more naturally interpreted as meaning 'The man who either makes oil like this, or gives away this oil to a stranger'. The stranger, in that case, would be anyone not of the priestly family, as in 29. 33 above.

31 And now the Lord said to Moses,
 2 Here is the name of the man I have
 singled out to help thee, Beseleel, son of
 Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Juda.
 3 I have filled him with my divine spirit,
 making him wise, adroit, and skilful in
 4 every kind of craftsmanship; so that he
 can design whatever is to be designed in
 5 gold, silver, and bronze, carve both stone
 6 and jewel, and woods of all sorts. I have
 found a partner for him in Oöliab, son of
 Achisamech, of the tribe of Dan; and I
 have inspired the hearts of all the crafts-
 7 men with skill to carry out the commands
 which I have given thee. The tabernacle
 which attests my covenant,¹ the ark that
 bears record of me, the throne above it,
 and all the appurtenances of the taber-
 8 nacle, the table with its appurtenances, the
 lamp-stand of pure gold and all that goes
 9 with it, the altar for incense and the altar
 for burnt-sacrifice, and all that goes with
 10 these, the basin and its stand, the sacred
 vestments to be worn by the high priest
 Aaron and his sons when they perform
 11 their holy office, the oil for anointing, and
 the incense that is to perfume the sanc-
 tuary, all that I have bidden thee make,
 shall be made through their workmanship.
 12 This, too, was the Lord's word to
 13 Moses: Give the sons of Israel a warning
 from me, Be sure that you observe the
 sabbath day.² It is a token between us,
 that is to last all through the ages which
 lie before you, reminding you that I am
 the Lord, and you are set apart for me.
 14 Keep my sabbath; it has a binding claim
 on you, on pain of death for all who violate
 it. The man who does any work on that
 15 day is lost to his people. You have six days
 to work in; the seventh is the sabbath, a
 day of rest set apart for the Lord, and if
 anybody works on that day, his life must
 16 pay for it. It is for the sons of Israel to
 observe my sabbath and honour it among
 themselves, age after age. It is an undying
 17 covenant, a perpetual token between me
 and the Israelites; the Lord spent six days
 making heaven and earth, and on the
 seventh he rested from his labours.
 18 Then, at the end of all this converse

with Moses on mount Sinai, the Lord gave
 him two stone tablets, with laws inscribed
 on them by the very finger of God.

32 Meanwhile, finding that Moses' return from the mountain was so long delayed, the people remonstrated with Aaron. Bestir thyself, they said; fashion us gods, to be our leaders. We had a man to lead us, this Moses, when we came away from Egypt; but there is no saying what has become of him. Take out the gold ear-rings, said Aaron, that your wives and sons and daughters wear, and bring them to me. The people, then, brought him their ear-rings as he had bidden them, and he melted down what they had given him and cast them into the figure of a calf. And all cried out, Here are thy gods, Israel, the gods that rescued thee from the land of Egypt. Aaron, finding them so minded, built an altar in front of it, and bade the crier give out that there would be a solemn feast next day in the Lord's honour. So when they awoke on the morrow, they offered burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offerings; and with that, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to take their pleasure.

And now the Lord said to Moses, Away, down with thee; they have fallen into sin, this people thou didst bring out of Egypt with thee. They have been swift to leave the way thou didst mark out for them, by making a molten calf and falling down to worship it; brought victims to it, and cried out, Here are thy gods, Israel, the gods that rescued thee from the land of Egypt. And the Lord said to Moses, I know them now for a stiff-necked race; spare me thy importunity, let me vent my anger and destroy them; I will make thy posterity into a great nation instead. But Moses would still plead with the Lord his God; What, Lord, said he, wilt thou vent thy anger on thy people, the people thou didst rescue from Egypt so imperiously, with so strong a hand? Wilt thou let the Egyptians say it was but a treacherous deliverance; that thou hadst marked them out for death, here in the mountains, and

¹ 'The tabernacle which attests my covenant'; in the Hebrew text, the phrase used is 'the tabernacle which is the meeting-place (between God and man)', elsewhere rendered in the Latin version, 'the tabernacle which bears record of me'.

² That is, perhaps, during all the busy activity of making the tabernacle.

no trace left of them on earth? Oh let the storm of thy anger pass; pardon thy people's guilt! Remember thy servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and the oath thou didst swear by thy own name: I will make your posterity countless as the stars in heaven, and give them all this land of which I spoke to you, to be their everlasting home. So the Lord relented, and spared his people the punishment he had threatened.

With that, Moses came down from the mountain, carrying in his hand the two tablets of the law, with writing on either side, God's workmanship; a divine hand had traced the characters they bore. And now, as the noise of shouting reached him, Josue said to Moses, I hear the cry of battle in the camp. No, said he, this is no sound of triumph or of rout; it is the sound of singing that I hear. Then they drew nearer the camp, and he saw the calf standing there, and the dancing. And so angry was he that he threw down the tablets he held, and broke them against the spurs of the mountain; then he took the calf they had made and threw it on the fire, and beat it into dust; this dust he sprinkled over water, which he made the Israelites drink.

And he asked Aaron, What harm has this people done thee, that thou hast involved them in such guilt? Do not be angry with me, my lord, said he; thou knowest how the whole bent of this people is towards wrong-doing, and it was they who said to me, Fashion us gods to be our leaders. We had a man to lead us, this Moses, when we came away from Egypt, but there is no saying now what has become of him. So I asked them, Which of you has any gold in his possession? And they brought what they had, and gave it to me; I cast it into the fire, and this calf was the issue of it.

Moses saw, too, that the people went all unarmed; Aaron had let them strip, in

their shameless debauchery, so that they were defenceless against attack.¹ So he stood there at the gate of the camp, and said, Rally to my side, all that will take the Lord's part. Then the whole tribe of Levi gathered round them, and he said, A message to you from the Lord God of Israel. Gird on your swords, and pass to and fro through the middle of the camp, from gate to gate, killing your own brothers, your own friends, your own neighbours. So the sons of Levi did as Moses bade them, and that day some twenty-three thousand men fell slain. To-day, said Moses, at war with your own flesh and blood, you have dedicated your hands to the Lord's service, and earned his blessing.²

When the morrow came, Moses told the people, You have sinned heinously; I will go up into the Lord's presence, and see if I can make amends for your guilt. And so, having recourse to the Lord again, he prayed thus: Thy people have sinned heinously, in making themselves gods of gold. I entreat thee, pardon this offence of theirs; or else blot out my name too from the record thou hast written.³ Whoever sins against me, the Lord answered, shall be blotted out from my record. But do thou march on, and lead this people into the land I told thee of, and my angel shall still go before thee. But when the time comes for vengeance, this sin of theirs shall not be forgotten.

The Lord, then, made the people suffer for their wickedness in the matter of the calf Aaron made for them.⁴

33 And now a new message came to Moses from the Lord, March on, then, with the people thou hast led out of Egypt; make thy way hence to the land I promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob should be the home of their race. I am

¹ The meaning of the Hebrew text here is somewhat obscure; it says no more, than that Aaron had given the people free rein, exposing them to the derision of their attackers. If the interpretation given in the Latin is correct, we should perhaps suppose that the Hebrews were commanded to go always armed; and it was the neglect of this command which exposed them to the onslaught of the Levites.

² Wherever the Old Testament records bloodthirsty actions done from zeal for the worship of God, we should remember (i) the barbarity of the times and (ii) the fact that God, under the imperfect revelation of the Old Covenant, did sometimes sanction conduct which, for more enlightened consciences, would be wrong. Hence we must not regard exploits like that of the Levites in this passage as worthy of imitation. According to the Hebrew text, the number of those killed was three thousand.

³ It does not seem probable that Moses refers here to the book of eternal life; if we understand him in that sense, he is perhaps giving rhetorical expression to the love he bears for his people. (Cf. note on Rom. 9. 3.) But the allusion is more probably to the register of God's people, mystically conceived as written down under his eye; cf. Mal. 3. 16.

⁴ It is not clear whether this refers to the events described in verses 27-29, or some other punishment not here specified.

ready to send an angel who will go before thee, so as to cast out Chanaanite, Amorhite, Hethite, Perezite, Hevite and Jebusite, and bring thee into the land that is all milk and honey. But I will not go with thee myself, stiff-necked people as thou art, or I might be moved to destroy thee on the way.

4 The people, on hearing this bitter reproach, went mourning, and none wore his ornaments, as custom bade; the Lord's word came through Moses to the Israelites, You are a stiff-necked people, and if once I set out on the march among you, I would be moved to destroy you. Take off, here and now, your ornaments, and wait till I have resolved what to do with you. So there, at mount Horeb, the sons of Israel laid their ornaments aside. Moses, too, removed his tent,¹ and pitched it far off, away from the camp, calling it, The tent which bears witness to the covenant; to this, all who had disputes to settle must betake themselves, away from the camp.

8 And when Moses repaired to this tent of his, all the people rose up and stood at the doors of their own tents, following Moses with their eyes till he went in. And, once he was within the tent that bore witness of the covenant, the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the entrance of it, and there the Lord spoke with Moses, while all watched the pillar of cloud standing there, and rose up and worshipped, each at his own tent door. Thus the Lord spoke with Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And when he returned to the camp, Josue, son of Nun, the young man who served him, never left the tent unguarded.

12 Then Moses complained to the Lord, Thou biddest me lead this people on the march, but thou wilt not tell me who it is thou art sending me for my guide. And this is the man whom thou callest thy familiar friend,² assuring him of thy favour! Nay, if indeed thou dost look upon me with favour, make thy own presence known to me; let me know thee, and

The Lord speaks with Moses face to face

know that thy favour is with me. Have more regard for this folk, thy own people. My presence, the Lord said, shall go before thee, and bring thee to thy resting-place. It must be thyself, said Moses, going before us; otherwise do not bid us leave the place where we are.³ How am I and thy people to know that thou dost look upon us with favour, if thou wilt not journey with us; such a privilege as no other people in the world can boast? And the Lord told Moses, I will grant this request of thine; such favour thou hast with me, thou, my familiar friend.

Give me, then, said Moses, the sight of thy glory. And he answered, All my splendour shall pass before thy eyes, and I will pronounce, in thy presence, my own divine name, the name of the Lord who shews favour where he will, grants pardon where he will. But, my face, he said, thou canst not see; mortal man cannot see me, and live to tell of it. Then he said, There is a place here, close by me, where thou mayst stand on a rock; there I will station thee in a cleft of the rock, while my glory passes by, and cover thee with my right hand until I have gone past. So, when I take my hand away, thou shalt follow me with thy eyes, but my face thou canst not see.

34 After this the Lord said to him, Carve two tablets of stone, like those others, and I will write on them the same words as I wrote on the tablets thou didst break. Be ready to come up on to mount Sinai in the morning, and there thou shalt stand before me on the mountain top. No one else is to climb up with thee, no one else is to be in sight on any part of the mountain; even the cattle and the sheep must not be allowed to graze within view. So Moses carved two tablets of stone, like the others; and he rose at dawn and went up mount Sinai at the Lord's bidding, with the tablets in his hand. The Lord came down to meet him, hidden in cloud, and Moses stood with him there, calling on the Lord's name.

¹ Some would translate 'the tabernacle', but it seems clear that the tabernacle, afterwards called 'the tabernacle of the covenant' (or rather, 'of meeting'; see note on 31. 7), had not yet been constructed.

² Literally, 'knowest by name'. So in verse 17, below. ³ In the Hebrew text of verse 13, Moses asks the Lord to make known not his presence, but 'his way'; it is difficult to see in what exact sense. Both in verse 14 and in verse 15, according to the Hebrew text, it is a question of God's 'face', or 'presence', going before Moses on his journey. The Latin, however, seems to distinguish between God's 'presence' (as if it were something which could be indirectly manifested), and his own personal nearness.

6 Thus the Lord passed by, and he cried out, It is the Lord God, the gracious; slow to take vengeance, rich in kindness, faithful
 7 to his promises. He is true to his promise of mercy a thousand times over; shame or sin or guilt is none but he forgives it; yet, before him, none can claim innocence in his own right, and when he punishes, the son must make amends for the father's guilt, to the third and the fourth generation.¹ Then, without more ado, Moses fell
 8 prostrate with his face to the ground in worship. Lord, he said, if thou dost look on me with favour, I entreat thee to go with us on our journey, stiff-necked as this people is; guilt of our sins do thou pardon, and keep us for thy own.

9 And the Lord answered, Here is my covenant, to which I am pledged. In the presence of you all I will do such marvels as were never yet seen on earth by any nation; the people among whom thou dwellest shall see for themselves what the Lord can do, and be terrified at the sight.
 10 Thy part is to keep all the commandments I am now giving thee.

11 When I dispossess Amorrite, Chanaanite, Hethite, Pherezite, Hevite and
 12 Jebusite at thy coming, make no treaty of friendship with any inhabitant of the land, or it will be thy ruin; destroy their altars,
 13 break their images, cut down their forest shrines.² Never pay worship to any alien god; the very name of the Lord bespeaks
 14 jealous love, he will endure no rival. Do not ally yourselves, then, with those who dwell there; those faithless hearts will be set on their own gods, and when they do sacrifice to their idols, someone will bid
 15 thee come and feast upon the meat so offered. Nor must thou find wives for thy sons among their daughters; faithless themselves, they will make thy sons, too,
 16 faithless, and worshippers of their own gods. Cast no metal to make thyself idols.

¹ In the Latin version, it is Moses who cries aloud the Lord's name, and describes him in the terms of verses 6 and 7. But according to the Hebrew text, it is the Almighty who cries out his own name as he comes near, and verses 6 and 7 give the terms in which he does so. This is more in keeping with the promise made above (33. 19).
² 'Images'; the word here used, which is of frequent occurrence, perhaps refers to stone pillars set up by the side of heathen altars; they may, originally, have been meant for representations of deities. The 'forest shrines' seem to have been sacred wooden poles similarly erected by the side of altars. These may have been survivals of tree-worship; cf. the emphasis on worshipping under trees in (e.g.) Jer. 2. 20; 3. 6, 13.
³ The text is awkward, suggesting that Moses wrote on the two tablets of stone the precepts, largely ceremonial, given in the preceding verses (11-26). But it is clear from verse 1 above that it was God who wrote on this occasion, reinscribing the moral precepts of Ex. 20. 2-17; Moses will have carried out the command given to him in verse 27 later on, with ordinary writing materials.

18 Observe the feast of unleavened bread. For seven days, in the first month of spring, thou shalt eat thy bread without leaven, as I bade thee; it was in that spring month thou didst escape from Egypt.

19 The first male thing that comes from every womb is forfeit to me; every such living thing, be it ox or ass, is mine by right. When an ass has her first foal, thou shalt offer a sheep in payment of its ransom; or, if thou hast no mind to ransom it, let it be killed. The first-born of thy own sons thou must ransom, presenting thyself before me with an offering.

21 Thou hast six days to work in; on the seventh, both ploughing and reaping must cease.

22 Thou shalt keep the feast of the seven weeks, with the first-fruits of thy wheat harvest, and another feast at the end of the year, when all is gathered in. Thrice in the
 23 year all thy men folk shall present themselves before the Lord, the almighty God of Israel. And so, when I have dispossessed the nations at thy coming, and given
 24 thee wide lands to dwell in, three times a year present thyself before the Lord thy God, and thy lands none shall invade by treachery.

25 When thou offerest living things in sacrifice to me, the bread that goes with them shall not be leavened, nor shalt thou leave any of the paschal victim till the morrow.

26 Bring the first-fruits of thy land as an offering to the house of the Lord thy God. Seething a kid in its dam's milk is a rite forbidden thee.

27 Then the Lord said to Moses, Put these words in writing, as terms of the covenant I am making with thee and with Israel. So, for forty days and nights, without food
 28 or drink, he remained there with the Lord; and he wrote down on the tablets the ten precepts of the covenant.³ Moses came
 29 down, after this, from Mount Sinai, bear-

ing with him the two tablets on which the law was written; and his face, although he did not know it, was all radiant¹ after the meeting at which he had held speech with God. The sight of that radiance made Aaron and the sons of Israel shrink from all near approach to him; he must call out to Aaron and the leaders of the people before they would gather round him. To these he spoke first; then all the Israelites came to greet him, and he passed on to them all the commands he had received on mount Sinai. When he had finished speaking, he put a veil over his face, which he only laid aside when he went into the Lord's presence and had speech with him. Afterwards he would come out, and tell the Israelites what commands had been given him; so they saw his face, as he came out, still radiant, but always, when he spoke to them, he veiled his face as before.

35 And now he called the whole assembly of the Israelites into his presence, and told them, Here are the Lord's commands. You have six days before you now to work in; when the seventh comes, you must keep it holy, since it is the sabbath, the Lord's day of rest; no one must do any work that day, on pain of death, you must not even light a fire in any of your dwelling-places on the sabbath day. Then Moses went on to tell all the Israelites what prescriptions the Lord had given him,² how they were to set apart contributions, to be offered to the Lord freely and with a ready heart; contributions of gold and silver and bronze, threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and lawn, and goats' hair, and rams' fleeces dyed red, and skins dyed violet; acacia wood, and oil to feed lamps, spices for the anointing-oil, and sweet-smelling incense; onyx-stones, too, and jewels, to be set in the priestly mantle and its burse.

If any of you is a skilled craftsman, he said, let him come forward to carry out the Lord's bidding. There is a tabernacle to be made, with its covering and its canopy, rings and boards and poles and pegs and sockets; an ark with poles to carry it, a throne over it, and a veil to hang in front

of it; a table with its poles and its appurtenances, bread, too, to be set forth there; a lamp-stand on which the lights are to rest, with its lamps and its other appurtenances, and oil to keep the light burning; an altar for offering incense, with its poles; oil for anointing, and incense made from spices; a screen for the tabernacle entrance; an altar for burnt-sacrifice, with its grating of bronze, its poles and other appurtenances; a basin with its stand; curtains for the court, with the posts they hang from and their sockets, a hanging for the door of the court, pegs and ropes to make fast both the tabernacle and its enclosure; the vestments that are worn in the service of the sanctuary, and those sacred vestments in which Aaron and his sons will perform their priestly office before the Lord.

No sooner had the sons of Israel left Moses' presence, than all alike began making their contributions to the Lord, with readiness and devotion of heart, to help build the tabernacle that should bear record of him. Whatever was needed for the performance of worship, or for sacred vestments, men and women made haste to give; armlets and ear-pendants, rings and bracelets; all the gold ware they had was set apart to be given to the Lord. And whoever had thread of blue or purple or scarlet twice-dyed, lawn or goats' hair, rams' fleeces dyed red, or skins dyed violet, or silver, or bronze, offered them to the Lord; and acacia wood for all its manifold uses. There were women, too, skilled in spinning, who had their own contribution to make of blue, or purple, or scarlet, or lawn, or goats' hair, and made them of their own accord. It was the rulers who gave onyx-stones and jewels for the mantle and its burse, and the spices and oil for feeding the lamps, and preparing the ointment, and making the sweet-smelling incense. All alike, men and women, devoutly brought their gifts, so as to speed on the work which the Lord, through Moses, had enjoined on them; there was not one Israelite that did not freely consecrate his offerings to the Lord's service.

And now Moses said to the sons of Israel, Here is the name of the man the Lord

¹ Literally (in the Latin), 'his face was horned'. text in chapters 35-39 as in chapters 25-30.

² The Latin sometimes varies from the Hebrew

has singled out to help me, Beseleel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Juda.

131 The Lord has filled this man with his divine spirit, making him wise, adroit, and skilful in every kind of craftsmanship, so that he can design and execute whatever is needed, in gold, silver, bronze, and sculptured gems, and carpenter's work.

132 All the craftsman's wit can discover the Lord has put into his heart. Here is Oöliab, too, son of Achisamech, of the tribe of Dan; both of these he has endowed with skill, to carry out woodwork, and tapestry, and embroidery, with threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed and lawn; the weaving shall be theirs, and they shall find out new devices.

36 And so the work was begun, by Beseleel, and Oöliab, and all the craftsmen to whom the Lord had given skill in their craft, so that they should know how to make workmanlike provision for the sanctuary's needs, according to the prescriptions the Lord had given. Moses summoned them, all these trained workmen who had been endowed by the Lord with skill, and had offered their services freely; and he handed over to them the contributions which the sons of Israel made. Eagerly they set about their work, and every morning the people brought their gifts, till at last the workmen must needs come to Moses, and tell him, The people are offering more than is needed. So Moses bade the crier give out that no man or woman should offer any more for the needs of the sanctuary; thus he put an end to the bringing of gifts, because the contribution had already given them enough and to spare.

8 So, to carry out the fashioning of the tabernacle, all these skilful workmen made ten curtains, of twisted linen thread, embroidered with threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, all of the same size, twenty-eight cubits in length and four in width. Then Beseleel joined five of these to each other, and the remaining five in the same way. And on the sides of one set of curtains, at its extreme edge, he made loops of blue cord, and so with the other, so that loop could meet loop and be fastened to it.

3 Afterwards he made fifty gold clasps, to catch the loops on the curtains, so as to

make a single tent of them. Next, he made eleven coverings of goats' hair, to protect the tapestry over the tabernacle. The measurements of all these coverings were the same; each was thirty cubits long and four cubits wide. He joined together first five of these coverings, then the other six in their turn. And he made fifty loops at the edge of the first set of coverings, then fifty at the edge of the other, to join them together, and fifty brazen clasps, so that the coverings would be tied together, and the whole would form a single protecting roof. He made a canopy, too, over the tabernacle, of rams' fleeces dyed red, and another canopy over that of skins dyed violet.

He made upright frames, too, of acacia wood to support the tabernacle. Each board was ten cubits high, and had a width of a cubit and a half; and at the sides of it, two tenon-pieces jutted out, so that each might be mortised to the next; all the framework of the tabernacle he made in this way. Twenty frames were on the south, facing the midday sun, with forty silver sockets, two to each frame, fitting on each side at the corners, where the mortising finished. There were twenty frames, too, on the side of the tabernacle which looked north, with forty silver sockets, two to each frame. For the western side of the tabernacle, looking towards the sea, he made six frames, and two in addition, for the corners at the extreme end of the tabernacle. These were joined together, from bottom to top, with a single kind of fastening; it was the same with the corners at each side, so that altogether there were eight frames, with sixteen silver sockets, two at the foot of each.

Then he made five poles of acacia wood, to hold the frames together on one side of the tabernacle, and five more to connect the frames on the opposite side, and on the western side of the tabernacle, looking seawards, five more still. And one pole he made that should reach right along the frames from end to end. The sockets he made of cast silver; the frames themselves he gilded over, and made rings of gold through which the poles, those too plated with gold, could pass.

He made a veil, too, out of twisted linen thread, worked in threads of blue and

36 purple and scarlet twice-dyed, with all the
embroiderer's art, and four posts of acacia
wood, gilded and with gilt capitals, but set
37 in silver sockets. And he made a screen
out of twisted linen thread, embroidered
with threads of blue and purple and scarlet
twice-dyed, for the entrance of the taber-
38 nacle, and five posts of acacia wood which
he gilded over, capitals and all, fitting into
sockets of moulded bronze.

37 Beseleel also made an ark of acacia
wood, two and a half cubits long,
with a breadth and height of one and a
half cubits, and gave it a covering and a
2 lining of pure gold, putting a coping of
3 gold all round the top of it, and four rings,
cast in gold, at its four corners, two on
4 each of the flanks. Then he made poles of
5 acacia wood, gilded over, and passed them
through the rings on the sides of the ark,
so as to carry it.

6 He made a throne, too, or shrine, of
pure gold, two and a half cubits long, one
7 and a half cubits broad, and two cherubs
of pure beaten gold, which he set up on
either side of the throne, each of them at
8 its extreme edge. And these two cherubs
that stood at the extreme edges of the
9 throne overshadowed it with their out-
spread wings, facing towards it and to-
wards each other.

10 And he made a table of acacia wood, two
cubits long, a cubit broad, and a cubit and
11 a half in height; this he gilded with pure
gold, and made a rim of gold about its
12 edge, with an embossed coping four inches
high, and a second coping of gold over
13 that. Then he cast four rings and fixed
them to the four corners of the table, one
14 by each leg close to the coping; and he put
poles through them, that would carry the
15 table; these poles, too, he made of acacia
wood, and gilded them over. So with the
16 appurtenances of the table, cups, and
bowls, and dishes, and goblets for pouring
out libations; all were of pure gold.

17 And he made a lamp-stand of pure
beaten gold, with branches coming out
18 from its stem, all with their cups and bosses
and fleurs-de-lis. Six branches stood
19 about the stem, three on either side; and
on each branch there were three cups
shaped like almond-flowers, then a boss,
then a fleur-de-lis, balanced by three cups

Construction of the Ark and the Altars

and a boss and a fleur-de-lis on the oppo-
site branch; such was the fashion of all the
six branches that came out of the stem.
But the stem itself had four cups, shaped
2 like almond-flowers, each with its boss and
its fleur-de-lis; there were six branches
21 altogether coming out of a single stem, and
under each pair of them there was an addi-
22 tional boss. The bosses and the branches
were all of a piece with the main stem, and
all alike were of pure beaten gold. He
23 made seven lamps, too, with snuffers and
trays for the burnt wick, all of pure gold.
The whole weight of the lamp-stand, to-
24 gether with its appurtenances, was a talent
of gold.

And he made an altar of acacia wood for
25 burning incense, a cubit square, with a
height of two cubits; it had horns at the
corners. And he covered the whole with
26 pure gold, the grate and the walls around
it and the horns too. It had a rim of gold
27 about it, and close under the rim two gold
rings on either side, for putting poles in,
so that the altar could be carried. These
28 poles, too, were of acacia wood, gilded
over.

And he made oil for the hallowing oint-
29 ment, and incense of pure spices, with all
the art of a perfumer.

38 He made another altar, too, of
acacia wood, for burnt-sacrifice,
with a surface five cubits square, and a
height of three cubits; it had horns at the
corners, and it was plated with bronze. And
he provided it with appurtenances all of
bronze, ash-pans, tongs, forks, hooks and
braziers; and made it a bronze grating of
network, and a hearth under this, in the
middle of the altar. He also cast four
rings, to go at the four extreme ends of the
grating; through these, poles were to be
passed, to carry the altar. The poles them-
selves he made of acacia wood, covered
with a plating of bronze, and set them in
the rings that stood out from the sides of
the altar. This altar was not solid, but
hollow, made of frames with an empty
space between them.

Then he made a washing-basin and a
stand for it, out of bronze from the mirrors
of the women who used to keep watch at
the door of the tabernacle.

He made a court, too, at the south side

of which there were hangings of twisted
 10 linen thread, a hundred cubits long, and
 twenty posts, with brazen sockets,¹ with
 their capitals and all their chased work of
 11 silver. On the north side, too, there were
 hangings, and posts with their sockets and
 capitals, all of the same measurement,
 12 workmanship, and material. But on the
 side which looked westwards the hangings
 were only fifty cubits long, and the posts,
 with their brazen sockets, their silver
 capitals, and chased work, were only ten
 13 in number. For the eastern side, it was
 fifty cubits long; fifteen cubits occupied
 the space at one end, in which there were
 14 three sockets and three posts, and at the
 other end (leaving room in between for the
 entrance which led to the tabernacle) there
 were again hangings fifteen cubits long,
 15 three posts, and three sockets. All these
 hangings for the court he had made out of
 16 twisted linen thread. The sockets for the
 posts were of bronze; the capitals were of
 silver, in chased work; the posts of the
 17 court he plated with silver. At the en-
 trance, he made a hanging of twisted linen
 threads, embroidered with threads of blue
 and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, twenty
 cubits long, and, like all the hangings of
 18 the court, five cubits high. There were
 four posts at the entrance, with sockets of
 19 bronze and capitals of chased silver. The
 pegs which kept the tabernacle and the
 court in place, all round, were made of
 bronze.

Here is an account, drawn up at Moses'
 command by the priest Ithamar, son of
 Aaron, with the help of the Levites. It
 shews what was spent on the tabernacle
 that bears record of the Lord, when all the
 work was completed, at the Lord's com-
 20 mand given through Moses, by Beseleel,
 son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of
 21 Juda. (He had Ooliab, too, son of Achisa-
 mech, of the tribe of Dan, to help him; he
 too was a famous craftsman in wood, he
 too could make tapestry and embroidery
 from threads of blue, and purple, and
 22 scarlet, and lawn.) The sum of gold spent

in building the sanctuary, provided by the
 contribution, was twenty-nine talents and
 seven hundred and thirty sicles, by sanctu-
 23 ary reckoning. Offerings, too, were
 made by those who were registered, six
 hundred and three thousand five hundred
 and fifty men under arms, from the age of
 24 twenty upwards; thus there were also
 a hundred talents of silver, from which they
 made the sockets of the holy place, and
 those of the entrance, where the veil hangs;
 a hundred sockets were made out of a hun-
 25 dred talents, one talent for each socket.
 They used besides a thousand seven hun-
 26 dred and seventy-five sicles over the capi-
 tals of the posts, and the posts themselves
 where these were plated with silver. Seventy-two thousand talents and four
 27 hundred sicles of bronze were offered,² and
 of these they made the sockets of the ap-
 proach to the tabernacle that bears record
 of the Lord, and the brazen altar with its
 grating, and all the appurtenances used at
 it; and the sockets round the court and at
 28 the entrance to the court, and the pegs
 which held up the tabernacle and the en-
 29 closure round about.

39 Beseleel made vestments, too, of
 blue and purple, scarlet and lawn,
 for Aaron to wear when he ministered in
 the holy place, as the Lord had prescribed
 them to Moses. He made a mantle of
 30 gold and blue and purple and scarlet twice-
 dyed, and of twisted linen thread, all em-
 broidered work; to do this, he must needs
 31 cut up gold leaf and spin it into threads,
 so that it could be worked into the rest of
 the coloured woof. At the top, on either
 32 side, he made two shoulder-pieces joined
 together, and a band³ of the same colours,
 33 as the Lord had prescribed to Moses. He
 also provided two onyx-stones, closely set
 in gold, and inscribed by a gem-carver
 with the names of Israel's sons; these, ac-
 34 cording to the prescription which the Lord
 had given Moses, he let into the sides of
 the mantle, to keep the sons of Israel in
 35 memory.

¹ The Latin version here seems to imply that the posts themselves were made of bronze. But there is no such indication in 27. 10. and verse 17 below tells us that the posts were plated with silver, and therefore probably made of wood. It seems possible therefore that the Latin text is only an awkward rendering of the Hebrew, which clearly says that the sockets were of bronze. ² The Hebrew text has 'seventy talents and two thousand four hundred sicles', a much more likely figure. It is probable that the talent represents about half a hundredweight, and the sicle about half an ounce; but the figures, according to others, should be considerably lower. ³ The Latin renders this Hebrew word differently in 28. 8.

8 He made a burse, too, of embroidered work, of the same pattern as the mantle itself, of gold and blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and twisted linen thread, a folded square of a palm's breadth either way. And he set in it four rows of stones; in the first row a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; in the second, a carbuncle, a sapphire, and a jasper-stone; in the third, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; in the fourth, a chrysolite, an onyx-stone, and a beryl; all the rows were closely set in gold. And these stones were inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, one on each. On the burse, they put chains of pure gold, fastened together, and two hooks, and two rings, all of gold. The rings they set on either side of the burse, so that the two gold chains could hang from them, and these fitted the hooks which stood out from the corners of the mantle. They met before and behind in such a way that mantle and burse were linked together, tied to the strongly fastened rings of the band by a blue cord, so that they should not hang loose, and come apart; so the Lord had prescribed to Moses.

20 They made a tunic, too, to go with the mantle, all of blue, with an opening in the middle of it at the top, that had a woven border round it. Underneath, round the skirt of it, there were ornaments of blue thread and purple and scarlet, and twisted linen thread, pomegranate-shaped; bells, too, of pure gold, which they put in between the pomegranates all round, at the edge of the tunic; first a golden bell, then a pomegranate. Such, according to the prescription the Lord had given Moses, was to be the dress of the priest when he went in to perform his sacred office. They made, too, woven robes of lawn for Aaron and his sons, and mitres of lawn with rings about them, breeches, too, woven of fine linen thread, and a girdle of twisted linen thread, embroidered with threads of blue and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, as the Lord had prescribed to Moses. They also made a plate of pure gold, a thing most sacred, inscribed with all the engraver's skill, with the words, Set apart for the Lord; and this, according to the prescription the Lord gave Moses, they fastened with a blue cord to the mitre.

So the sons of Israel finished making the tabernacle, and all that covered in the sacred record, carrying out all the prescriptions the Lord had given to Moses. And they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent itself and all its furniture, rings, frames, poles, posts and sockets; the canopy of rams' fleeces dyed red, and the other canopy of skins dyed violet; the veil, the ark with its poles, and the throne; the table with its appurtenances and the loaves that were to be set out on it; the lamp-stand, with its lamps and its other appurtenances, and the oil for it; the golden altar, the ointment, and the incense made from spices; the hanging for the tabernacle approach; the brazen altar, with its grate, its poles, and all its appurtenances; the basin with its stand; the hangings for the court, and the posts with their sockets; the hanging for the entrance of the court, its ropes and its pegs. Nothing was missing of all the appurtenances that had been prescribed for the needs of the tabernacle, the shrine of the covenant. The vestments, too, that were to be worn by the priests, both Aaron himself and his sons, in the sanctuary, were brought to Moses by the Israelites, in fulfilment of the Lord's command. And when Moses saw that they had completed all their task, he gave them his blessing.

40 And now the Lord said to Moses. When the first day of the first month comes, set up the tabernacle that is to bear record of me, and put the ark in it, and screen the ark with the veil. Then bring in the table, and set out due offerings there; the lamp-stand, too, must be in its place, with lamps on it, and the golden altar upon which incense is burnt, there before the ark that bears record of me. Stretch out the hanging at the entrance to the tabernacle, and set down before it the altar for burnt-sacrifice, with the basin there, full of water, between altar and tabernacle; and screen off the court and its entrance with the hangings. Then bring out the anointing-oil, and hallow by unction with it the tabernacle and its appurtenances; the altar for burnt-sacrifice and all that belongs to it, and the washing-basin with its stand; all must be consecrated with the anointing-oil, to be

12 holiness itself. Bring Aaron, too, and his
sons to the doors of the tabernacle that
13 bears record of me, and, when they have
washed, clothe them with the sacred vest-
ments in which they are to minister to
me, and anoint them to be my priests for
ever.

14 Moses did as the Lord bade him; and
on the first day of the first month, in this
second year of wandering, the tabernacle
15 was set up. To set it up, Moses must first
dispose the frames, with their sockets and
16 poles, and erect the posts; then he spread
the tapestry over the tabernacle, and covered
it, as the Lord bade him, with the
17 canopy. He put the tablets of the law in
the ark, and passed the poles through at
the base of it, and fixed the throne above
18 it. Then, bringing the ark into the tabernacle,
he spread the veil in front of it, in
19 fulfilment of the Lord's command. In
front of the veil, at the northern end of the
tabernacle that bore record of the Lord,
20 he put down the table, and on it, as the
Lord bade him, he set out the consecrated
21 loaves. On the south side of the tabernacle,
opposite the table, he set up the
22 lamp-stand, with all its lamps in position
as the Lord bade him. And before the
23 veil, still under the tabernacle roof, he
placed the golden altar, on which, at the

Lord's command, he burnt incense made
from spices.

And now he must hang the screen at the
26 entrance of the tabernacle, and by the door
27 of the tabernacle must stand the altar for
burnt-sacrifice, on which he offered the
victims and sacrificial gifts which the Lord
had prescribed. He put the basin, too,
28 between the tabernacle and the altar, filling
it with water, so that Moses and Aaron
29 and Aaron's sons could wash their hands
and feet whenever they would enter the
30 tabernacle that bore record of the covenant,
or approach the altar, as the Lord
had commanded him. He also set up the
31 court round the tabernacle and the altar,
and hung the screen at the entrance to it.

When all was done, a cloud covered the
32 tabernacle, and it was filled with the
brightness of the Lord's presence; nor
33 could Moses enter the tabernacle that bore
record of the covenant, so thick the cloud
that spread all about it, so radiant was the
Lord's majesty; all was wrapped in cloud.
Whenever the cloud lifted from the tabernacle,
34 the Israelites would muster and set
out on the march, and while it hung there,
35 they halted. The divine cloud by day, the
36 divine fire by night, still brooded over the
tabernacle for all Israel to see it, wherever
they halted on their journey.

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

THE Lord summoned Moses, and, from the tabernacle that bore record of him made known his will.

2 These rules the Israelites were to follow, when any of them would offer the Lord a beast as a victim, from herd or from flock. The man who would win the Lord's favour with burnt-sacrifice of cattle must bring a male beast, without blemish, to the door of the tabernacle, and lay his hand on the beast's head, and so it will be accepted, and will serve to make atonement for him. 3 Then he will immolate the calf in the Lord's presence, and the priests of Aaron's line will make an offering of its blood, which they will pour round the altar at the tabernacle door. Then they will skin the victim and cut its limbs into joints; and, lighting a fire on the altar, where a pile of wood lies ready, they will lay on it the joints, the head and the fat¹ round the liver. The entrails and feet must first be washed with water. So the priest will make a burnt-sacrifice of it all, there on the altar, and the smell of its burning will be acceptable to the Lord.

10 As with the herd, so with the flock; if he would offer sacrifice, sheep or goat, let him bring a male without blemish, and immolate it at the northern side of the altar; and the priests of Aaron's line will pour its blood round about, and will separate the limbs, the head, and the fat round the liver, and lay them upon the wood over the fire; the entrails and the feet first washed in water. So the priest will burn the whole offering as a burnt-sacrifice, and the Lord will accept the smell of its burning.

14 If a bird is offered to the Lord as a burnt-sacrifice, it will be a turtle-dove, or a young pigeon. And the priest will bring it to the altar, where he will wring its neck and slit it open;² then he will let the blood run over the foot of the altar, casting away the crop and feathers near by on the eastern

side, where the ashes are poured out. He will break the bird's wings, but will not cut it up into joints with a knife; he will burn it whole over wood kindled on the altar. So it will be a burnt-sacrifice, and the smell of its burning will be acceptable to the Lord.

2 If anyone would bring the Lord a bloodless offering,³ his gift must be of flour; over this he will pour oil, and lay incense on it, and so he will bring it to the priests of Aaron's line; one of whom will take up a handful of the wheat and oil, with all the incense, and cast it on the altar as a token-sacrifice,⁴ acceptable to the Lord in its fragrance. All that is left of this sacrifice shall belong to Aaron and his sons; the remnant of the Lord's own offering, it is set apart for holy uses.

If this bloodless offering of thine is cooked in the oven, it shall be of unleavened wheaten loaves, kneaded with oil, and unleavened cakes with oil poured over them; if it is cooked in the pan, it shall be of unleavened flour kneaded with oil, cut up into small pieces, with oil poured over them; if it is cooked on the gridiron, it must still be of flour mingled with oil. Thy gift to the Lord, it shall be put into the priest's hands; and he, in offering it, will separate the token-sacrifice, which he will burn there on the altar, acceptable to the Lord in its fragrance; the rest shall belong to Aaron and his sons; the remnant of the Lord's offering, it is set apart for holy uses.

All such offerings must be made to the Lord unleavened; no leaven or honey must be burnt with the Lord's sacrifice. Of such things, you may offer first-fruits, or bring gifts, but they shall not be put on the altar, to give out fragrance there. Whatever sacrifice thou offerest is to be seasoned with salt; thou shalt not grudge thy God the

¹ Literally, in the Latin, 'The joints, that is, the head and the fat'; but it is evident from the context that the whole beast was burned.

² For 'slit it open' the Hebrew text has 'burn it, there on the altar'.

³ 'A bloodless offering'; literally, in the Latin, 'an offering (by way) of sacrifice', in the Hebrew text simply, 'a gift'. The word is technically used to distinguish offerings made of vegetable things from those which involved the destroying of animal life.

⁴ Literally, 'as a memorial'. The use of the word in this connexion is obscure, but it is always used of these (less expensive) vegetable offerings.

14 salt which his covenant demands; salt shall be a part of every offering. If thou makest the Lord a gift of thy first-fruits, thou shalt roast the ears, while they are still fresh, over the fire and bruise them as flour is bruised, and so offer the Lord thy first-fruits. Thou shalt pour oil on them, too, and lay incense on them, to shew that they are an offering made to the Lord; and the priest, for a token-sacrifice, shall burn part of the bruised grain and the oil, with all the incense.

3 The man who would make a welcome-offering¹ of cattle, must bring to the Lord a beast without blemish, bullock or heifer as he will. He is to lay his hand on the head of the victim, and it is to be immolated at the entrance of the tabernacle that bears record of me, the priests who represent Aaron's family pouring its blood about the altar. The parts of the victim that must be given to the Lord in a welcome-offering are the fat enclosing the entrails and the fat on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat round the flanks, and with the kidneys the caul of the liver. All these, once the wood is kindled, they shall offer on the altar as a burnt-sacrifice, and the Lord will accept the smell of their burning.

6 As with the herd, so with the flock; the victim can be male or female, as long as it is without blemish. If it is a lamb that he offers to the Lord, he will lay his hand upon the head of the victim, and it will be immolated in front of the tabernacle that bears record, the sons of Aaron pouring its blood about the altar. And the parts of the victim sacrificed to the Lord in this welcome-offering will be the tail with all the fat on it, the kidneys, all the fat which encloses belly and entrails. Both kidneys are to be offered with the fat round the flanks, and with the kidneys the caul of the liver. All these the priest will burn on the altar, to feed its fire and to give the Lord his offering. So, too, if the victim he brings to the Lord is a goat, he will lay his hand upon its head, and immolate it in front of the tabernacle that bears record, the sons

of Aaron pouring its blood about the altar. The same parts must be cut away to feed the fire of the Lord's sacrifice; the fat which covers belly and entrails, the two kidneys, and with the kidneys the caul and the fat of the liver, close to the flanks; these are for the priest to burn on the altar, feeding the flame and giving out acceptable fragrance. All that is fat shall belong to the Lord; this rule you must observe continually, age after age, wherever you dwell; neither fat nor blood are for your eating.

4 And now the Lord spoke to Moses again, making known his will to the sons of Israel: It may be that a man has transgressed through inadvertence, disobeyed, without thinking to disobey, some one of the Lord's precepts. Such a transgression, if it be committed by the high priest then in office, brings guilt upon the whole people, and he must make amends for it by offering to the Lord a young bullock without blemish. He will bring it into the Lord's presence, at the door of the tabernacle, and, laying his hands on its head, will immolate it to the Lord. Then he will draw off some of its blood, which he will take with him into the tabernacle; and there he will dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle it in the Lord's presence, before the sanctuary veil, seven times. Some of this blood he will smear on the horns of the altar; that altar within the tabernacle, on which the fragrant incense is burnt for the Lord's acceptance; the rest he will pour away at the foot of the sacrificial altar, near the tabernacle door. And now, to make amends for his fault, he will cut away the bullock's fat, the fat enclosing the entrails and all else that is found within it, the two kidneys, and with the kidneys the caul and fat of the liver, close to the flanks, as if it were the victim of a welcome-offering, and burn these on the sacrificial altar. The skin and all the flesh, with the head, the feet, the entrails and the dung, and all the rest of its carcase, he will carry away from the camp to the place you have hallowed for pouring the ashes away, and

¹ A welcome-offering; literally, in the Latin, 'an offering of things that make peace'. The Hebrew text is understood by some as implying a sacrifice made for the 'peace', that is, welfare, of the worshipper; by others as implying thanksgiving. But the implication seems to be that of *friendship*; the sacrifices thus described were distinguished from others by the fact that the worshipper himself shared the sacrificial meal, as if by way of hospitality, instead of devoting all to the service of the sanctuary.

burn them over a wood fire, there on the ash-pit.

13 Or perhaps the whole people of Israel has been betrayed into a fault, transgressing the Lord's command unwittingly. If so, when they find out their error, they will bring a young bullock to the tabernacle door in amends. There, in the Lord's presence, the elders of the people will lay their hands on its head; and when the bullock has been immolated before him, some of its blood will be taken into the tabernacle by the high priest then in office, who will dip his finger and sprinkle it before the veil seven times, smear with it the horns of the altar that stands within the tabernacle in the Lord's presence, and pour away the rest about the foot of the sacrificial altar, by the tabernacle door. He will separate the fat and burn it on the altar, treating it like the bullock aforementioned; and at the priest's intercession, the Lord will have mercy. The bullock itself he will take away from the camp, as before; and so amends will be made for the general transgression.

22 Be it one of the rulers that has transgressed by breaking some one of the laws inadvertently, and later has recognized his fault, he must offer to the Lord a he-goat, without blemish, as his victim. He will lay his hands on its head, and immolate it, in amends for his fault, where the Lord's burnt-sacrifices are immolated; and the priest will dip his finger in the blood of this transgression-victim, smearing some of it on the horns, this time, of the sacrificial altar, and pouring the rest away about its foot. On this altar, too, he will burn the fat, as the fat of the welcome-offering is burnt; and so, at the priest's intercession, the ruler's fault will be forgiven.

27 Be it one of the common folk that has transgressed through inadvertence; the law has been broken nevertheless, and guilt incurred. Such a man, when he becomes aware of his fault, must offer a she-goat without blemish, lay his hand on the head of this transgression-victim, and immolate it where the burnt-sacrifices are

immolated. The priest will smear the sacrificial altar with some of the blood, and pour the rest away at its foot; then separate the fat, as if this were a welcome-offering, and burn it on the altar, where the smell of its burning will be acceptable to the Lord. And so, at the priest's intercession for him, the guilty man will be pardoned. Or he may choose, as his transgression-victim, a ewe-lamb without blemish from his flock, lay his hand on its head, and immolate it where the burnt-sacrifices are immolated. The priest will use the victim's blood as before, separate the fat, as if this were the ram of the welcome-offering, and burn it on the altar, offer it to the Lord by fire; so, at the priest's intercession, the guilty man will be pardoned.

5 Here is a sin men commit; a man hears the call that puts him under oath, and can bear witness of what he has seen or known, yet witness he bears none; he must pay the penalty.¹

A man may have touched what has been killed by a wild beast or has fallen dead, or the carcase of a reptile,² or some other unclean thing, unaware of his defilement at the time; yet he has incurred guilt by the fault. Or he has touched some defilement of the human body; there are many such; he may be unaware of it till afterwards, but he has incurred guilt. Or he has taken an oath, pronounced with the lips, to do this or that³; he has given his pledged word, and then forgotten that he gave it, but remembers it afterwards. For all such faults as these a man must do penance,⁴ offering up a ewe-lamb or a she-goat from his flock; so the priest will make intercession to have his fault pardoned. If he has no beast to give, he must offer two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons to the Lord instead, one in amends for his fault, and the other as a burnt-sacrifice. The priest, when these are brought to him, will offer the first as a transgression-victim, bending its head right back to the wings, but so that it is still attached to the neck, not completely

¹ If the text has been correctly preserved, it looks as if this verse must belong to some other context. The offence it contemplates is evidently deliberate, like those at the beginning of chapter 6, whereas the faults mentioned in 5. 2-4 are the results of inadvertence, and classed as such (cf. 4. 27 above and 5. 15 below).

² 'Or the carcase of a reptile'; literally, in the Latin version, 'or any other reptile'. In the Hebrew text, it is a question of touching the carcase of any unclean beast or reptile.

³ 'To do this or that'; literally 'to do evil or good', but this is Hebrew idiom for 'anything whatsoever'. The oath has been forgotten, until it was too late to fulfil it; the fault is therefore only one of inadvertence.

⁴ 'Do penance'; in the Hebrew text, 'confess'.

9 severed, and sprinkling some of its blood on the side of the altar; the rest he will allow to drip down at the altar's foot, to make amends for the transgression. Of the other he will make a burnt-sacrifice, in the customary way, and, at the priest's intercession, the man will be pardoned. If he cannot even lay his hand on two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, the transgression-offering must be a tenth of a bushel of flour; but he will not mix oil with it, or lay incense on it; this is an offering for transgression. He will hand it to the priest, who will take a handful and burn it on the altar, as a token-sacrifice for the man who brought it, praying and making atonement on his behalf; the rest of it the priest will keep as his own offering.

4 And this, too, was a commandment which the Lord gave Moses: If anyone commits a fault by inadvertence, defrauding the Lord of his due over things consecrated, he must make amends for his guilt by offering a ram without blemish out of his flock, such a ram as is worth two silver pieces by sanctuary reckoning. He must also make restitution of the sum that is lacking, and a fifth part of it besides, handing this to the priest, who will make intercession for him when he offers up the ram, and win him pardon. Or, if the fault of inadvertence lies only in disobeying the law, it is enough that, when he becomes aware of his guilt,¹ he should bring the priest a ram without blemish out of his flock, of greater or less worth as the fault demands. And the priest shall intercede for the unwitting transgressor, winning him pardon because he did the Lord a wrong inadvertently.

6 And the Lord said to Moses, There are faults, too, committed in the Lord's despite, when a man defrauds his neighbour of some loan that was entrusted to him for safe keeping, or extorts money by violence, or wrongs him at law, or perjures himself in denying that he has found something lost, or is guilty of some other offence such as men are prone to commit. If he is found guilty, he must make restitu-

tion, giving back in full all that he hoped to gain by his knavery, and a fifth part besides, to the owner whom he has wronged. He must make amends, too, for his fault by bringing to the priest a ram without blemish out of his flock, of greater or less worth as the wrong demands. The priest will make intercession for him before the Lord, and win pardon for all his wrongful deeds.

The Lord also spoke to Moses giving him a commandment for Aaron and his sons: This is the rule which governs burnt-sacrifice. It is to be burnt on the altar all night till morning comes, with the altar's own fire. The priest, clothed in his robe and linen breeches, will take away the ashes left by the fire which consumes it, and lay these down by the altar. Then, taking off the clothes he wears and putting on others, he will take the ashes away from the camp to a place already purified, and there calcine them.² The fire on the altar must burn continually; each morning the priest will feed it with fresh logs, on which he will lay first the burnt-sacrifice, then the fat taken from the welcome-offering. Never must the altar be empty of this perpetual fire. And this is the rule that governs the bloodless offering which Aaron and his sons will make before the altar in the Lord's presence. The priest will take a handful of the flour mingled with oil, and all the grains of incense that are laid on it; and these he will burn on the altar as a token-sacrifice, whose fragrance the Lord will accept. The rest of the flour, still with no leaven in it, Aaron and his sons will eat, upon hallowed ground within the court of the tabernacle that bears record of me. No leaven must be put into it, shared as it is with the Lord's burnt-sacrifice; it is set apart for holy uses, like the offerings that are made for a fault or for a wrong done. Only the male descendants of Aaron may eat it. This is the rule to be observed continually, age after age, in offering the Lord sacrifice; whoever touches it becomes holy thereby.

The Lord also said to Moses, This is the offering Aaron and his sons must make to the Lord when they are anointed; one

¹ The context makes it clear that this command does not refer to faults of inadvertence in general (like chapter 4), but to faults of inadvertence connected with divine worship, though not (like those in verses 15 and 16) unjustly enriching the person who commits them. ² In the Hebrew text, nothing is said about calcining the ashes.

tenth of a bushel of flour for a continuous offering,¹ half of it in the morning and half in the evening, mingled with oil and fried in a pan. It shall be offered still warm, acceptable to the Lord in its fragrance, by each priest succeeding to his father's office, and the whole of it must be burnt on the altar. Every sacrifice made by the priests themselves must be altogether destroyed by fire; no one must eat any part of it.

And the Lord spake to Moses again, giving him a message for Aaron and his sons: This is the rule that governs the offering of a victim for transgression; it must be immolated before the Lord in the same place where burnt-sacrifices are offered; it is set apart for holy uses. The priest who offers it must eat his share on hallowed ground in the tabernacle court; whatever touches the flesh of it becomes holy thereby, and if his clothing is stained by its blood, it must be washed on hallowed ground. Even the earthenware pot in which it was cooked must be broken; or, if it is cooked in a pan of bronze, the pan must be scraped clean and washed in water. The flesh is set apart for holy uses, but it may be eaten by any male person belonging to the priestly family, except that of the transgression-victim whose blood has been taken into the tabernacle, to make atonement in the sanctuary; such a victim is not to be eaten, it must be destroyed by burning.²

7 And this is the rule which governs the offering of a victim for wrong done.³ Such a victim is set apart for holy uses, and must be immolated where burnt-sacrifices are immolated; its blood must be poured round the altar. The parts which must be offered are the tail, and the fat which covers the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that is close to them, and with the kidneys the caul of the liver. All these the priest will burn on the altar, as a burnt-sacrifice to the Lord in amends for the wrong done; the flesh of the victim is set apart for holy uses, but it may be eaten by any male person belonging to the priestly

family. Victims are to be offered for a wrong done just as they are for a fault; the rule is the same for either, and either victim belongs to the priest who offers it.

The priest who offers a victim in burnt-sacrifice, may keep the skin for himself; and every offering of flour cooked in the oven, or prepared with gridiron or pan, is made over to the priest who offers it; kneaded with oil or dry, such gifts must be divided equally between all the men of Aaron's race.

And this is the rule which governs the welcome-offerings that are brought to the Lord. If it is a thank-offering, there must be loaves of unleavened bread kneaded with oil, unleavened cakes with oil poured over them, pastry kneaded with oil, and loaves, too with leaven in them. All these must go with the victim which is immolated as a welcome-offering in thanksgiving; and one of each must be offered to the Lord as first-fruits, so that it will belong to the priest who sheds the victim's blood. The flesh of the victim must be eaten the same day, none of it left till the morrow. If the offering is made in performance of a vow, or simply from devotion, it should be eaten on the same day; but if any is left till the morrow, it may still be eaten; whatever the third day finds still unfinished must be destroyed by fire. If any such flesh is eaten on the third day, the offering will be null and void, and the giver will have no advantage from it; indeed, whoever contaminates himself by eating such food is guilty of an offence. If it has touched anything unclean, it must be destroyed by fire, not eaten. Only one who is free from defilement may partake of it; the man who eats any of the victim for a welcome-offering, when he is himself defiled, is lost to his people; and he, too, who eats such flesh after touching any defilement left by man or beast, or anything that makes him unclean.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, giving him this message for the sons of Israel: You are not to eat the fat of sheep or ox or goat; but you may keep the fat of anything

¹ This perhaps means a daily offering.

² That is to say, the flesh of the victim, apart from the fat, was to be eaten by the priests in the cases mentioned in chapter 4, 22-35, but not in the cases mentioned in chapter 4, 3-21.

³ It is clear that a distinction is here drawn between offerings-for-a-fault (or "transgression") and offerings-for-a-wrong; the Hebrew terms differ. Probably the latter term involves the idea of compensation for an injury. It is generally agreed that we are concerned with faults in 4; 5, 1-13; and 6, 24-30; with wrongs in 6, 1-7 and this chapter. The position of offences referred to in 5, 14-19 is somewhat doubtful.

that falls dead, or is killed by a wild beast,
 25 for various uses. Anyone who eats the fat which ought to be offered, as part of the Lord's burnt-sacrifice, is lost to his people.
 26 Nor must you use the blood of any living
 27 thing, bird or beast, as food; whoever consumes the blood, is lost to his people.

128 And the Lord spoke to Moses giving him this message, too, for the sons of Israel: The man who brings the Lord a welcome-offering must surrender, in doing so, his sacrificial due, the choice portions of the victim. He will carry with him the fat and the breast of the victim, and both these, when they have been held up in sign of consecration to the Lord, he will
 31 hand over to the priest, who will burn the fat on the altar, while the breast belongs, as their due, to Aaron and his sons. The right shoulder of the victim slain in welcome-offering is also the priest's prerogative; whichever of Aaron's sons offers the blood and the fat, is to have the right
 34 shoulder for his portion. The breast that is held up in sign of consecration, the shoulder that is separated from the rest, are the portions of the welcome-offering which I demand of the Israelites; making them over to Aaron, my priest, and to his descendants, as a right due to them at all times from the sons of Israel.

35 Such are the privileges¹ Aaron and his sons enjoy in the worship offered to the Lord, ever since the day when Moses presented them to him to be his priests; such gifts the Lord bade the Israelites bestow upon them by a right unalterable, age after age.

17 Thus far the rules which govern burnt-sacrifice,² and sacrifices for a fault or a wrong done, for the hallowing of priests, and for the victims used in welcome-offering, as the Lord prescribed them to Moses on mount Sinai, when he commanded the sons of Israel, there in the desert of Sinai, to bring him their offerings.

8 And now the Lord said to Moses,
 2 Bring with thee Aaron and his sons, and their sacred vestments, and the oil for anointing, and a young bullock such as is offered for a fault, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread, and gather the

whole assembly of the people at the tabernacle door. Moses did as the Lord had bidden him; and when all the people had gathered before the entrance to the tabernacle, he told them, I do this at the Lord's
 5 express command.

With that, he presented Aaron and his
 6 sons; and when they had been duly washed, he clothed the new high priest in the linen robe, and girded him with the girdle, and put the blue tunic on him, and the mantle over that, binding it close with its band, and attaching to it the burse in which were the touchstones of wisdom and of truth. He covered his head, too, with the mitre, and put in front of it the golden plate, sacred and set apart, as the Lord had bidden him. Then he took the oil used for
 10 anointing, and with it he anointed the tabernacle and all its furniture; anointed the altar, too, after consecrating it seven times by sprinkling, with all its appurtenances, and consecrated the basin and its stand with oil. Then, pouring oil over
 12 Aaron's head, he anointed and hallowed him. Aaron's sons, too, he brought forward, dressed them in linen robes, girded them with girdles, and put mitres on them, as the Lord had bidden him.

Then he offered a young bullock for
 14 their faults; Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head, and Moses immolated
 15 it, drawing off its blood. In this he dipped his finger, and smeared it round the horns of the altar, till all was cleansed and hallowed; the rest he poured away at the altar's foot. The fat on the entrails, the
 16 caul of the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, he sacrificed on the altar, burning the carcase, skin and flesh and dung, away from the camp, as the Lord had bidden him.

He offered a ram, too, as a burnt-sacrifice; Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head, and so he immolated it, pouring away its blood round the altar. This ram he cut into joints, and sacrificed it, head and limbs and fat, upon the altar, first
 21 washing its entrails and its feet; so he burnt the whole ram on the altar, a sacrifice such as the Lord had commanded, to please him with the smell of its burning.

Another ram he offered for the hallowing of the priests; Aaron and his sons laid

¹ Literally, 'the anointing'.

² 'Burnt-sacrifice'; in the Hebrew text, 'burnt-sacrifice and bloodless offerings'.

- 23 their hands on its head and now, after immolating it, Moses took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot. Then he brought forward Aaron's sons, smeared them, ear and thumb and toe, with the ram's blood, and poured away what was left of it about the altar. He set on one side the fat of the tail, and all the fat that covered the entrails, the caul of the liver, the two kidneys with their fat, and the right shoulder. Then he added to the fat and the shoulder an unleavened loaf, a cake made with oil, and a piece of pastry, from the basket of unleavened bread that lay there before the Lord; and he gave all these to Aaron and his sons, who lifted them up in the Lord's presence. So they were handed back to Moses, and he burnt them on the sacrificial altar as an offering for their consecration, a smell of burning for the Lord to accept. The breast of this ram they were hallowed with, he took, as the Lord bade him, for his own portion, after lifting it up in the Lord's presence.
- 30 Then he took the holy oil, and the blood from the altar, and sprinkled them over Aaron and his sons, and the vestments they wore. And now that they were hallowed, vestments and all, he told them, Cook the flesh before the tabernacle door, and eat it there; the bread, too, that is offered for your hallowing, that lies there in the basket; such was the Lord's command to me, Aaron and his sons shall eat it. If any is left over, of the meat or of the bread, it must be destroyed by fire. But you must not leave the entrance of the tabernacle for seven days, till the time of your hallowing is complete; for seven days your hallowing must continue with all to-day's solemnities, before the rite of your consecration takes full effect. Night and day you must make the tabernacle your home, on pain of death, keeping vigil in the Lord's honour; this was the command given to me.
- 36 Such was the Lord's bidding through Moses, and Aaron and his sons faithfully observed it.

- 9 And now, when the eighth day came, Moses summoned Aaron and his sons, with the elders of Israel, and said to Aaron, Choose out a young bullock to

Aaron offers Sacrifice for the first Time

atone for your faults, and a ram for burnt-sacrifice, both without blemish, and offer them to the Lord. And bid the sons of Israel choose out a goat to atone for their faults, with a bullock and a lamb, both one year old, both without blemish, for their burnt-sacrifice; an ox, too, and a ram, by way of welcome-offering. They must immolate them here before the Lord, and offer up flour kneaded with oil to accompany each sacrifice; this day, the Lord means to appear among you. So they brought to the tabernacle door all that Moses bade them bring; and to the whole multitude there assembled Moses proclaimed, Here is a command laid upon you by the Lord; fulfil it, and his glory will be revealed to you. Then he said to Aaron, Go up to the altar, and immolate the victim that is to atone for thy faults; offer burnt-sacrifice, to win pardon for thyself and for the people; the people too, have a victim thou must immolate, making intercession for them as the Lord bids thee.

With that, Aaron came up to the altar, and immolated the bullock that was to atone for his own faults. His sons held out the blood before him, and he dipped his finger and smeared the horns of the altar with it, pouring the rest away at the altar's foot. Then, obedient to the command which the Lord had given Moses, he sacrificed on the altar the fat, the kidneys, and the liver-caul of this transgression-victim, taking its flesh and skin away from the camp to be destroyed by fire. After this, he immolated the victim of the burnt-sacrifice, his sons holding out first the blood, which he poured away round the altar; then the carcase, cut up into joints, with its head and all its limbs complete, which he burnt on the altar, first washing its entrails and its feet in water.

Next, he immolated the goat, as an offering for the people's faults, and, purifying the altar, went on to the burnt-sacrifice, to which he added, burning them on the altar, the customary gifts, over and above all the ceremonies of the morning sacrifice. Then he immolated the ox and the ram, by way of welcome-offering for the people. His sons held out the blood, and he poured it round the altar; the fat of the ox, and the ram's tail, and the kidneys with their fat, and the cauls of the livers,

90 they laid on the breasts of the victims, and when the fat had been burnt on the altar, 91 Aaron set apart the two breasts and the two right shoulders, which he lifted up in the Lord's presence, as Moses had bidden 92 him. Then he stretched out his hands over the people, and blessed them; and so, the sacrifice done, the atonement for faults, the burnt-sacrifice, and the welcome-offering, he came down from the altar.

93 After this, both Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle that bears record and blessed the people as they came out. Whereupon the glory of the Lord shone out upon the whole multitude, and suddenly the 94 Lord sent down fire, which consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and all the fat that lay on the altar. At the sight, the whole people raised a cry of praise, and fell face to ground in worship.

10 There were two of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abiu, who took up their censers and put coals and incense into them, to burn unhallowed fire in the Lord's presence,¹ not in accordance with his command; whereupon the Lord sent down fire which devoured them, and they died there in the Lord's presence. And Moses told Aaron, The Lord gave us warning of this when he said: I mean to vindicate my holiness among those who come near me, win reverence in the eyes of the whole people. And with that, Aaron kept silence. Meanwhile, Moses summoned Misael and Elisaphan, sons of Oziel that was Aaron's uncle, and said to them, Go and remove the bodies of your brethren from the tabernacle door, and carry them away from the camp. So they went without more ado and took them up just as they lay there, still clothed in their robes of linen; and they carried them away as he bade them. Then Moses said to Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, Do not bare your heads or rend your garments, on pain of death, and such vengeance as may overtake the whole people; let your brethren, and all the race of Israel bewail this fresh kindling of the Lord's fire. You must not, on pain of death, leave the tabernacle door, with the oil of

your consecration still upon you. So they did as Moses bade them.

The Lord, too, said to Aaron, When you are for entering the tabernacle, thou and thy sons, drink neither wine nor strong drink, on pain of death; such is the commandment you must observe, age after age. It is your task to distinguish between 10 what is holy and what is profane, what is defiled and what is clean; and to teach the sons of Israel all these commandments of mine, the Lord's word to them through Moses.

And now Moses said to Aaron, and to his surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, You must take up what is left of the bloodless sacrifice offered to the Lord, and eat it, still unleavened, near the altar; it is set apart for holy uses, and on holy ground it must be eaten, as the share given to thee and to thy sons in the Lord's own offering; such was the Divine command. The breast, too, that was held up in worship, and the shoulder that was set apart, you must eat 14 in a place that is clean of all defilement, thou and thy sons and thy daughters, too, with thee. This share of the welcome-offerings the sons of Israel bring is kept for thee and thy children; priestly hands have 15 lifted up, in the Lord's presence, the shoulder and the breast and the fat which was afterwards burnt on the altar, and it is the Lord's bidding that they should belong to thee and thy sons, by right perpetual.

Meanwhile, when Moses went to look 16 for the goat that was their transgression-victim, he found its body all consumed by fire, and angered by this, he asked Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's two surviving sons, Why did you not eat, on holy ground, this 17 transgression-victim, all holiness, which was handed over to you so that you might take the faults of the people on yourselves, and make intercession for them in the Lord's presence? Its blood had not been 18 carried within the sanctuary; you should have eaten it on holy ground, in obedience to the commandment that was given me. But Aaron's answer was, Why, this very 19 day transgression-victim and burnt-sacri-

¹ 'Unhallowed'; literally 'foreign'. It is clear that the two priests offended by some act of contumacious disobedience, but the exact nature of their offence remains doubtful. Some think they had neglected the command given in Ex. 30. 9 (where the literal meaning of the Hebrew is 'foreign incense'); others, that they ought to have lighted their censers from the holy fire on the altar.

20 fice have been offered to the Lord, and thou seest what has befallen me in spite of it. How could I find acceptance with the Lord in eating my share of it, with a heart so mournful? And with that, Moses was content.¹

2 **11** This was a message the Lord gave to Moses and Aaron for the sons of Israel: Among all the living creatures on earth, these only are to be your food. 3 Among the beasts, those which chew the cud and have cloven hoofs. Such beasts as the camel, ruminants with their hoofs single, you must hold unclean, not to be eaten; the rock-rabbit, too, is unclean, a ruminant without cloven hoofs, and the hare in the same way. The sow for the opposite reason; it has cloven hoofs but does not chew the cud. You are not to eat the flesh of these animals, or touch their carcases; you must regard them as unclean.

9 Everything that lives in the water is food for your eating as long as it has fins and scales, whether it be sea or river or lake fish. Creatures that live and move in the water without scales or fins you must hold in abomination, so abominable that you will not eat their flesh or even touch their carcases; there is defilement in all that lacks fins and scales.

13 Of the birds, you must avoid these as forbidden food, the eagle, the griffon, the osprey, the falcon and the vulture with all else of their kind, anything that belongs to the raven tribe, the ostrich,² the night-owl, the sea-mew, every kind of hawk, the horned owl, the cormorant, the ibis, the swan, the pelican, the coot, the stork, birds of the curlew kind, the hoopoe and the bat.

20 The winged things that are four-footed you must hold in abomination, except those which have the hinder legs longer, and leap from one spot to another; these you may eat, the locust and all its kindred, 23 bruchus or attacus or ophiomachus. But

winged creatures that must walk on four feet you are to hold in detestation; no one that touches their carcases but is defiled thereby, and must count himself unclean till the evening comes; even if necessity bids him carry such a carcase, he must wash his clothes afterwards, and count himself unclean till set of sun.

Any beast that has hoofs, but not cloven hoofs, and does not chew the cud, is to be unclean, and the man who touches it, defiled. Any four-footed beast that walks on its paws is to be unclean, and to touch its carcase is to be defiled till evening comes; whoever carries such a carcase must wash his clothes, and count himself unclean till set of sun; all these things you must hold contaminated.

And there are things that creep along the ground which you must hold unclean, every weasel and mouse and skink, shrew-mouse and chameleon and newt and lizard and mole. All these are unclean; the man who touches one when it is dead is defiled till evening comes. Let such a carcase fall on a bucket or a garment or a skin or a piece of sackcloth or anything else that is in use, and it is defiled; it must be washed in water, and not counted as clean even then till set of sun. If it defiles an earthenware pot by falling into it, the pot must be broken. Whatever you drink out of such a vessel, and even the food you eat, if water out of such a vessel is poured over it, becomes unclean. Wherever such a carcase falls it brings uncleanness; oven or chafing dish that is contaminated by it must be destroyed. Springs or cisterns in which water is collected remain undefiled by it, but anyone who touches the carcase itself becomes unclean. So, too, if it falls on seed-corn, there is no defilement, unless someone has first watered the seed-corn, and then the carcase falls on it; if so, it becomes unclean at once.

Whoever touches the carcase of an animal that falls dead, though it be one of

¹ The offering made in 9. 15 above was not that ordinarily made for the faults of the whole congregation, a bullock whose blood was sprinkled before the veil in the sanctuary (4. 16) and whose flesh was not eaten but burnt (6. 30). On this special occasion of Aaron's hallowing, the people offered what was ordinarily the transgression-victim for a ruler, a goat whose blood was only smeared on the altar of burnt-sacrifice (4. 25), and whose flesh should therefore have been dealt with on the general principle laid down in 6. 25. Aaron explains that he and his sons burnt the goat's flesh because they had no heart to eat it. The words 'with a heart so mournful' are not in the Hebrew text. ² Many of the creatures named in this chapter cannot be identified with any certainty. It would appear that the divine Law was content to classify them according to popular notions, which ranked the hare (for example) among ruminants, and the bat among the birds.

those you are allowed to eat, is defiled till evening comes; and anyone who eats of it, or carries it, must wash his clothes, and until evening comes count himself unclean.

All that creeps along the ground must be held in abomination, and never used for food; whether it walks on four feet with its belly close to the ground, or has many feet, or glides along, it is no food for you, you must hold it abominable. Keep your persons undefiled, touching no such thing, for fear of contamination. I am the Lord your God; you must be set apart, the servants of a God who is set apart. Do not contaminate yourselves with any of these beasts that creep along the ground. I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt; I am set apart and you must be set apart like me.

Such is the rule that governs the use of beast and bird, and all the life that moves through the water or creeps along the ground, teaching you the difference between clean and unclean, what food you may eat and what food you must reject.

12 And the Lord spoke to Moses, giving him this message for the Israelites: If a woman conceives, and gives birth to a boy, she will be unclean for seven days, as she is unclean at her monthly times. On the eighth day, the child must be circumcised, and after that she must wait for thirty-three days more to be purified after her loss of blood, touching nothing that is hallowed, never entering the sanctuary, until the time is up. If she gives birth to a girl, she will be unclean as at her monthly times, for fourteen days, and she will wait for sixty-six days more to be purified after her loss of blood. When the days needed for her purification, after the birth of boy or girl, have run out, she must bring a lamb of one year old as a burnt-sacrifice, and a young pigeon or a turtle-dove by way of amends, to the tabernacle door. These she will hand over to the priest, who will offer them to the Lord and intercede for her, to win purification for her after the blood-losing. Such is the rule governing the birth of boy or girl. If she cannot lay her hand on a lamb fit to be offered, she must bring two turtle-doves or two young

pigeons, one as a burnt-sacrifice and one by way of amends; these will suffice, and at the priest's intercession she will be purified.¹

13 This, too, the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, If there should appear on anyone's skin, the change of colour or the scab or the shiny patches that betoken the scourge of leprosy, he must be brought before the high priest Aaron, or one of his sons. If the priest, looking at the place on his skin, finds that the hairs have turned white, and the skin of the part affected seems shrunken compared with the rest of the skin round it, this is the scourge of leprosy; and when the priest so pronounces, the man must be segregated from his fellows. If the skin is marked by a shiny white patch, but is not shrunken, and the hairs have kept their colour, the priest will keep him shut away for a week, and on the seventh day examine him. If, by now, the infection has not grown worse or spread, he will shut him away for a week more. And now, if he finds on the seventh day that the infection is less marked, and has not spread further in the skin, he will declare the man clean; it is only a scab, and he will be clean once he has washed his garments. If the infection begins to grow worse, after he has been examined and pronounced clean, he must be brought back to the priest, and pronounced unclean after all.

When a man is brought to the priest bearing the marks of infection, and he, upon examination, finds a white swelling that has turned the hair white, and shews the raw, live flesh, then it must be pronounced leprosy inveterate, deeply rooted in the skin, and the priest must pronounce him unclean without being at pains to shut him away; his uncleanness is manifest. But if the infection has broken out all over his skin, covering it from head to foot, wherever it is observed, the priest who examines him will decide that his infection is no defilement; when it shews white all over him, he is to be declared clean. But whenever the raw flesh shews, the priest will declare him contaminated, and he is to be reckoned unclean; the raw flesh betokens leprosy and uncleanness. If, after-

¹ Lk. 2. 24.

wards, the skin turns white all over his
17 body, the priest, examining him again, will
pronounce him clean.

18 When an ulcer formed in flesh or skin
19 heals up and leaves a white or reddish scar
behind it, the man so marked must be
20 taken to the priest; and if the priest sees
that this part of the skin has shrunk com-
pared with the rest, and the hairs have
turned white, he will pronounce him de-
filed; the scourge of leprosy has broken
21 out in the ulcer. But if the hair keeps its
old colour, and the scar is dark, and there
is no shrinking of the skin, he will shut the
22 man away for a week; and then, if it has
spread, he will declare him a leper, but if
23 it is still confined to the same spot, it is but
the scar of the ulcer, and the man is clean.

24 So, too, if flesh and skin that have been
injured by a burn shew a white or reddish
25 scar, and the priest who examines it finds
that it has turned the hair white and is
shrunk, he will declare such a man un-
clean; leprosy has broken out in the burn.
26 But if the hair has kept its colour and there
is no shrinking, and the look of the place
itself is dark, he will shut the man away
27 for a week, and if in that time he finds that
infection has spread in the skin, he will
28 pronounce the man unclean; but if the
whiteness has not spread, and shews less
plain, the burn is the cause of it, and the
man is clean; it is only the scar of a burn.

29 Man or woman suffering from an in-
fection of the head or chin must be
30 examined by the priest, and if the skin has
shrunk and the hair gone yellow and thin-
ner than it was, they must be pronounced
unclean; there is leprosy in the head or
31 beard. But if he finds the skin level and
the hair still dark, they must be shut away
32 for a week, and if he finds that the dis-
figurement has not spread, and the hair
33 keeps its colour, and the skin is level, the
hair must be shaved all round the infected
part. For a week more they must be shut
34 away, and if then he finds that the in-
fection is confined to the same spot, and
there is no shrinking of the skin, he will
declare them clean, and they will be free
from defilement when their clothes have
35 been washed. If, after they have been pro-
nounced clean, the infection spreads in the
36 skin, he need not look to see whether the
hair has gone yellow; the uncleanness is

manifest. But if the infection remains
where it was, and the hair is black, he may
be sure that the man is healed, and pro-
nounce him clean without scruple.

When whiteness appears on the skin of
man or woman, and the priest, examining
them, finds it is only a dull whiteness that
shews there, he will recognize that it is not
leprosy, but ring-worm, and the man or
woman is clean.

A man may lose the hair on his crown,
and still be clean; may lose the hair on his
forehead, and still be clean, despite his
baldness. But if in the bald patch on crown
or forehead a white or reddish tinge is
shewing, the priest who finds it there will
hold him unclean beyond all doubt; the
bald patch is leprous.

The man who is infected with leprosy,
and segregated at the priest's bidding, must
go with rent garments and bared head, his
face veiled, crying out, Unclean, unclean.
And still, as long as he remains unclean
through leprosy, he must dwell away from
the camp, alone.

A garment of wool or linen, that is in-
fected in warp or woof, or a skin, or any-
thing made of leather, if it is stained with
white or reddish spots, is suspect of leprosy
and must be shewn to the priest. He will
examine it, and shut it away for a week;
and if, looking at it again at the end of that
time, he finds that the patch has spread, it
is malignant leprosy; he will pronounce
the garment, or whatever else is infected,
unclean, and it must be destroyed by fire
accordingly. But if he finds that the patch
has not spread, he will give orders for the
infected thing to be washed, and so he will
shut it away for a week more. If it shews
the same as before, although the patch may
not have spread, he will pronounce it un-
clean and destroy it by fire, as a thing in-
fected, whether outwardly or all through
with leprosy. But if the infected patch is
less marked after the washing, he will cut
it away and separate it from the rest. And
if, after that, patches begin to shew where
all was once unspotted, it is leprosy spread-
ing this way and that, and the thing must
be burnt. If, on the contrary, the infection
ceases, the part that is left uncontaminated
must be washed in water again, and now it
is clean. Such are the rules for pro-
nouncing judgement of cleanness or un-

cleanness upon infection in any garment of wool or linen, its warp or its woof, as well as any piece of leather-work.¹

14 The Lord also told Moses, This is the ceremonial to be used when a leper is to be pronounced no longer unclean. He must needs present himself before the priest; the priest, therefore, will go out of the camp to find him, and if it appears that leprosy no longer defiles him, he will tell him what offerings to make by way of purgation for himself. These are, two living birds, of such a kind as may be used for food, cedar-wood, and scarlet stuff, and hyssop. One of the birds must have its blood shed over spring water held in an earthenware pot; the one which is left alive must be dipped (together with the cedar-wood, the scarlet stuff, and the hyssop) into the dead bird's blood, and with this the priest must sprinkle the defiled man seven times, to effect his due cleansing. Then the living bird must be allowed to fly away into the open. And now the man must wash his clothes, shave the hair on his body, and bathe in water; so purified, he will enter the camp, but on the condition that he does not go into his tent for a whole week.

On the seventh day he must shave all his hair, head and beard and eyebrows and all, and he must wash again, both his clothes and his body. On the eighth day he will take two lambs and a yearling ewe, all without blemish, three tenths of a bushel of flour, kneaded with oil, for a bloodless offering, and a pint of oil besides. The priest who is pronouncing him clean will bring him into the divine presence, together with these gifts of his, at the door of the tabernacle which bears record of me; and there he will take one of the lambs and offer it as a victim for wrong done. He will take the pint of oil, too, and all the rest, and hold them up in the Lord's presence. The lamb must be immolated on holy ground, where the offerings for faults and the burnt-sacrifices are offered; and the victim for wrong done, like the victim for a fault, becomes the property of the priest; it is set apart for holy uses.

The priest will take some of the blood from this victim which is offered for wrong

done, and set a mark with it on the man he is pronouncing clean; on the tip of his right ear, his right thumb, and the great toe of his right foot. Then he will take some of the oil in his left hand, dip a finger of his right hand in it, and sprinkle it seven times in the Lord's presence. The rest of the oil in his left hand he will use to anoint the man he is cleansing; over the victim's blood smeared on ear and finger and toe, and finally on his head. So he will intercede for him in the Lord's presence, and offer, first a sacrifice for his fault, then a burnt-sacrifice; this he will put on the altar, with its accompanying gifts, and so the man will be duly declared clean.

If he is poor, and cannot lay his hand on all the victims aforesaid, he must bring a lamb by way of offering for wrong done, with which the priest will make intercession for him, the tenth of a bushel of flour, kneaded with oil, for a bloodless offering, and a pint of oil, and two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, one by way of offering for his fault, and the other as a burnt-sacrifice. These he will bring before the priest at the tabernacle door in the divine presence, on the eighth day of the cleansing. The priest will take the lamb, the offering for wrong done, and the pint of oil, and hold them up together; then he will immolate the lamb, and set a mark with its blood on the man he is pronouncing clean, on the right ear, the right thumb, the great toe of the right foot. Then he will take some of the oil in his left hand, dip in his right hand, sprinkle the oil seven times in the Lord's presence, anoint the stains on ear, thumb and toe, and pour the rest of the oil in his hand over the head of the man who is being cleansed, to win him the Lord's favour again. Finally he will offer the two birds, whether turtle-dove, or young pigeon; one of them as for a fault and one by way of burnt-sacrifice, together with the gifts that accompany it. Such is the offering to be made by a leper who cannot afford the full price of his cleansing.

This was a further message the Lord gave to Moses and Aaron: When you reach the home I mean to give you in the land of Chanaan, it may be that a house will suffer infection. If so, the owner of it will go and

¹ Throughout this chapter the Hebrew text, followed by the Latin version, uses the same word to express (i) infection doubtful in its nature and (ii) ascertained leprosy.

16 tell the priest that his house is suspect of
 17 leprosy; and the priest, before going to
 18 ascertain whether it is leprosy or not, will
 19 have everything taken out of the house, for
 20 fear that all its contents might become de-
 21 filed. Then he will go in to examine the
 22 infection in the house; and if he sees dents
 23 in the surface of the walls that are pale or
 24 reddish in colour, he will go out of doors
 25 and shut the house up for a week. And if,
 26 when he comes back to examine it on the
 27 seventh day, he finds that the infection has
 28 spread, he will order the stones that are
 29 infected to be prised out, and thrown into
 30 a refuse pit, away from the city; the inside
 31 of the house, too, must be scraped all
 32 round, and the dust scraped from it must
 33 also be scattered over the refuse pit. Then
 34 other stones will be put in, in place of the
 35 old, and the house will be plastered afresh.

36 If, after the removal of the stones, and
 37 the scraping, and the new plastering, the
 38 priest comes in and finds that the infection
 39 has returned, and the walls are still dis-
 40 figured with spots, this is malignant le-
 41 prosy, and the house is unclean. It must
 42 be destroyed at once, stone and wood and
 43 plaster alike must be thrown into a refuse
 44 pit, away from the town. Anyone who has
 45 entered it since the priest shut it up will be
 46 unclean till evening comes, and anyone
 47 who has slept or eaten there must wash his
 48 clothes.

49 But if the priest finds that the infection
 50 has not spread in the house after the new
 51 plastering, he will cleanse it, in token that
 52 it is now free of disease. To effect this
 53 cleansing, he will take two birds, some
 54 cedar-wood, and scarlet stuff, and hyssop,
 55 shed the blood of one bird into spring
 56 water in an earthenware pot, dip the cedar-
 57 wood, the scarlet stuff, the hyssop, and the
 58 living bird into the water stained with the
 59 dead bird's blood, and sprinkle it over the
 60 house seven times. So, by the use of blood
 61 and water and a living bird and cedar-wood
 62 and hyssop and scarlet stuff, the cleansing
 63 will be effected; and letting the bird fly
 64 away into the open, the priest will make
 65 intercession for the house, and it will be
 66 duly declared clean.

67 Such are the rules for all leprosy and
 68 scab, for the infection that breaks out in
 69 garments or in houses, for scars and ulcers,

and for shiny patches on the skin that
 change their colour; such are the means
 for ascertaining when it is time to declare
 anything clean or unclean.

15 And the Lord gave Moses and
 Aaron this message for the Is-
 raelites: The man who has a running of
 the reins is unclean. And he must still be
 considered unclean, even though his de-
 filement, at certain times, dries up and
 causes a stoppage. Any bed he lies on,
 anything he sits on, becomes unclean. The
 man who touches his bed, must wash his
 garments and bathe, and hold himself un-
 clean till sundown; and there is the same
 washing, and bathing, and uncleaness for
 the man who sits where he sat; the same
 washing, and bathing, and uncleaness,
 for the man who touches him; the same
 washing, and bathing, and uncleaness for
 the man on whom his spittle falls. Unclean
 the saddle on which he has ridden, un-
 clean, till evening comes, everything on
 which the man so afflicted may rest; the
 same washing, and bathing, and unclean-
 ness for anyone who carries it in his hands;
 the same washing, and bathing, and un-
 cleaness for anyone whom he touches,
 unless he washes his hands first. Any
 earthen pot he touches must be broken,
 any bucket of wood he touches, rinsed with
 water.

If a man so afflicted is healed, he must
 count seven days from the time of his
 healing,¹ and then, when he has washed
 his clothes and his whole body in spring
 water, he is clean. On the eighth day, he
 must bring two turtle-doves, or two young
 pigeons, to the door of the tabernacle that
 bears record of me, and give them to the
 priest. The priest will sacrifice one as a
 victim for his fault, and the other as a
 burnt-sacrifice, and so make intercession
 for him in the Lord's presence, that he may
 be clean from the defilement of his body.

The man who loses the seed of pro-
 creation must wash his whole body in
 water, and remain unclean till evening
 comes; wash, too, in water his garment of
 stuff or of leather, and that too, till evening
 comes, is unclean. If he has had commerce
 with a woman, she too must wash, and she
 too, till evening comes, is unclean.

¹ The sense of the Hebrew text is rather 'up to the time of his cleansing'.

19 The woman who loses blood, because
 20 her monthly time has come round, must
 21 remain a whole week apart; whoever
 22 touches her is unclean till sundown, and
 23 all she lies upon or sits upon during this
 24 time of separation, becomes defiled there-
 25 by. The man who touches her bed, must
 26 wash his garments, and bathe, and hold
 27 himself unclean till evening; and there is
 28 the same washing, and bathing, and un-
 29 cleanness for anyone who touches any
 30 piece of furniture on which she has sat
 31 down to rest. If a man has commerce with
 32 her at her monthly time, he remains un-
 33 clean for a whole week; unclean, too, is any
 34 bed on which he lies.

35 A woman who loses blood continually at
 36 other times, or when her monthly time is
 37 over, must be considered unclean in the
 38 same way, as long as her affliction lasts;
 39 unclean the bed she sleeps on, and all that
 40 she rests on, unclean, till evening comes,
 41 everyone who has touched her, and mean-
 42 while he must wash his garments and
 43 bathe in water. If the issue of her blood
 44 dries up, she must count seven days from
 45 the time of her healing,¹ and on the
 46 eighth day she will bring two turtle-doves,
 47 or two young pigeons, to the priest at the
 48 door of the tabernacle. The priest will
 49 sacrifice one as a victim for her fault, and
 50 the other as a burnt-sacrifice, and so make
 51 intercession for her in the Lord's presence
 52 over the issue of blood that has defiled
 53 her.

54 You must teach the sons of Israel to be
 55 on their guard against uncleanness; or they
 56 may be punished with death for the ir-
 57 reverence which has profaned my taber-
 58 nacle, here in their midst. Such are the
 59 rules which concern men who are defiled
 60 by a running of the reins, or by intercourse
 61 with woman, and for women who must
 62 remain apart because of their monthly
 63 time, women who have a continuous issue
 64 of blood, and men with whom such women
 65 have commerce.

¹ This might also be translated 'up to the time of her cleansing', which is the sense of the Hebrew text, but cf. verse 13 above.

² According to the Hebrew text, one lot was for the Lord, the other for 'azazel'. The meaning of this word is uncertain; it does not occur in the Bible outside this chapter. It appears in later Jewish literature as the name of an evil Spirit; and some think that it has that meaning here, the scapegoat being handed over into the power of an evil spirit, such as might be supposed to inhabit the desert, far from the haunts of men (Tob. 8. 3; Mt. 12. 43). In any case, it is clear that the sins of the people were laid, symbolically, on the head of the goat, so that in discharging it from the camp they discharged themselves from guilt.

³ The eastern end; that is, the part immediately inside the veil. But the sense of the Hebrew text is probably 'opposite the throne, in front of it'. The Hebrew text implies that the blood was sprinkled once on the throne, and seven times in front of the throne.

16 After the death of Aaron's two
 17 sons, that were punished for offer-
 18 ing up unhallowed fire, the Lord spoke to
 19 Moses giving him a message for his brother
 20 Aaron: He must never present himself
 21 without due preparation within the sanc-
 22 tuary, behind the veil, where the throne
 23 stands above the ark. If he does so, the
 24 penalty is death; it is over this shrine that
 25 I mean to reveal myself in cloud. And this
 26 is the preparation he must make; he must
 27 offer a young bullock as a victim for his
 28 faults, and a ram by way of burnt-sacrifice.
 29 He must be clad in the linen robe, with
 30 linen breeches for decency, and must be
 31 girt with a linen girdle, and wear the linen
 32 mitre on his head; these are the sacred
 33 vestments he must put on, after washing
 34 himself. And the whole people of Israel
 35 must provide him with two goats as vic-
 36 tims for their faults, and a ram for burnt-
 37 sacrifice.

38 He will offer the bullock to make inter-
 39 cession for himself and for his family. The
 40 two goats he will present before the Lord,
 41 at the door of the tabernacle that bears
 42 record of me, and will cast lots between
 43 them; one is to be the Lord's due, the other
 44 is for discharge.² The one chosen by lot
 45 to be the Lord's due must be offered for
 46 their faults; the one chosen for their dis-
 47 charge must be presented before the Lord
 48 alive, to let intercession fall upon it, and
 49 then be turned loose in the desert.

50 So, with due ceremony, he will offer the
 51 bullock, making intercession for himself
 52 and his family, and immolate it. And now,
 53 filling his censer with coals from the altar,
 54 and taking a handful of beaten spices for
 55 incense, he will pass beyond the veil into
 56 the inner sanctuary, putting incense on the
 57 coals, so that a cloud of smoke may hide
 58 that shrine over the ark, which none may
 59 see and live. He will take some of the
 60 bullock's blood, too, and sprinkle it with
 61 his finger seven times over the eastern end
 62 of the sanctuary, opposite the throne.³ And

afterwards, when he has immolated the goat for the faults of the people, he will carry some of its blood, too, within the veil, and sprinkle it there opposite the shrine, like the bullock's blood. So he will purify the sanctuary from all the faults the sons of Israel have committed, their transgressions and their uncleanness. With the same ceremony he shall purify the tabernacle that bears the Lord's record, pitched there amongst them, with all the defilement of their dwellings round about.

17 No one must be there in the tabernacle from the time when the high priest enters the inner sanctuary, to make intercession for himself and his family and the whole people of Israel, till the time when he comes out again. And when he comes out to the altar that stands there in the Lord's presence, he must make intercession for himself, pouring the blood of bullock and goat all round the horns of it; and so, sprinkling it with his finger seven times, he must make expiation, and cleanse it from all the defilement incurred by the sons of Israel.

20 Sanctuary, and tabernacle, and altar so cleansed, he has still to offer up the goat that is left alive. He must put both hands on its head, confessing all the sins and transgressions and faults Israel has committed, and laying the guilt of them on its head. And there will be a man standing ready to take it into the desert for him; so the goat will carry away all their sins into a land uninhabited, set at large in the desert.

23 Then Aaron will come back to the tabernacle, and take off the vestments he wore when he entered the sanctuary, and leave them there; he will wash on holy ground, and put on his own garments instead. He will come out, and offer his own burnt-sacrifice, and that of the people, making intercession for himself and for the people both at once, and burn the fat of the transgression-victim on the altar. The man who let loose the goat that was discharged must wash his clothes and bathe before he

returns to the camp. As for the transgression-victims, the bullock and the goat, whose blood was carried into the sanctuary to make expiation there, the carcasses must be taken away from the camp and destroyed by fire, skin and flesh and dung together. And the man who burns them before he returns to the camp, must wash his clothes and bathe like the other.

This ceremony you are to observe for all time. On the tenth day of the seventh month you will keep a fast;¹ no work is to be done by citizen or by alien that day. It is a day of atonement on your behalf, to cleanse you from all fault, and make you clean in the Lord's sight; it must be all repose; so that you can observe the fast, year after year. He who then holds the office of high priest, duly anointed to serve in place of his father, will make atonement, clad in linen robe and sacred vestments; purify sanctuary, tabernacle, altar, priests and people. You will continue for all time to make intercession, once a year, for the children of Israel, and for all the faults they have committed.

And Aaron carried out the commands which the Lord had given to Moses.

17 And the Lord spoke to Moses, bidding him tell Aaron and his sons and all Israel, Here is a commandment the Lord has for you. Any Israelite who kills sheep or ox or goat,² within the camp or without, and does not make an offering to the Lord at the tabernacle door, shall pay for it with his life; blood has flowed, and the shedder of it is lost to his people. Whatever beasts they kill on their farms, the sons of Israel must bring to the priests as victims, consecrating them to the Lord's honour at the tabernacle door, and immolating them as welcome-offerings to him. And the priest will pour out the blood at the altar which stands before the tabernacle, and burn the fats for the Lord to accept the smell of its burning. You have prostituted yourselves to the worship of false gods; to them you must offer victims

¹ 'Keep a fast'; literally, 'afflict your souls'.

² The word translated 'killed', here and in verse 5 below, is one of frequent occurrence in the Mosaic law, and everywhere else it is a sacrificial term, 'immolate'. It is not, therefore, clear whether this regulation applies to all slaughtering of cattle for food; or whether it forbids the private *sacrificing* of cattle, which might easily degenerate into the idolatry condemned in verse 7. But perhaps at the time of the Exodus, when food was scarce, the killing of a beast was confined to special occasions, such as would call for sacrifice; after the conquest of Palestine, the situation was altered (Deut. 12. 20-22).

no longer. Such is the law they and their
 8 descendants must obey for all time; tell
 them that if any Israelite or any alien
 living among them offers burnt-sacrifice
 9 or victim without bringing it to the door
 of the tabernacle which bears record of
 me, and offering it to the Lord, he is lost
 to his people.

10 Any Israelite, or alien dwelling among
 you, who consumes the blood when he
 eats, becomes my enemy; I will sever him
 11 from my people. It is the blood that ani-
 mates all living things, and I have destined
 it to make atonement for your souls upon
 the altar, blood for the purification of your
 12 souls. That is why I have warned the sons
 of Israel that neither they nor the aliens
 who dwell among them must consume the
 13 blood when they eat. Any Israelite, or
 alien living among you, who hunts down
 a beast or snares a bird, such as you are
 allowed to eat, must drain its blood and
 14 cover it with earth. Because it animates
 all living things, I give the sons of Israel
 this warning: Never, on pain of death,
 turn it to your own use, the blood that
 holds the life.

15 Anyone, citizen or alien, who eats what
 has fallen dead or been the prey of a wild
 beast, must wash his clothes and bathe
 in water, and be reckoned unclean till
 sun-down. Then he will be clean again;
 16 but if he does not wash his clothes and
 bathe himself, he will be held to account
 for it.

18 And the Lord spoke to Moses
 1 bidding him give the sons of
 Israel this message: I am the Lord your
 2 God; it is not for you to live by the customs
 of that Egyptian land in which you once
 3 dwelt, or to imitate the men of Chanaan,
 the new home I am giving you, and follow
 4 their observances. It is my decrees you
 will execute, my commands you will obey,
 following them closely; am I not the Lord
 5 your God? It is my laws, my decrees you
 must keep; they give life to the man who
 6 lives by them; am I not the Lord? And it
 is I, the Lord, who tell you that no man is
 to betake himself to a woman who is near
 of kin to him, and mate with her.

7 Thou shalt not come between thy
 father's sheets, and mate with her that

bore thee; wouldst thou mate with thy own
 mother? Thou shalt not mate with her
 8 that is thy father's wife; her shame is his.
 Thou shalt not mate with thy sister by
 9 either parent, born in the same house or
 born elsewhere. Thou shalt not mate with
 10 the daughter of thy own son or daughter;
 her shame is thine. Thou shalt not mate
 11 with any daughter thy father's wife bears
 him; she is thy sister. Thou shalt not mate
 12 with thy father's sister, thy own father's
 flesh and blood; nor with thy mother's
 13 sister, thy own mother's flesh and blood.
 Thou shalt not come between thy uncle's
 14 sheets and mate with his wife; she is bound
 to thee by affinity. Thou shalt not mate
 15 with thy daughter-in-law; wouldst thou
 mate with the wife of thy own son? Thou
 16 shalt not mate with thy brother's wife;¹
 her shame is his. Thou shalt not mate with
 17 a woman and also with her daughter, no,
 nor with any grand-daughter of hers; they
 are flesh and blood of hers, and all such
 commerce is incestuous. Thou shalt not
 8 make a concubine of thy wife's sister,
 mating with her while thy wife still lives.
 Thou shalt not come nigh a woman and
 19 mate with her during her monthly time.
 Thou shalt not defile thyself by bedding
 20 with thy neighbour's wife.

Thou shalt not yield up any child of
 21 thine to be devoted to the false god
 Moloch, doing dishonour to the name of
 thy God; am I not the Lord? Thou shalt
 22 not have commerce with a man as if it had
 been with a woman; such commerce is
 abominable. Thou shalt not defile thyself
 23 by commerce with a beast; nor shall a
 woman allow any beast to have commerce
 with her; it is foully done.

Do not defile yourselves like the nations
 24 I am dispossessing to make room for you;
 the whole land is contaminated by their
 25 presence, and I am calling it to account for
 these ill deeds, till it vomits out its own
 inhabitants. Citizens alike and aliens, that
 26 dwell among you, must observe these laws
 and decrees I am giving you, and keep
 27 clear of all such abominations; the very
 abominations by which the former in-
 habitants of the land have contaminated it.
 Be sure that it will vomit you out like those
 28 others, if you do as they did. Whoever is
 29 guilty of any such abomination is lost to his

¹ That is, presumably, while the brother is still alive; cf. 20. 21 below, and Deut. 25. 5.

30 people. Keep my commandments, and do not defile yourselves by imitating your forerunners; am I not the Lord your God?

19 The Lord, too, spoke to Moses, bidding him give the whole company of Israel this message: You must be men set apart, as I am set apart, I, the Lord your God. Worshippers of such a God, you must reverence father and mother, and keep my day of rest; worshippers of such a God, you must not betake yourselves to idols, make molten images at your pleasure.

5 If you immolate a victim by way of welcome-offering, to win the Lord's favour, eat it on the day of its immolation, or the day after; whatever remains on the third day must be destroyed by fire. The man who eats of it when two days have passed defiles it and displeases me; he will be held to account for profaning what is consecrated to the Lord; he shall be lost to his people.

9 When thou reapest the crops on thy land, do not raise all to the level of the ground,¹ or pick up the scattered ears; do not hoard up the clusters or the grapes that have fallen. Leave something for poor men and wanderers to glean; remember what God you worship.

11 Do not steal, and lie, and deceive one another. Do not violate the honour of thy God by swearing falsely in my name; the Lord's name. Do not wrong thy neighbour or despoil him by violence; do not withhold the wages of thy hired servants till morning comes. Do not miscall the deaf, or put a stumbling-block in the blind man's way; thou hast the vengeance of thy God to fear; the Lord's vengeance. Do not pervert justice by giving false awards, whether by taking a man's poverty into account,² or by flattering the great; give every man his just due. Do not whisper calumnies in the public ear, and swear away thy neighbour's life; the Lord hears thee. Do not nurse resentment against thy brother; put thyself in the right by confronting him with his fault. Do not seek revenge, or

bear a grudge for wrong done to thee by thy fellow-citizens; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; thy Lord is his.³

Keep true to my commandments; do not mate any beast of thine with one of another sort, or sow thy field with a mixed crop, or wear garments woven of two different fabrics.⁴

If a man has commerce with a slave-woman promised in marriage, but not yet redeemed or set free, both shall be beaten, but they shall not be put to death, as if she were a free woman. The man must offer a ram to the Lord at the tabernacle door for wrong done, and so the priest will make intercession before the Lord for the fault he has committed, and the Lord will be merciful, and pardon his fault.

When you reach your own country and plant fruit-trees there, you must strip them of the fruit they bear,⁵ as something unclean, not for your eating, till the fourth year; then you must offer the whole crop to the Lord as an acceptable sacrifice. You must not gather the fruit on them for your own eating till the fifth year; the Lord your God comes first.

Do not eat anything that has the blood still in it.

Do not consult omens, or pay regard to dreams. There must be no tonsuring of heads and mutilating of beards, no gashing your bodies when a man dies, no branding them with marks and designs; the Lord forbids it. Do not expose any daughter of thine to dishonour; so thou wilt bring dishonour on the whole land, and fill it with lewdness. Keep your observance for my sabbaths, your reverence for my sanctuary. Do not betake yourselves to sorcerers, or consult wizards, to your defilement; you are the Lord's worshippers.

Rise up from thy seat in reverence for grey hairs; honour the aged, as thou dost fear God, the Lord thy God. If an alien comes to dwell in your land, and settles down among you, do not treat him disdainfully; welcome him as if he were native born, and do him kindness as if he were

¹ In the Hebrew text, 'finish off the corners of thy field'.

² Literally, according to the Hebrew text, 'showing partiality towards the poor'; cf. Ex. 23. 3.

³ 'Thy neighbour'; literally, according to the Latin, 'thy friend', but cf. verse 13 above, where the Latin renders the same Hebrew word by 'neighbour', and Lk. 10. 27.

⁴ Some think that this verse refers to superstitions common at the time. Others have suggested that the purpose of these regulations was symbolical, the Israelites being warned against making a hotch-potch of true and false religion. Cf. Deut. 22. 9-11.

⁵ 'Strip'; literally 'circumcise'. It is perhaps implied (cf. verse 24) that the fruit produced at first would be unworthy of sacrifice.

one of yourselves, remembering that you were aliens once, in the land of Egypt; the Lord your God remembers. There must be no tampering with justice, with the rule or the weight or the measure you employ; an even scale, a true balance, a full bushel, a full pint-measure; ever just the Lord your God is, that rescued you from Egypt.

Remember all these laws, all these decrees of mine, and live by them; the Lord's decrees.

20 And the Lord spoke to Moses, giving him this message for the sons of Israel: If any Israelite, or alien living among you, sacrifices a child of his to the false god Moloch, his life must pay for it; he must be stoned publicly. On such a man my ban rests, and I will not let him live among my people any longer, once he has outraged my sanctuary, dragged my holy name in the dust, by sacrificing his child to Moloch. Does the people neglect its duty, defy my commandments? Does it condone the sacrifice, and refuse to kill him? Then shall my ban rest upon all his kindred too, and I will rid my people of the man who played the wanton with Moloch, and all who consented to it. If anyone be-takes himself to sorcerers and wizards, on him too my ban shall rest for prostituting himself to such arts, and I will rid my people of him. Keep yourselves apart, and be a holy people; remembering what God you worship. Keep these commandments of mine and live by them; I, the Lord, have set you apart.

If a man curses father or mother, his life must pay for it; he has put himself beyond hope of pardon,¹ in cursing father or mother.

If a man commits adultery by having commerce with his neighbour's wife, the lives of both, adulterer and adulteress, must pay for it. If a man has commerce with his step-mother, coming between his own father's sheets, the lives of both must pay for it; they must find no mercy. No

mercy must be shewn when a man has commerce with his daughter-in-law; order has been violated, and both must die. No mercy, either, when a man has commerce with another man as if he had been a woman; either is guilty of a foul deed, and both must die. The man who mates with daughter and mother both, is guilty of a foul deed; he and they must be burnt alive, and such guilt as theirs be found in your midst no longer.² If a man has commerce with a beast, his life must pay for it; the beast too must be killed; and the woman who allows a beast to have commerce with her, must die with the beast; no mercy must be shewn to any such. If a man takes his own sister to his bed, whether she is his father's daughter or his mother's, to her shame and his, it is great disgrace; both must be held to account for it, and be put to death publicly, for bringing shame on one another. If a man has commerce with a woman in her monthly time, and intrudes upon the flowing of her blood, both must be lost to their people.

Thou shalt not mate with any sister of thy father or thy mother; the man who does this dishonours his own flesh and blood, and both will be held to account for it. If a man has commerce with the wife of his father's brother, or his mother's brother, bringing shame on his own kindred, man and woman will be held to account; they shall not live to breed children. The man who takes his brother's wife in marriage does a forbidden thing, bringing shame on his own brother; children they shall have never.³

Remember these laws and decrees of mine, and live by them, or you too will be vomited up again by the land you are soon to invade and occupy; it is not for you to imitate the practices of the nations I am driving out to make room for you. Was it not these very practices that made me their enemy? And now, if I bid you take possession of their land, a land all milk and honey, and make it your home, it is because I, the Lord your God, have set you apart

¹ Literally, 'His blood must be upon his own head', that is, to kill him is execution, not murder. ² It is not clear why this special punishment is reserved for this special offence. The word 'alive' is not found in the Hebrew text; and we find a sentence of stoning followed by burning in Jos. 7. 25.

³ See note on 18. 16 above. Probably we are meant to understand that the brother is still alive (cf. Mk. 6. 18). It is not impossible, however, that marriage with a brother's widow (being no breach of the natural law) may have been forbidden to the Israelites in the wilderness, yet afterwards prescribed to them as settlers in the land of Chanaan, in cases where the widow had no child to inherit the property (Deut. 25. 5).

- 25 among all the nations of the world; and you too must set what is clean apart from what is unclean, whether beast or bird; you are not to incur defilement over such beasts and birds and other living things as
- 26 I have bidden you hold abominable. You must be set apart for my service, as I am set apart, I, your God, who have chosen you out among all the nations of the world, to belong to me.
- 27 If man or woman is possessed by a spirit of witchcraft or divination, their lives must pay for it by stoning; they have put themselves beyond hope of pardon.

21 The Lord also spoke to Moses giving him a message for the priests, the sons of Aaron: When a fellow-citizen dies, a priest is not to expose himself to defilement, unless it be the funeral of one of his near kin, father or mother, son or daughter, a brother of his or a sister that is a virgin unwed. Nay, he must not expose himself to defilement even for the ruler among the people.¹

- 5 Priests are not to shave their heads or beards, or make gashes in their skin for mourning. They are men set apart for their God, and must never bring reproach on his name; they burn incense² to the Lord, offer their God his consecrated loaves, and
- 7 shall they not be holy? They must not wed harlots, or women dishonoured, or those whom their husbands have rejected, these men vowed to the service of their God,
- 8 who set out the consecrated loaves before him. They must be set apart, as I, the Lord, am set apart, the Lord that hallows
- 9 them. If the daughter of a priest is convicted of playing the harlot, and bringing dishonour on her father's name, she must be given to the flames.

- 10 The high priest, that one who is chief among his brethren, whose brow has been anointed with the holy oil, and his hands consecrated for the priestly office, who wears the sacred vestments, may never
- 11 bare his head, or rend his garments, or go

near a dead body upon any occasion. Though it be his father or mother, he must not expose himself to defilement, but keep³ within the Lord's holy precincts, so as not to bring defilement on them, a man consecrated to his God by the holy oil that anointed him; the Lord's own priest. And when he marries, he must marry a virgin; not a widow, or a rejected wife, or a harlot, or a woman dishonoured; she must be a virgin of his own clan,³ so that the stock of his family is not debased by the blood of common folk; I, the Lord, have set him apart.

The Lord, too, spoke to Moses, bidding him tell Aaron: No descendant of thine that has any blemish shall be allowed to offer his God the consecrated loaves, nor to come forward and do him service. Such are the blind, the lame, one whose nose is deformed in size or twisted awry,⁴ one who has a crushed hand or foot, is hunched or blear-eyed,⁵ or wall-eyed, has a continual scab or itch on him, or a rupture. No one of the priestly line of Aaron who has such a blemish must come forward to sacrifice to the Lord, or offer his God the consecrated loaves. He is allowed to eat the bread which is offered in the sanctuary, but he must have no access to the veil,⁶ must not go near the altar; my sanctuary must not be profaned by any blemish. I, the Lord, have set priests apart for myself.

All these commands Moses handed on to Aaron, and to his sons, and to the people of Israel.

22 And the Lord spoke to Moses giving him this command for Aaron and his sons: They must beware what use they make of the offerings brought by Israel; they must not profane the honour of these consecrated things; of things consecrated to the Lord. Tell them, tell all who follow, that if any of their race comes near these sacred offerings in a state of defilement, he is lost to my service; the

¹ The sense of this verse in the Hebrew text is uncertain. ² According to the Hebrew text, 'offerings'. In this chapter, by a metaphor, the priests seem to be thought of as servants waiting at their master's table. ³ Literally, 'his own people', but the context seems to indicate that the Latin version uses the word here in a restricted sense. The Hebrew text has simply 'She must be a virgin, of his own people, and he must not dishonour his race among his people'. ⁴ The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'one who is mutilated (probably in the face) or has an over-developed limb'. ⁵ The word in the Hebrew text seems to mean 'withered'. ⁶ Literally, according to the Latin text, 'go within the veil', but this was in any case forbidden to all except the high priest (Heb. 9. 7). The Hebrew text has 'come up to the veil' (cf. 4. 6 above).

14 service of the Lord. Any of Aaron's race who is a leper, or has a running at the reins, must cease to have any share of the hallowed food, until he is cured. Anyone of them who has touched a thing defiled by death, or has lost the seed of procreation, 15 or perhaps has touched some creeping animal, or anything whose touch defiles, 16 remains unclean till sundown, so that he must not share the holy food. Not till he 17 has bathed in water, and waited for the sun to go down, may he enjoy his privilege of 18 sharing in it. The priests must not defile themselves by eating anything that falls dead, or has been a prey of a wild beast; 19 they are the Lord's priests. They must observe my commands, and commit no fault; death shall overtake them, there in my sanctuary, if they profane it. It is I, the Lord, who have set them apart.

10 No one that is not of their family may share the holy food, no guest the priest entertains, no hired servant of his; only a slave bought with his money or born in his house has the privilege. If a priest's daughter marries out of her clan, she loses 13 her right to these hallowed offerings; but if she becomes a widow, or is rejected by her husband and comes home childless, she may eat with her family as when she was still a maid. It is only those who belong to another clan that may not share it. 14 If anyone partakes of the holy food through inadvertence, he must go to the sanctuary and make restitution to the priest of the same quantity, with a fifth part added. 15 There must be no profaning what the sons of 16 Israel have offered to their God; they will be held to account for it, if they eat this holy food. It is I, the Lord, who have set my priests apart.

7 And the Lord spoke to Moses bidding him tell Aaron and his sons and all Israel: When any Israelite, or any alien dwelling among you, would offer the Lord burnt-sacrifice, either in payment of a vow, or out of devotion, and must present it through your hands, it must be a male victim, ox or 9 sheep or goat, without blemish. If it has

any blemish, it is unacceptable, and must not be offered. And anyone who makes the 21 Lord a welcome-offering, either in payment of a vow or out of devotion, must offer an ox or a sheep that is without blemish, if it is to be acceptable. It must have no blemish of any sort; if it is blind, 22 or crippled, or scarred, disfigured by blisters or scab or mange, you must not offer it to the Lord, or burn it on the Lord's altar. Ox or sheep that has ears or tail cut 23 off may be offered out of devotion, but not in payment of a vow.¹ No beast that has 24 suffered crushing or bruising or gelding may be offered to the Lord; there must be no such custom in your country. You must 25 not offer to your God either bread or any other gift that comes from an alien; such gifts are tainted, there is a blemish in them, they shall find no acceptance with you.

And the Lord gave Moses this message: 26 Calf, or lamb, or kid, when it is newly born, 27 must be allowed to suck for a whole week; only on the eighth day and afterwards may it be offered to the Lord. Cow or ewe, 28 dam must not be slaughtered on the same day as its young. When you sacrifice a 29 victim to the Lord by way of welcome-offering, to win his favour, you must eat it the same day, none must be left over till 30 the morrow; the Lord will have his precepts observed. Remember these com- 31 mandments of mine, and live by them; the Lord's commandments. Do not dishonour 32 my holy name; it is among the sons of Israel that I would vindicate my holiness, I, the Lord, who have set you apart for myself, and rescued you from the land of 33 Egypt, so as to be your God; am I not the Lord?

23 The Lord also spoke to Moses, bidding him tell the sons of Israel: 2 These are the feasts which the Lord will have you proclaim as specially set 3 apart.¹ You have six days to work in; the 4 seventh day must be kept set apart as a day that is all repose; you must refrain from 5 all work that day, and there must be repose

¹ 'Has ears or tail cut off'; the Hebrew text probably signifies, 'has an over-developed or an under-developed limb'.

² That is, one resident abroad (see verse 18 above). The meaning of the Hebrew text appears to be, 'If any alien offers one of the things mentioned as bread (i.e. food) for the Lord'; it is not clear whether the sense is that an alien must not (any more than an Israelite) offer any victim which has a blemish, or that no alien may offer ox, sheep, or goat in sacrifice. ³ The sense of the Hebrew text is, that the people are to gather in solemn assembly on these days; so in verses 3, 4, 7, 8, 21, 24, 27, 35, 36 and 37 below.

LEVITICUS

in every dwelling-place of yours, in the Lord's honour. And these are the feasts you must observe as consecrated to the Lord when certain times of year come round.

On the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, the Lord's Pasch begins; and with the fifteenth day of the month comes the feast of unleavened bread; for a whole week you will eat your bread without leaven. This first day you shall hold in great honour and reverence, doing no servile work on it; you will offer burnt-sacrifice to the Lord, and these sacrifices shall continue all through the week. The seventh day, too, is one which is to be kept with special honour and reverence, and no servile work is to be done.

And next, the Lord spoke to Moses, bidding him give this message to the Israelites: When you have reached the land I mean to make yours, you will have a harvest to gather in. You must bring sheaves of corn, the first-fruits of your crop, to the priest, and he, the day following the sabbath, will consecrate each sheaf, lifting it up in the Lord's presence to win his favour for you. The same day on which the sheaf is hallowed, a yearling lamb without blemish must be offered to the Lord as a burnt-sacrifice; and with it, as a bloodless offering, a peck of flour, kneaded with oil, to burn before the Lord and please him with the smell of its burning. And you must add a quart of wine by way of libation. You must not eat bread or pearl-barley or porridge made from the new crop until you have brought your God this offering. This is a law you must observe at all times and everywhere.

From that day, the next after the sabbath, when the sheaf of first-fruits was offered, you will count seven full weeks; and on the day after the end of the seventh week, that is, on the fiftieth day, you will offer the Lord a sacrifice out of your new harvesting. Each household must provide two loaves by way of first-fruits; a peck of flour cooked with leaven as first-fruits given to the Lord. With the loaves, you will offer seven yearling lambs without blemish, a calf chosen from the herd, and two rams; a burnt-sacrifice with your gifts to accompany it, for the Lord to accept the

Festivals to be observed during the Year

smell of its burning. And you must sacrifice a goat as a transgression-victim, and two yearling lambs by way of welcome-offering. These the priest will lift in the Lord's presence together with the first-fruits, and they shall be for his own use. You must keep this day with great honour and reverence, doing no servile work on it; that is a law you must observe at all times and everywhere. And when you reap your land, you will not rase all to the ground, or gather the stray ears; you will leave them for the poor man and the wanderer to glean; remember what God you worship.¹

And next, the Lord spoke to Moses, bidding him tell the Israelites: You must keep the first day of the seventh month as a day of rest; it shall be proclaimed holy with blowing of trumpets, to keep the Lord in mind of you. You must cease from all work, and offer the Lord burnt-sacrifice. And moreover (so ran the Lord's word to Moses) the tenth day of this seventh month is the day you are to honour by making atonement; it will be proclaimed holy, and you will fast on it, as well as offering the Lord burnt-sacrifice. During this day you are to do no servile work: it is a day of atonement, to win the Lord's mercy for you. If anyone does not fast that day, he is lost to his people; and I will rid the people, too, of anyone who does any work on it. It must be an unalterable rule with you at all times and everywhere to cease work on that day; it is to be all repose. The fast will begin on the evening of the ninth day, and from evening to evening you will rest.

And the Lord also spoke to Moses giving him this message for the Israelites: From the fifteenth day of this seventh month onwards, you will keep, for a whole week, the feast of Tent-dwelling. The first day is to be held in all honour and reverence; you will do no servile work on it. On each of the seven days you will offer the Lord burnt-sacrifice, and the eighth day too you must keep with all honour and reverence, with burnt-sacrifices to the Lord; the people must assemble together, and no servile work is to be done.

These are the Lord's feasts, which you must proclaim with honour and reverence,

¹ See note on 19. 9 above.

bringing the Lord your offerings, burnt-sacrifice and the gifts that go with it, as the rite of each day prescribes; to make no mention of the sabbath, and of those offerings which you will make to the Lord in performance of a vow, or out of devotion.

This is how you will celebrate your week of feasting in the Lord's honour, at the time when the last of your crops have been gathered in, from the fifteenth day of the seventh month onwards. The first and the eighth days will be all repose. And on the first day you will pluck fruit from some favourite tree, and branches of palm, leafy boughs, and osiers from the river banks, and so keep holiday in the presence of the Lord your God. For a whole week every year you will honour this observance, making it a law at all times and everywhere. It is to be kept in the seventh month, and for seven days you will live in arbours; the whole race of Israel will become tent-dwellers, to remind those who come after you that I bade the sons of Israel dwell in tents when I rescued them from the land of Egypt; I, the Lord your God.

So Moses gave word to the Israelites about the feasts they were to celebrate in the Lord's honour.

24 And the Lord said to Moses, Bid the sons of Israel bring thee oil of the olive, pure and clear, to feed at all times the lamps before the veil, where the ark bears record of me in the tabernacle that attests my covenant. Aaron shall set them there to burn before the Lord from evening to morning; a rite you shall observe continually, age after age. They shall be set there always in the Lord's presence, on the lamp-stand that is of pure gold.

Take flour, too, and bake twelve loaves of it, a peck of flour to each of them; these must be set on the table of pure gold that stands there before the Lord, six on each side of it. And put grains of fine incense on them; the bread is to be a token-sacrifice to the Lord. Every sabbath day new loaves shall be set there, Israel's covenanted gift in perpetuity; the old will be for the use of Aaron and his sons, who are to eat them on holy ground; they are set apart for holy uses, reserved out of the Lord's offerings as the prerogative of the priests for ever.

There was a man who had been born in the camp of Israel, his mother an Israelite, his father an Egyptian; and this man, quarrelling there with a true-born Israelite, blasphemed the Lord's name in heaping curses upon him. So they brought him before Moses. (His mother's name was Salumith, daughter to Dabri, of the tribe of Dan.) And he was put under guard, while they waited to know the Lord's mind concerning him.

And this was the word the Lord gave Moses: Take the blasphemer beyond the confines of the camp; let all those who were listening lay their hands on his head, and let the whole people put him to death by stoning. Tell the Israelites this: The man who curses his God will be held to account for it; he blasphemed the Lord's name, and he must die. Be he citizen or stranger, he must be stoned by the whole people; death for the blasphemer. Death, too, for anyone who smites a man and kills him. If he injures a beast, he can make it good; one beast will do as well as another; but if he causes injury to one of his fellow-countrymen, he must pay for it in the same coin, making amends for broken limb with broken limb, for eye with eye, for tooth with tooth; the loss he inflicted, he must undergo. Restitution for harm done to a beast; for harm done to a man, punishment. Your award must be the same, whether it was citizen or stranger that did the wrong; it is a just God you worship.

So Moses gave word to the Israelites, and they, obedient to the Lord's command, took the blasphemer beyond the confines of the camp, and there stoned him.

25 And there, on mount Sinai, the Lord spoke to Moses, bidding him give these commands to the sons of Israel. When you reach the land I mean to make yours, there will be times of repose to be kept in the Lord's honour. For six years thou mayest sow thy land, for six years thou mayest prune thy vineyard, and gather in its fruit; in the seventh year the land must have rest, lie fallow in the Lord's honour; no field must be sown, no vineyard pruned. Thou shalt not make a harvest of the land's aftergrowth, or hoard up, at vintage time, the dedicated grapes, in

6 this year when all is repose;¹ thou shalt leave them to be sustenance, as need arises, for thyself, thy slaves and slave-women, thy hired labourers, and the aliens in thy household; for thy beasts of burden, too, and for thy cattle, the aftergrowth shall provide food enough.

8 Of these cycles of seven years thou shalt count seven, forty-nine years in all, and then, on the tenth day of the seventh month, the day of atonement, there shall be sounding of trumpets all through the land. The fiftieth year thou shalt set apart, by proclaiming release to all that dwell in thy country; it is the year of jubilee, in which every man comes into his own lands again, and is restored to his old home. In this fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, thou shalt neither sow crops nor make a harvest of the aftergrowth, nor gather in the dedicated grapes; that would profane the jubilee; all must be eaten as it comes to hand.

13 In the year of jubilee, everyone will come into his own lands again. If, then, thou art selling land to one of thy fellow-countrymen, or buying it from him, do not drive a hard bargain with him. If thou art buying, take into account the number of years since the jubilee, and pay him according to what value there is in the remaining harvests. If many years are still to run before the next jubilee, the price will be higher; if few, the price must be brought down. It is but the succession of so many harvests that he is selling thee. Do not take advantage of your own fellow-countrymen; each of you has a divine vengeance to reckon with; the vengeance of the Lord, your God.

18 Do my bidding, remember the decrees I make, and carry them out; so you shall remain secure in your possession of the land; such crops it will bear as shall give you food to your hearts' content, shall deliver you, come what enemy may, from fear of famine. Would you ask, how you are to live in the seventh year, since you have neither sowed nor gathered in crops? Be assured that in the sixth year my blessing shall be upon the land, and it will yield food for three years to come; you will still

be enjoying the old harvest, when you sow in the eighth year, still be enjoying the old harvest, when the ninth year comes and you can reap the new.

The land must not be sold in perpetuity; it is mine, and you come into it as strangers whom I have settled there. Nothing that is yours must be sold but on the condition that it can be redeemed. If thy brother-Israelite falls on evil days, and must sell thee his little plot of ground, his next of kin, if he will, may redeem what was sold. Or, if he has no near kinsman, but is able to find the money himself, let him pay the sale price, less the value of the crops since the time of the sale, and so recover possession. If he cannot find the money, then the buyer will remain in possession till the year of jubilee comes; that year, all which has been sold comes back to its true master, who held it in earlier days.

The man who sells a house within the walls of a city, is free to effect its redemption till a year has passed; if it remains unredeemed at the end of the year, it passes into the possession of the man who bought it, and of his heirs in perpetuity; there is no redeeming it now, even in the year of jubilee. But if the house stands in some unwall'd village, there is the same right of redemption as if it were land; it will return to its true master in the year of jubilee, if he has not redeemed it first. The houses which the Levites own in their cities can always be redeemed, and if they are not redeemed they return to their masters in the jubilee year; that is because the Levites have been granted their cities in lieu of lands such as their brethren enjoy. The land round their cities must never be sold; it is their inalienable property.

If thy brother-Israelite falls on evil days, or his strength fails him, and thou givest him lodging as if he were some alien guest of thine, thou shalt not claim interest over and above what thou hast spent on him. Thou hast the vengeance of thy God to fear; see to it that thy brother has freedom to lodge with thee. It is not for thee to receive interest on what thou spendest, and entertain him to thy own profit. Bethink you how I, the Lord your God, rescued you

¹ 'Dedicated grapes'; in the Latin version, 'the first-fruits of the grapes', in the Hebrew text, 'the Nazirite grapes'. The man who took a Nazirite vow must grow his hair long; and to this, by a metaphor, the unpruned vines of the sabbatical year are compared.

from Egypt and gave you a home in Canaan, to make you mine.

And if thy brother-Israelite is brought by poverty to sell his own liberty to thee, do not submit him to bondage with thy slaves; let him work in thy household as if he were a hired servant or a free alien, till the year of jubilee comes. Then, with his children, he must be restored to his kindred and to his ancestral lands. The Israelites know no master but me, their rescuer from Egypt; they must not be bought and sold like slaves; do not use thy power over him, then, to treat him ill, as thou fearest God's vengeance. Your men-slaves and women-slaves must come from the nations round about you; or they must be aliens who have come to dwell among you, or children of theirs born on your soil; these you may hold as chattels, passing them on to your children by right of inheritance, as belonging to you in perpetuity; but you must not lord it over your brother-Israelites.

If an alien comes to dwell among you and grows rich, and one of thy brother-Israelites sells his liberty to this man, or to some descendant of his, there is still opportunity for him to be redeemed after the sale. He may be redeemed by any of his clan, uncle or cousin or kinsman by blood or kinsman by affinity. Nay, if he can lay hands on the money, he may redeem himself. In doing so, he will reckon up the number of years from the time of his sale to the next jubilee, and divide the price he was sold for by the number of years, as if he was a hireling paid yearly wages. If there are many years to run before the jubilee, he must pay the full price for them; if there are few, he will settle his account by paying his master the value of those few years' work. Full allowance must be made for the years he has served already; thou shalt not stand by and see him treated unjustly. And if, even so, he cannot find the price of his redemption, in the year of jubilee he and his children shall go free. They are no one's servants but mine, these sons of Israel whom I rescued from the land of Egypt.

26 I am the Lord your God; and if I, the Lord, am your God, you must not make yourselves idols or carved

figures, or set up monuments or engraved stones in any part of your country, so as to pay them worship. It is for you to observe my sabbaths, to reverence my sanctuary; the Lord's sanctuary. If you live by my law, if you remember my commands and obey them, rain shall fall on you when fall it should; the land will yield its increase, and the trees will be bowed with fruit, threshing not done with by vintage time, or vintage by seed-time; you shall have food to your hearts' content. Securely you shall hold your lands; sleep safe in your beds, with peace on all your frontiers. I will rid you, too, of ravenous beasts, and never the sword shall lay your country waste. You shall rout your enemies, and beat them down before you; five of you putting a hundred aliens to flight, and a hundred of you ten thousand; so shall your enemies bite the dust at your approach. Under the eye of my favour you shall increase and multiply, all my promises to you I will make good; ever the old harvest shall suffice, till you rid yourselves of it to make room for the new. I will make my dwelling among you, and never shall my love cast you off, still coming and going in the midst of you, I your God, and you my people. Was it not I, the Lord your God, that rescued you from your masters in Egypt, struck the chains from your necks, and gave you the upright carriage of free men?

Will you refuse me a hearing? Will you leave all my commands unfulfilled? Will you defy my laws, let my decrees go for nothing, neglect my bidding, annul my covenant with you? If so, this shall be my answer to you. I will be quick to punish you with death, and send fever to dim your eyes and waste your lives away; your crops shall be sown in vain, for the enemy to consume them. You shall feel my displeasure, when you are beaten down before your enemies, when you submit to tyrants who hate you, when you take flight before ever your foes attack.

And if you still refuse obedience, I will exact sevenfold punishment for your sins, till I have tamed this stubborn pride of yours. The skies shall be iron above you, and the earth bronze; all your labour will be spent in vain, earth will yield you no harvest, and the trees no fruit. Cross me,

refuse me a hearing, and I will add fresh plagues, in sevenfold punishment of your sins. I will send wild beasts to prey upon you and your cattle, till you are few in number, and your roads lie deserted. And if you refuse to be chastened, and cross me still, I will cross you in my turn, punishing your sins sevenfold. I will let war loose upon you in return for breaking your covenant with me; and when you take refuge in the cities, I will send pestilence among you. And soon you will be fain to surrender to your enemies, when I have cut off your supply of bread, so that ten women can bake in one oven, and dole out the bread by weight to men that eat and are still hungry.

Will you refuse me a hearing, will you cross me, even then? If so, I will cross you in my turn, hot with anger, plaguing you sevenfold for your sins, till you must needs eat the flesh of your own sons and daughters. I will destroy your hill-shrines, break your idols, and where your idols have fallen, you too will fall. Such will be my loathing for you that I will turn your cities into a wilderness, and your holy places into a desert; the fragrance of your sacrifices will be acceptable to me no more. I will make a havoc of your land, so that your very enemies, as they come to dwell there, will stand aghast. For yourselves, I will scatter you wide among the nations, and my sword shall be at work on what you have left behind you, turning your land into a desert, your cities into ruins. Then, in those days of desolation, your land will enjoy a sabbath indeed; while you are far away, exiled among your enemies, it will be at rest, it will repose in a sabbath of utter loneliness, that land which was never given rest by any sabbath of yours, while you dwelt there. Those of you who are left will be faint-hearted in the lands of your enemies, ready to take flight at the fall of a leaf, as if it were a sword threatening them, prostrate before ever their foes attack, stumbling over one another as if routed in battle, so little heart will be left among you to withstand your enemies. You will be lost among the Gentiles, swallowed up by a hostile country. Those few who live on will live on to pine away, still unpardoned, exiles in a land that hates

them, in punishment for their sins, punishment for the sins of their fathers. So it must be, until they confess their sins and the sins of those fathers of theirs who rebelled against me and crossed me. I must cross them still, condemning them to exile in a land that hates them, until those defiled hearts learn to be ashamed.¹

Then they will make atonement for their sins, and I will remember my covenant with Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham, remember the land which they have left, sunk now in the enjoyment of its long repose, uninhabited because of their sins. They will make atonement at last for their sin in rejecting my decrees, forgetting my law. And it will prove that all the while, even when they were exiled among their enemies, they were not rejected, they were not forgotten altogether; I would not let them perish, would not annul my covenant with them. No, I am the Lord their God, and I will bethink me of the covenant I made long ago, when I rescued them from Egypt under the eyes of the Gentiles, and proclaimed myself the God who protects them, I, the Lord.

Such were the decrees and the laws by which the Lord bound the sons of Israel to himself on mount Sinai, with Moses for his spokesman.

27 And the Lord spoke to Moses giving him this message for the Israelites: If anyone makes a vow by which he promises to God a life that belongs to him, he must pay a fixed ransom. A man between the ages of twenty and sixty must pay fifty silver pieces by sanctuary reckoning, and a woman of the same age must pay thirty. Between the ages of five and twenty, a boy must pay twenty silver pieces, a girl ten. From the age of one month to the age of five years, five silver pieces will be the price for a boy and three for a girl. A man of sixty or over will pay fifteen pieces, a woman of the same age ten. If the maker of the vow is poor, and cannot pay the full price, he must present himself before the priest, and pay whatever the priest judges to be within his means.

If anyone vows such a beast as is fit to be immolated in the Lord's honour, that beast is consecrated, and there is no ex-

¹ 'Defiled'; literally, 'uncircumcised'.

changing better for worse, or worse for better; if he sacrifices one beast in exchange for another, that other is none the less forfeit. If it is some unclean beast, which cannot be offered to the Lord in sacrifice, it must be brought before the priest, who will fix its value, according as he thinks it to be good or bad of its kind; and if the worshipper would pay to redeem it, he must add on a fifth part to this valuation.

If a man vows to consecrate his house to the Lord, the priest shall examine it and decide its worth. The valuation he makes shall be the price assigned to it, and if the worshipper would redeem it, he must pay that price and a fifth besides, to recover possession of the house.

If a man vows to consecrate to the Lord some piece of land which is part of his patrimony, it must be valued according to the worth of its yield; if it takes eight bushels to seed it, the price fixed will be fifty silver pieces. If he vows the field in the first year of a jubilee period, it must be estimated at its full worth; but if some time has passed, then the priest will count up the years still left before the jubilee comes, and will lower the price accordingly. And if the worshipper would redeem it, he must pay that price and a fifth besides, to recover the field. If he does not wish to redeem it, and it is sold to some other, the worshipper has no further opportunity of redeeming it; and when jubilee time comes round, it will be forfeit to the Lord; a consecrated piece of ground belongs to the priests by right. If the piece of land consecrated to the Lord was bought, and not part of the worshipper's

ancestral property, then the priest will reckon its value according to the number of years till jubilee time, and the worshipper will pay that sum to the Lord; when the jubilee comes, it will go back to its former owner, who sold it, since it is part of his patrimony. Every valuation must be made by sanctuary reckoning. The silver piece is worth twenty pence.

First-born creatures, which belong to the Lord already, cannot be the subject of a vow or a consecration; ox or sheep, it belongs to the Lord by right. But if it is the first-born of some unclean animal, thou, the priest, shalt put a value on it; if the worshipper would redeem it, let him pay that price and a fifth besides, if not, let it be sold at the price thou hast reckoned.

What is forfeit to the Lord, whether man or beast or piece of ground, can neither be sold nor be redeemed; once forfeit, it is set apart for holy uses, consecrated to the Lord.¹ No human life that is forfeit can be redeemed; death is the only way.

The tenth part of what the land yields, whether grain crop or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord, and is consecrated to him; if anyone would redeem his tithe, he must pay a fifth part besides. There will be tithes, too, of oxen and sheep and goats; every tenth beast, as they pass under the herdsman's rod, must be consecrated to the Lord. No choice must be made of good or bad, and there must be no exchanging one beast for another. If any exchange is made, both beasts are forfeit to the Lord, and there is no redemption.

Such are the commands the Lord gave Moses on mount Sinai, to be proclaimed to the sons of Israel.

¹ The word 'forfeit' is elsewhere used of persons or things placed under a public ban (cf. Num. 21. 2-3), and the same custom may be alluded to here. But the bearing of verses 28 and 29 is obscure.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

IN the second year after the escape from Egypt, on the first day of the second month, the Lord spoke to Moses in the tabernacle which attested his covenant, there in the desert of Sinai, giving him this message: Register the whole people of Israel by their clans and their households¹ and their several names, all that are of the male sex, of twenty years or more. Count up, thou and Aaron, the warriors of Israel by their companies; and from each tribe you shall have one man to help you, the head of a household and of a clan. These are their names; Elisur son of Sedeur for Ruben, Salamiel son of Surisaddai for Simeon, Nahasson son of Aminadab for Juda, Nathanael son of Suar for Issachar, Eliab son of Helon for Zabulon; and among the descendants of Joseph, Elisama son of Ammiud for Ephraim, and Gamaliel son of Phadassur for Manasses. For Benjamin, Abidan son of Gedeon; for Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammisaddai; for Aser, Phegiel son of Ocran; for Gad, Eliasaph son of Duel; for Nephthali, Ahira son of Enan. These were the men chosen out of the whole multitude to represent their tribes and clans, the leaders of Israel's host. They were summoned by Moses and Aaron in the presence of the whole multitude, assembled there on the first day of the second month, and together they made a register by clans and households and families and persons, enrolling each man who was twenty years old or more. All alike were counted, there in the desert of Sinai, as the Lord had bidden Moses count them.

Clan and household that came down from Ruben, Israel's first-born, could muster warriors of twenty years and more, forty-six thousand five hundred. Of Simeon, fifty-nine thousand three hundred. Of Gad, forty-five thousand six hundred

and fifty. Of Juda, seventy-four thousand six hundred. Of Issachar, fifty-four thousand four hundred. Of Zabulon, fifty-seven thousand four hundred. Among Joseph's descendants, of Ephraim, forty thousand five hundred; of Manasses, thirty-two thousand two hundred. Of Benjamin, thirty-five thousand four hundred. Of Dan, sixty-two thousand seven hundred. Of Aser, forty-one thousand five hundred. Of Nephthali, fifty-three thousand four hundred.² Such was the register Moses and Aaron and the twelve chiefs of Israel made, household by household and family by family; so that the whole muster-roll of warriors in Israel, twenty years old or more, by their households and families, was six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men.

But no family in the tribe of Levi was counted in the reckoning; the Lord had said to Moses, Do not count the tribe of Levi, or register them among the sons of Israel. Give them charge of the tabernacle that bears record of me, all its appurtenances and all that goes with its worship. It is they who will carry the tabernacle with its appurtenances, they who will attend to the tabernacle and pitch their tents about it. The Levites will take the tabernacle down when the order is given for marching, and set it up when the order is given for encamping; no one else must come near it, on pain of death. Each Israelite will pitch his tent among the regiment, the company,³ in which he goes to battle; round the tabernacle itself none but the Levites must encamp, or the whole people of Israel will incur my displeasure; theirs it is to keep watch over the tabernacle that bears record of me. Such was the Lord's bidding to Moses, and the sons of Israel faithfully observed it.

¹ 'Clans' and 'households' are frequently mentioned as sub-divisions of the tribe, and the Latin version is not always consistent in its choice of equivalents for them. Where confusion might otherwise be caused, this translation follows the Hebrew in preference to the Latin. ² The figures given in verses 21-43 are set out, after the manner of ancient records, with much repetitiveness; the translation given here cuts out the repetitions, to make the passage read more easily. ³ This Hebrew word is the same as that translated 'banner' in 2. 2.

2 And the Lord gave Moses and Aaron this command: All the Israelites are to encamp in their several companies, under banners and emblems of their own, by their families, with the tabernacle that bears witness of me in the middle. At the eastern end the sons of Juda will pitch their tents, arranged according to the companies in which they go to war, with Nahasson the son of Aminadab at their head, the full muster-roll of their warriors, seventy-four thousand six hundred strong. Next to them, under Nathanael son of Suar, Issachar was to encamp, a force of fifty-four thousand four hundred fighting men. Zabulon was led by Eliab son of Helon; there were fifty-seven thousand four hundred of them under arms. Thus the whole camp of Juda mustered a hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred men; and their companies were to be the vanguard.

Ruben, under Elisur son of Sedeur, was to encamp on the south, with a roll of forty-six thousand five hundred warriors; next to him the tribe of Simeon under Salamiel son of Surisaddai, with a roll of fifty-nine thousand three hundred; then the tribe of Gad under Eliasaph son of Duel, with a roll of forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty. And the camp of Ruben, reckoning a hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty men in their companies, were to march second. Then came the tabernacle, and the companies of Levi had the carrying of it; they were to take it down in the same way as they had set it up, and march with due place and rank assigned to them. To the west, Ephraim would encamp, under Elisama son of Ammiud, with a roll of forty thousand five hundred, and with them the tribe of Manasses, under Gamaliel son of Phadassur, with a roll of thirty-two thousand two hundred; then the tribe of Benjamin under Abidan son of Gedeon, with a roll of thirty-five thousand four hundred. The camp of Ephraim, reckoning a hundred and eight thousand one hundred men in their companies, were to march third. On the north, Dan would encamp under Ahiezer son of Ammisaddai, with a roll of sixty-two thousand seven hundred; next

to him the tribe of Aser under Phegiel son of Ochran, with a roll of forty-one thousand five hundred; and then the tribe of Nephthali under Ahira son of Enan, with a roll of fifty-three thousand four hundred. The camp of Dan, with a roll of a hundred and fifty thousand six hundred men, were to march last. Such was the number of the Israelites, when their whole array was marshalled by its families and its companies, six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty strong. But the Levites, in obedience to the command the Lord gave to Moses, were not reckoned among the Israelites. And the Israelites carried out all the Lord's bidding; in marching order they pitched their tents, and their marching order was by families and households.¹

3 Aaron and Moses had already sons to succeed them at the time when the Lord spoke to Moses on Sinai; and these were the names of Aaron's sons, Nadab, his first-born, then Abiu, Eleazar and Ithamar. All these sons of Aaron were anointed priests, their hands enriched and consecrated for priestly duties, but Nadab and Abiu, who offered unhallowed fire in the Lord's presence, died there in the desert of Sinai without issue; it was only Eleazar and Ithamar that performed the duties of the priesthood now, under the eye of Aaron their father.

And now the Lord gave Moses this command, Dedicate the tribe of Levi to me, and bid them wait on the pleasure of Aaron, the high priest; doing him service and keeping watch, carrying out the duties that belong to public worship before the tabernacle, keeping safe, too, the appurtenances of the tabernacle, and attending to its needs. Thou shalt put the Levites at the disposal of Aaron and his sons, to whom the Israelites have assigned them; but it is to Aaron and his sons that thou wilt entrust the priestly office. No one else must minister there, on pain of death. This, too, the Lord said to Moses, Among all the sons of Israel, I have singled out the Levites to be my own, in lieu of those first-born Israelites that handseil the womb; all first-born things belong to me. Ever since

¹ Literally, 'they pitched their tents in companies, and marched by families and households'; but the whole sense of the chapter seems to imply that the two principles of division were one and the same.

I smote the first-born in the land of Egypt, I have claimed the eldest birth, whether of man or of beast, as forfeit; forfeit to me, the Lord.

14 And while they were still in the desert
15 of Sinai, the Lord bade Moses register the
sons of Levi by their households and their
families, all of them that were more than
16 a month old. So Moses made a register, as
17 the Lord had bidden him; giving the
names of Levi's sons in their order, Ger-
18 son, Caath and Merari; then the sons of
19 Gerson, Lebni and Semei, the sons of
Caath, Amram, Jessar, Hebron and Oziel
20 and the sons of Merari, Moholi and Musi.
21 The two families that came down from
22 Gerson through Lebni and Semei amount-
ing to seven thousand five hundred males,
23 above the age of a month; these were to
encamp behind the tabernacle, to the west,
24 under Eliasaph the son of Lael. The parts
of the tabernacle which were to be in their
26 charge were the tent itself and its canopy,
and the screen stretched over the doorway
by which the tabernacle was entered; the
curtains for the court, and the hanging at
the entrance to the court, with all that
belongs to the service of the altar;¹ the
tabernacle ropes, too, and its appurten-
ances in general.

27 The race of Caath, comprising the fami-
lies that were named after Amram, Jesaar,
28 Hebron and Oziel, which counted eight
thousand six hundred males above a
month old, were in charge of the sanctuary.
29 They were to encamp south of it, under
31 Elisaphan the son of Oziel, and have the
keeping of the ark, the table, the lamp-
stand, the altars, the vessels for worship in
the sanctuary, the veil, and all other such
32 furniture. These guardians of the sanc-
tuary had the chief of all the Levites at
their head, Eleazar, son of the high priest
33 Aaron. The two families of Merari's line,
34 named after Moholi and Musi, counting
six thousand two hundred males above a
35 month old, were to encamp on the north,
36 under Suriel the son of Abihaiel. They
were to guard the frames and poles of the
tabernacle, the posts with their sockets,
37 and all that went with such an office; the
posts of the outer court, too, with their

sockets, the pegs and the ropes. In front
of the tabernacle, that is, on the east,
Moses and Aaron were to encamp with
their sons, keeping guard over the sanc-
tuary in the midst of the Israelite people;
it was death for any other to come near it.
The whole strength of the Levites, all the
families registered at the Lord's command
by Moses and Aaron, was twenty-two
thousand males above a month old.²

And now the Lord said to Moses, Count
up all the male first-born in Israel who are
more than a month old, and find their
number. I must have a Levite for every
male in Israel; it is the Lord's due. And
they must have cattle to match in number
all the first-born cattle the Israelites pos-
sess. So Moses counted the first-born of
Israel, as the Lord bade him, and found
that there were twenty-two thousand two
hundred and seventy-three such persons.
And the Lord said to Moses, Set apart the
Levites to be my own, instead of the first-
born Israelites, and the cattle of the Levites
to be mine, instead of the first-born cattle;
it is the Lord's due. Meanwhile, here are
two hundred and seventy-three first-born
who have no Levites to match their num-
ber; for these, ransom must be paid.
Claim five silver pieces, by sanctuary
reckoning, for each of them, (the silver
piece is worth twenty pence), and pay the
money to Aaron and his sons, as the ran-
som for the first-born who are left over.
So Moses took ransom for those who were
left out of the count when the Levites
stood as ransom for the first-born sons of
Israel, a thousand three hundred and
sixty-five silver pieces by sanctuary reck-
oning; and these he paid over to Aaron and
his sons as the Lord had bidden him.

4 Then the Lord bade Moses and
Aaron register the sons of Caath,
household by household, family by family,
apart from the rest of the Levites; men
between the ages of thirty and fifty, who
went into the tabernacle to wait and work
there. The sons of Caath, he said, there in
the tabernacle, are to have the holiest task
of all. When the order is given for march-
ing, it is for Aaron and his sons to go in and

¹ According to the Hebrew text, 'the hanging at the entrance to the court which surrounds the tabernacle and the altar'. ² The total here given does not correspond with the figures previously mentioned, which must have suffered from a copyist's error.

take down the veil at the sanctuary entrance, in which they will wrap up the ark; then they will enfold it again in a covering of skins dyed violet, and spread a cloth over it all of blue, and so they will put the poles in to carry it. They will spread another blue cloth over the table, which will have its cups and bowls and dishes on it, and goblets for pouring out libations, and the bread set forth there as always; a red cloth over that, and a covering dyed violet, and put the poles in. Then, with a blue cloth, they will cover the lamp-stand, with its lamps, tongs, snuffers, and all the phials of oil for feeding the lamps, enfold all in skins dyed violet, and so they will make it ready for carrying. Then a blue cloth, and a covering of violet skins, for the golden altar; and all the appurtenances of sanctuary worship they shall cover up in the same way, and make these, too, ready for carrying. The brazen altar they will rid of its ashes, and wrap it in a purple cloth, enclosing with it all the appurtenances used for its ceremonies, fire-pans, flesh-hooks, forks, pot-hooks and shovels; they must wrap up all the appurtenances of this altar in a covering of violet skins, and then put poles through the rings of the altar itself. Then when Aaron and his sons have wrapped up the sanctuary and all its appurtenances ready for the march, the sons of Caath will enter and carry them away in their wrappings; they are not to touch the things of the sanctuary, on pain of death. Such charge will the sons of Caath have over the tabernacle that attests my covenant; and Eleazar, son of the high priest Aaron, will be in command of them. Under his care is the oil for feeding the lamps, and the spices for the incense; under his care the continual sacrifice, and the oil used for anointing, and all that concerns the worship paid in the tabernacle, and all the furniture of the sanctuary. This warning, too, the Lord gave to Moses and Aaron; Would you have the family of Caath lost to Levi's tribe? If you value their lives, order their doings thus; death is the penalty, if they should touch what has been set apart for holy uses. Only Aaron and his sons may enter; and they

will direct what is to be the task of each Levite, what burden he is to carry. None must pry into the secrets of the shrine while they are yet uncovered, on pain of death.

Then the Lord bade Moses register the sons of Gerson, by households and families; men between the ages of thirty and fifty, who went into the tabernacle to work there. The task of these sons of Gerson, he told them, is to carry the curtains of the tabernacle, and the second covering that makes a roof over the place of covenant, and the purple canopy over all, and the screen at the entrance of the tabernacle; the hangings, too, of the court, and the screen at the entrance of the court, opposite the tabernacle.¹ All that belongs to the altar, and all the ropes, and the appurtenances that go with them, shall be carried by the family of Gerson, as Aaron and his sons shall direct; they will make known what burden falls to each. This is the charge which the sons of Gerson will have over the tabernacle which attests my covenant, and Ithamar, son of the high priest Aaron, will have the disposal of them. The households and families of Merari's line must also be registered; men between the ages of thirty and fifty, who go about their work in the shrine of the covenant. They have the charge of carrying the frames and poles of the tabernacle, its posts with their sockets; posts, too, sockets and pegs and ropes for the court round about. All such appurtenances shall be handed over to them one by one, to carry with them. Such duties and tasks the sons of Merari will have, in the tabernacle that attests my covenant, and these too will be at the disposal of Ithamar, son of the high priest Aaron.

So Moses and Aaron and the chieftains registered the households and families of Caath, all the tabernacle servants between the ages of thirty and fifty; of these there were two thousand seven hundred and fifty. Then the Gersonites; of these there were two thousand six hundred and thirty. Then the Merarites; of these there were three thousand two hundred.² So that the full register of the Levites, which Moses

¹ 'The screen at the entrance of the court, opposite the tabernacle'; according to the Latin version, 'the screen at the entrance of the tabernacle'.

² *vv.* 34-45 are here compressed, to avoid a number of word-for-word repetitions which would seem unnecessary to the modern reader.

and Aaron and the chieftains made, household by household and family by family, 47 men between thirty and fifty, fit to carry burdens and do the work of the tabernacle, 48 contained eight thousand five hundred and 49 eighty names altogether. And Moses, as the Lord had bidden him, registered all their names with the duties and burdens that fell to each.

5 This was the Lord's word to Moses, 2 Bid the sons of Israel cast out from their encampment all the lepers, all those who have a running at the reins, or are 3 defiled by contact with the dead. Men and women alike must be shut out from the camp, so as not to pollute it when 4 I am making my abode with you. This the Israelites did, shutting out such persons from the camp in obedience to the command which the Lord gave to Moses.

5 This, too, was a message the Lord gave 6 to Moses for the sons of Israel, If man or woman commits any of those wrongs mankind is prone to commit, and incurs guilt by neglecting the Lord's commandment, 7 confession must be made of it, and the sum paid back, with a fifth part added besides, to the wronged party. If there is no one to whom restitution can be made, they must make their payment to the Lord, and it will belong to his priest, over and above the ram which is offered in expiation, to 9 win pardon for the wrong done. So, too, all the first-fruits which the Israelites offer 10 belong to the priest; and all offerings made to the sanctuary, once they have been put in the priest's hand, become his.

11 This, too, was a message the Lord gave 12 to Moses for the sons of Israel: It may be that a married woman will leave her duty, 13 and, in despite of her own husband, bed with another; yet her husband will have no means of discovering her guilty secret; no witness caught her in the act of adultery. 14 What, then, if a man be inflamed with jealousy against his wife, that either is defiled, or has brought false suspicion on herself? 15 He must bring her before the priest, and make offering for her of barley-meal, the tenth part of a bushel. He will pour no oil over it, put no incense on it; this is the jealous man's sacrifice, and the

purpose of his offering is to detect unfaithfulness. The priest will cause her to appear, and bring her into the Lord's presence, and will take up an earthen jar of lustral water, into which he will put a handful of dust from the tabernacle floor. Then he will unveil the woman's head, as she stands there in the Lord's presence, and put into her hands the token-sacrifice, the jealous man's offering; in his own hand will be the baneful waters, embittered now by his curse.¹ And he will put the ban on her; If it is true no stranger has bedded with thee, and thou hast never defiled thyself by forsaking thy husband's bed, then these baneful waters I have cursed will have no power to harm thee. But if thou hast left thy duty towards thy husband, and defiled thyself by bedding with another man, then this curse of mine will bind thee: The Lord make thee a by-word of all that is accursed among his people, make thy thigh rot and thy belly swell till it bursts. Once this cursed water has entered thy belly, belly must swell and thigh rot. And here the woman shall answer, Amen, amen. This ban the priest shall write down in a book, and wash it with the baneful waters he has cursed, and so make her drink them. When she has finished the draught the priest will take the jealous man's sacrifice from her hand, lift it up in the Lord's presence, and lay it on the altar. Only, before all this is done, he must take a handful of what is offered, by way of token-sacrifice, and burn it on the altar; then he will make her drink the baneful waters.

And when she has drunk them, if she is indeed defiled, and has been guilty of adultery in her husband's despite, the cursed water as it passes into her will make her belly swell and her thigh rot, and she will be a by-word of all that is accursed among the people. But if she is innocent, she will take no harm, and will become a mother of children. Such is the law concerning jealousy. If a woman leaves her husband and is defiled, and her husband, inflamed with jealousy, brings her into the Lord's presence, so that the priest can carry out the rite aforesaid, the husband is without blame; the fault is hers, and she must answer for it.

¹ 'Embittered now by his curse'; according to the Hebrew text, 'which bring a curse with them'.

6 This message, too, the Lord gave to Moses for the sons of Israel, Man or woman that would be set apart for the Lord by taking the Nazirite vow must abstain from wine, and from all strong drink. They must not drink vinegar made from wine or from any such liquor, nor any draught that is strained from the grape; they must not eat grapes, whether fresh or dried. No fruit of the vine, grape or raisin,¹ must pass their lips while the days of their consecration last.

The Nazirite, while he is set apart, must not pass any razor over his head until his consecration to the Lord has been completed; the growth of his hair is a sign of dedication. Nor, during his time of consecration may he come near any dead body, nor may he incur defilement when father or mother, brother or sister is buried; the hair is a sign of his dedication to his God, and he is set apart for the Lord as long as the time of his consecration lasts. If he is present when a death befalls unexpectedly, his consecrated head is defiled thereby; he must shave it there and then, on the very day when the need for purification arises, and again on the seventh day. On the eighth day, he will offer to the priest two turtle-doves or young pigeons at the tabernacle door, and the priest will offer one by way of amends for the fault, and the other in burnt-sacrifice; then he will pray for pardon for the fault which the death occasioned. On the same day, his head sanctified afresh by the priest, he will dedicate to the Lord his new period of consecration, and offer a yearling lamb in amends. His former days of consecration go for nothing, once they have been interrupted by defilement.

And this is the rite he must follow when the period of his vow is completed. He will be brought to the tabernacle door, and there he will make his offering to the Lord, a yearling he-lamb without blemish in burnt-sacrifice, a yearling ewe without blemish to make amends for fault, and a ram without blemish as a welcome-offering; a basket, too, of unleavened bread kneaded with oil, and cakes with oil poured over them, and the gifts proper to each. All these the priest will offer in the Lord's presence, performing there the sacrifice of

amends and the burnt-sacrifice, and immolating the ram before the Lord as a welcome-offering; at the same time he will present the basket of unleavened things and the customary gifts. Then, before the tabernacle door, the Nazirite will shave off the consecrated growth of hair, and throw it upon the fire that consumes his welcome-offering. And now the priest will take the ram's shoulder, which has been cooking, and one of the loaves from the basket and one of the cakes, and put them into the hands of the newly shaved Nazirite, who will give them back to him, so that he can offer them up in the Lord's presence. These parts of the offering are set apart for the priest, like the breast that has been duly cut away, and the thigh. After this, the Nazirite is free to drink wine again. So must the time of his dedication be brought to an end, and so must his vow be fulfilled; apart from any special undertaking he may have made. To achieve the purpose of such consecration, he must carry out the full intentions of his vow.

And this was a message the Lord gave to Moses for Aaron and his sons: When you give the Israelites your blessing, you are to say: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord smile on thee, and be merciful to thee; the Lord turn his regard towards thee, and give thee peace. So shall they invoke my name over the sons of Israel, to win a blessing from me.

7 At the time when Moses finished the tabernacle and set it up, anointing and hallowing both the tabernacle and altar with all their appurtenances, an offering was made by the chieftains of Israel, the heads of families, who were in charge, each for his own tribe, of the registering. They gave to the Lord six covered waggons and twelve oxen, one wagon for every two of the chieftains, and one ox for every one of them. When they presented these before the tabernacle, the Lord said to Moses, Accept these gifts for the service of the tabernacle, and make them over to the Levites, for the better carrying out of their various duties. Moses, therefore, accepted the waggons and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites, assigning two waggons and four oxen to the sons of Gerson for their

¹ 'Grape or raisin'; in the Hebrew text, the Nazirite is forbidden to eat even the pips or the skin.

8 needs, and the remaining four waggons and eight oxen to Ithamar, son of the high priest Aaron, for the needs of the Merarites. No waggons or oxen were given to the sons of Caath, because their business was with the sanctuary, and every burden must be carried on their own shoulders.

10 And when the altar was to be anointed, the chieftains had their dedication gifts to bring before it; so the Lord said to Moses, Let the chieftains bring their dedication gifts on successive days. The first day, Nahasson son of Aminadab, of Juda, made his offering; a silver dish of a hundred and thirty, and a silver bowl of seventy sicles' weight, by sanctuary reckoning, both full of flour kneaded with oil for sacrifice; a gold saucer weighing ten sicles, full of incense; a bullock, a ram, and a yearling he-lamb for burnt-sacrifice; a goat to make amends for fault; and for a welcome-offering, two oxen, five rams, five goats, and five yearling he-lambs. Such was the gift of Nahasson son of Aminadab, and next day Nathanael son of Suar gave dish and bowl and saucer, of the like workmanship and with the like contents, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-offering for Issachar. On the third day it was the turn of Eliab, son of Helon, to give dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-offering for Ruben. On the fourth day Elisur, son of Sedeut, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim and welcome-offering for Gad. On the seventh day Elisama, son of Ammiud, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim and welcome-offering for Ephraim. On the eighth day Gamaliel, son of Phadassur, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-

offering for Manasses. On the ninth day Abidan, son of Gedeon, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-offering for Benjamin. On the tenth day Ahiezer, son of Ammisaddai, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-offering for Dan. On the eleventh day Phegiel, son of Ochran, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-offering for Aser. On the twelfth day Ahira, son of Enan, gave dish and bowl and saucer, and the same burnt-sacrifice, transgression-victim, and welcome-offering for Nephthali.¹

All these dedication gifts were offered by the chieftains of Israel at the time when the altar was hallowed. There were twelve silver dishes, twelve silver bowls and twelve saucers of gold. A hundred and thirty sicles of silver went to each dish, seventy to each bowl, making two thousand four hundred sicles of silver in all, by sanctuary weight. And the twelve golden saucers with incense in them weighed ten sicles each, by sanctuary weight, making a hundred and twenty sicles of gold altogether. For burnt-sacrifice, there were twelve bullocks, twelve rams, and twelve yearling he-lambs, with the bread-offering proper to them; in amends for fault, twelve goats; for welcome-offering, twenty-four oxen, sixty rams, sixty goats, and sixty yearling he-lambs. Such were the gifts made, when the altar was hallowed and anointed.

Whenever Moses went into the tabernacle that attested God's covenant, to consult the oracle there, he heard a voice speaking to him from the shrine between the two cherubs, standing above the ark; there it was that God spoke to him.

8 The Lord gave Moses this message for Aaron, When thou dost put the seven lamps in their place, the lamp-stand must be set up on the south side of the tabernacle; and give orders that the lamps face northwards, towards the table of the loaves on the other side, the lamp-stand turned towards it, and so shedding light

¹ The translation given here cuts down the dimensions of the original, in which the details given in verses 13-17 are repeated, word for word, in connexion with each tribe.

3 upon it. Such was the rule the Lord enjoined on Moses, and such was ever the rule Aaron followed, in setting out the lamps.¹ This lamp-stand was fashioned of wrought gold, both the stem in the middle of it and the branches that sprang from either side and all their ornament; the pattern the Lord had shewn him was the pattern Moses gave it.

5 And this was the Lord's word to Moses, 6 Separate the Levites from the rest of Israel, 7 and purify them. To be purified, they must be sprinkled with lustral water, and must shave all the hair on their bodies. They will wash their clothes, too, and cleanse 8 themselves. After this, they will provide an ox and the bread-offering that goes with it, of flour kneaded with oil, and a second ox must be provided as a transgression-victim; and so thou wilt bring them out in front of the tabernacle that attests my covenant, where all Israel will be assembled. And the Israelites will lay their hands upon the Levites, as they stand 11 there before the Lord, and Aaron will offer them to the Lord on Israel's behalf, to do 12 him service. Then the Levites will lay their hands upon the heads of the oxen; one of these thou wilt offer as a victim for fault, and the other in burnt-sacrifice to the 13 Lord, to make intercession for them. So thou wilt present the Levites before Aaron and his sons, set apart and offered to the 14 Lord, separated from the rest of Israel to be mine; after that, they may enter the tabernacle which attests my covenant and do me service. They must be purified, set apart, and made over to me, because they 16 are a gift to me from the Israelites, which I have accepted in lieu of every first-born son in Israel that handsels the womb. All 17 first-born things in Israel, man or beast, belong to me and are forfeit to me since the day when I smote the first-born in the land of Egypt; and in lieu of all Israel's first-born sons I claim the Levites for myself; 19 I have chosen them out from the rest of the people to be at the disposal of Aaron and

his sons, to do me service in the tabernacle and offer me prayer on Israel's behalf. The rest of the people must not come close to the sanctuary, on pain of being smitten with a plague. These commands of the 20 Lord by Moses they carried out faithfully, Moses and Aaron and all the people of Israel; the Levites were purified, and 21 washed their clothes, and Aaron made an offering of them in the Lord's presence, and made intercession for them. And now 22 they were free to enter the tabernacle, to perform their duties at the pleasure of Aaron and his sons, Levites purified as God bade Moses purify them.

This, too, was the Lord's word to 23 Moses, The law governing the Levites is 24 that they should begin their tabernacle service from the age of twenty-five onwards; when they have reached the age of 25 fifty, they are no longer bound to service, but they will attend on their brethren in the tabernacle and keep guard there as they are appointed, without doing the work of it any longer. Such is the direction 26 thou wilt give the Levites about their duties.

9 In the second year after the escape from Egypt, the Lord gave a message to Moses in the desert of Sinai, in the first month of the year. The Israelites, he said, must celebrate the paschal feast, now that the time has come round; it begins with 3 evening on the fourteenth day of this month, and all the ceremonies prescribed for it must be duly observed. So Moses 4 bade the Israelites keep the pasch, and when the evening of the fourteenth day came, keep it they did, there in the desert of Sinai. There was no word the Lord gave to Moses, but Israel obeyed it. But a 5 doubt arose; here were some men who could not keep it that day, because they were defiled by contact with a corpse. And these came to Moses and Aaron with the 7 complaint, Must we, who are defiled by touch of the dead, be robbed of our oppor-

¹ 27. 1-3 involve considerable difficulty. v. 2, in the Hebrew text and equally in the Septuagint Greek, is much shorter: 'When thou settest up (or, lightest) the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lamp-stand'. Perhaps, owing to the difficulty of attaching any meaning to this phrase, the Latin interpreter expanded it. (The similar phrase in Ex. 25. 37 probably means that the light of the lamp is to fall on the table where the bread was set out.) The end of verse 2 reads literally, in the Latin, 'they must shine over against that part towards which the lamp-stand looks', as if the lamps were shaded in some way, and only shone in one direction; but nothing of this kind is indicated in the directions for their manufacture (Ex. 25. 31-39). It is possible to understand the direction as meaning that the side of the lamp-stand, not its end, should face the table.

tunity to make the Lord such an offering as the season claims, with the rest of Israel?

- 8 And Moses bade them wait till he could find out what was the Lord's will for them.
- 9 Thereupon the Lord gave Moses this message for the Israelites. If any of Israel's race, at such times, is defiled by contact with a corpse, or is away on a journey, he must keep pasch in the Lord's honour on the fourteenth day of the second month instead; eating unleavened bread and wild herbs with it, leaving nothing till the morning, breaking no bone of the victim, so as to observe the full paschal rite. But if anyone who is clean of defilement and not hindered by his travels neglects to keep the pasch, he is lost to his people. Paschal time came, sacrifice to the Lord he would not; he will be held to account for it. Even aliens that lodge with you or have come to dwell among you must omit no rule of observance when they keep pasch in the Lord's honour; the law binds citizen and alien alike.¹

- 15 On the day when the tabernacle was set up, a cloud overshadowed it; and when evening came, fire seemed to hang over the canopy of it till morning. So it was continually; by day, cloud hung above it, by night, what seemed like fire; it was when this cloud left its post over the tabernacle that the Israelites marched on, never encamping again until it settled. At the Lord's bidding they marched, at the Lord's bidding they pitched their tents. There was no moving as long as the cloud hung over the tabernacle; even if it lingered many days there, they were the Lord's sentinels, these men of Israel, and must not leave their post while the tabernacle was in cloud; only at the Lord's bidding might they pitch their tents, only at his bidding let them down.² Sometimes the cloud would only rest there from evening to morning, and move away at dawn, so that they could march at once; sometimes they must wait, before marching, till day too had passed. And sometimes it would be two days, or a month, or even longer, that the Israelites stayed motionless, because the cloud was still there. Then, once it had lifted, they moved camp.

They must pitch their tents at the Lord's bidding, march at the Lord's bidding; the sentinels of the Lord, as his word, given through Moses, had commanded them.

10 And the Lord bade Moses make two trumpets of wrought silver, to give the signal when he would gather the whole people round him, when he would order them to move camp. Sound both trumpets, he told him, and all must assemble to meet thee at the tabernacle door: sound but one, and it will bring only the chieftains, that represent the many thousands of Israel. But if it is a long blast that rises and falls, first of all those on the east will move camp; when the sound comes again, a second wail of the trumpet, those on the south will fold their tents; and so with the rest, as the wail of the trumpet bids them set out. When the signal is given for the people to assemble, the blast of the trumpet will be on one note, without any wailing rise and fall. The trumpets are to be blown by the priests, the men of Aaron's line; this custom you must keep unaltered, age after age. When your country goes out to war, to repel hostile attack, the trumpets must give a wailing sound, appealing to the Lord your God to save you from the power of your enemies. And when you keep feast or holiday, and at the new moon, you will make burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering to the sound of the trumpet, to claim the divine audience; audience from the Lord your God.

And now, in the second year, on the twentieth day of the second month, the cloud lifted from the tabernacle, and the sons of Israel marched away, company by company, from the desert of Sinai, till the cloud came to rest again in another desert, that of Pharan. First, as the Lord's word to Moses commanded them, went the companies of Juda, under Nahasson son of Aminadab, then Issachar under Nathanael son of Suar, then Zabulon under Eliab son of Helon. Meanwhile, the tabernacle had been taken down, and the sons of Gerson and Merari set out bringing it with them. Then came the companies of Ruben under Helisur son of Seder, then

¹ He must be circumcised in order to do this (Ex. 12. 48).
 a new sentence: ² And sometimes it lingered only a few days over the tabernacle, but it was always at the Lord's bidding that they pitched their tents', etc.

² In the Hebrew text, this verse forms

1 Simeon under Salamiel son of Surisaddai,
 10 then Gad under Eliasaph son of Duel.
 11 After these the Caathites marched, with
 their holy burden;¹ the tabernacle going
 on first, so as to be ready for them when
 they reached the place where it was set up.
 12 Then came the companies of Ephraim
 13 under Elisama son of Ammiud, then Man-
 nassen under Gamaliel son of Phadassur,
 14 then Benjamin under Abidan son of Ge-
 15 deon. And in the rear came the companies
 of Dan under Ahiezer son of Ammisaddai,
 16 the tribe of Aser under Phegiel son of
 17 Ochran, and the tribe of Nephthali under
 18 Ahira son of Enan. Such was the order of
 march in which Israel's various companies
 set out, whenever they moved camp.

9 And now Moses said to Hobab, son of
 Raguel the Madianite, his father-in-law,
 We are on our way to the home the Lord
 means to give us; come with us, and share
 our fortunes; the Lord has promised to
 10 bless Israel. I cannot come with thee, he
 said; I must go back to the land where I
 11 was born. And Moses answered, Do not
 leave us; thou canst tell us where best to
 encamp; we look to thee for guidance.
 12 Come with us, and the best of all the Lord
 gives us shall be thine.

3 So they travelled three days' journey
 from the mountain of the Lord; and all
 those three days' journey the ark that bore
 record of the Lord's covenant went at their
 4 head² to choose their camping-place. The
 divine cloud, too, overshadowed them all
 5 day while they marched. Whenever the ark
 was lifted from the ground, Moses would
 say, Bestir thyself, Lord, and rout thy
 6 enemies; confront thy ill-wishers and put
 them to flight. And when it was put down
 again, he would say, Restore thy presence,
 Lord, to the thronging armies of Israel.

11 Meanwhile, the people were as-
 sailing the Lord with complaints,
 and bemoaning their hard lot. The Lord
 was roused to anger when he heard it, and
 sent a fire which burnt up the outlying part
 2 of the camp. Whereupon the people had

recourse to Moses; and when Moses
 prayed to the Lord, the fire died down. It
 3 was this divine punishment by fire which
 gave the place its name, the Place of
 Burning.

They were still accompanied by a crowd
 4 of mixed breed;³ and these infected the Is-
 raelites by their example, as they sat there
 lamenting; If we had but meat to feed on!
 they said. How well we remember the fish
 5 that Egypt afforded without stint, the cu-
 cumbers, the melons, leeks and onions and
 6 garlic! Our hearts faint within us, as we
 look round, and nothing but manna meets
 our eyes. (This manna was a food that
 7 looked like coriander-seed, its colour like
 bdellium. The people would go round
 8 gathering it, and grind it in the mill or bray
 it in a mortar; and then they would cook it in
 pots, making it into rolls that tasted like
 bread kneaded with oil. Every night, as
 9 the dew fell on the camp, the manna fell
 there too.)

From household after household Moses
 10 heard these complaints, as the men sat
 bemoaning themselves at their tent doors,
 till he could bear it no longer, that the
 Lord's displeasure should be provoked so
 grievously. Lord, he said, why dost thou
 11 treat me thus? How is it that I have fallen
 out of favour with thee? Must I carry a
 whole people like a weight on my back?
 I did not bring this multitude of men into
 12 the world; I did not beget them; and thou
 wouldst have me nurse them in my bosom
 like a child, till they reach the land pro-
 mised to their race. Where am I to find
 13 meat for such a host as this? And that is
 the complaint they bring me; they would
 have meat for their food. I cannot bear,
 14 alone, the charge of so many; it is too great
 a burden for me. If I may not have my
 15 way in this, then in mercy, I beseech thee,
 rid me of these miseries by taking my life
 away.

Whereupon the Lord said to Moses, 16
 Choose out for me seventy Israelites of
 ripe age, men already known to thee as
 elders and officers of the people, bring

¹ Literally, 'carrying the sanctuary', but (since the sanctuary was part of the tabernacle) this would contradict verse 17 just above. What they carried was evidently the furniture of the sanctuary (see 4. 15). In the second half of the verse, the Latin means literally 'the tabernacle was carried all the time, until they reached the place of its setting up'; the Hebrew is also obscure, 'and they set up the tabernacle till they arrived'. But the meaning in either case must surely be, that the sons of Gerson and Merari marched well in front, so that they might have it ready erected by the time the sons of Caath came up bearing its furniture.

² The Hebrew text here may imply that the ark went three days' journey forward in advance of the Israelites.

³ See Ex. 12. 38.

them to the door of the tabernacle that bears record of my covenant, and let them stand there at thy side. I will come down and converse with thee there; taking away some of the spirit which rests upon thee and giving it to them instead, so that they may share with thee that charge over the people which thou canst not support unaided. And say to the people, You must purify yourselves in readiness for the banquet of meat you will have to-morrow. I have heard you complaining that no meat is given you; that you were better off in Egypt. And now the Lord will give you meat to feed on, not for one day or two, for five days or ten, or for a score of days, but for a whole month, till it comes out at your nostrils, and you are sick with surfeit. That shall be your reward for disowning the Lord that dwells among you, and lamenting, here in his presence, that you ever left Egypt behind. Why, said Moses, here is a people that counts six hundred thousand foot-soldiers; wilt thou promise them meat for a whole month? If all the flocks and herds were slaughtered, would that be enough for them? Nay, if all the fish in the sea could be brought into one place, would they even so be content? And the Lord's answer was, Has my arm lost its power? Thou wilt see for thyself, in a little, whether this promise of mine comes true.

So Moses went back to the people, and told them what the Lord had said. Then he chose seventy of the elders of Israel, and ranged them in a half-circle at the tabernacle door. And when the Lord came down, hidden in the cloud, to converse with him, he took some of the spirit which rested upon Moses and gave it to the seventy elders instead; whereupon they received a gift of prophecy which never left them.¹ This same spirit rested even upon two men, Eldad and Medad, who were still in the camp; their names were enrolled among the rest; but they had never gone out to the tabernacle. There in the camp they fell a-prophesying, and a messenger

ran to bring Moses tidings of it. At this, Josue the son of Nun, that was Moses' favourite servant, cried out, My lord Moses, bid them keep silence. What, said he, so jealous for my honour? For myself, I would have the whole people prophesy, with the spirit of the Lord resting on them too. So Moses went back to the camp, and the elders of Israel with him.²

And now the Lord sent a wind that brought a flight of quails over the sea, and drove them down where the camp was, a day's journey away on each side; quails that hovered only two cubits above the ground. All that day and that night and the next day the Israelites busied themselves gathering in the quails, which lay so thick that a man made nothing of gathering a hundred bushels; then they spread them out to dry, round the camp. They had meat between their teeth yet, and the supply had not begun to fail, when suddenly a grievous plague fell on them, sentence of the divine anger they had provoked; and the place was called ever after, The Graves of Greed, from the men that lay buried there whose greed was their undoing. From the Graves of Greed they made their way to Haseroth, and there encamped.

12 Mary, too, and Aaron had complaints to make against Moses; the desert wife he had married was the cause of it.³ Has the Lord, they asked, sent his word by Moses and no other? Has he not spoken to us too? Such were the complaints the Lord must needs listen to. As for Moses, whom they attacked, never was a man more patient on the whole face of the earth. But the Lord at once commanded him, and Aaron, and Mary to come out by themselves to the tabernacle; and when they reached it, he himself came down, hidden in cloud, summoning Aaron and Mary to him. So they went apart; and this was his word to them, which he bade them mark well: Prophets there may be among your race; to one I appear in a

¹ According to the Hebrew text, 'which did not continue with them'.
² It seems to be implied in verses 26-30 that the tabernacle was now pitched outside the camp (cf. 10. 33), not, as was customary, in the middle of it (2. 2). Some think that Eldad and Medad were among the seventy; but this would contradict verse 24 above, and we are perhaps meant to understand that six elders were chosen from each tribe, so that the two persons in question were left behind when the seventy presented themselves before the tabernacle.

³ 'Desert wife', literally, 'Ethiopian wife'; but there is some reason to think that the name was given to the inhabitants of the Arabian desert, as well as to those of Africa. The wife in question is therefore probably Sephora, Ex. 2. 21. It seems possible that Mary and Aaron suspected their brother of intending to found a dynasty, and objected that his sons were not pure Israelites.

vision, to another I reveal my thoughts in
 7 a dream. Moses is not my servant on such
 terms as these; I entrust him with the
 8 management of all my household, speak
 with him face to face, and when he has
 sight of the Lord, it is not by means of
 parable and image. How is it that you
 were not afraid to slight Moses, my own
 9 servant? Then, in anger, he left them; the
 cloud, too, no longer appeared over the
 tabernacle; and all at once Mary's skin
 shewed white as snow with leprosy. And
 Aaron, looking upon her and seeing her
 21 covered with leprous sores, cried out to
 Moses, My lord, I entreat thee, do not hold
 us to account for this mad rebellion of ours.
 22 Must she, then, be no better than a dead
 woman, cast off like an untimely birth?
 Sec, how her flesh is already half devoured
 23 with leprosy! When Moses cried to the
 24 Lord, beseeching him to restore her, the
 Lord answered, Nay, if her father had spat
 in her face, must she not have spent seven
 days hiding her blushes? Let her be shut
 out from the camp for seven days, and then
 25 brought back. So for seven days Mary
 was shut out from the camp, and there was
 no marching on for the people until Mary
 returned to them.

13 It was after leaving Haseroth that
 the people encamped in the desert
 2 of Pharan; and here the Lord spoke to
 3 Moses, bidding him send out men of
 mark, one from each tribe, to survey Israel's
 promised inheritance, the land of
 4 Chanaan. This Moses did; and the names
 of the leading men he despatched from the
 5 desert of Pharan were these: Sammua son
 6 of Zechur from Ruben, Saphat son of Huri
 7 from Simeon, Caleb son of Jephone from
 8 Juda, Igal son of Joseph from Issachar,
 9 Osee son of Nun from Ephraim, Phalti son
 of Raphu from Benjamin, Geddiel son of
 2 Sodi from Zabulon, Gaddi son of Susi
 from Manasses' branch of the tribe of
 3 Joseph, Ammiel son of Gemalli from Dan,
 4 Sathur son of Michael from Aser, Nahabi
 son of Vapsi from Nephthali, Guel son of
 5 Machi from Gad. Such were the names
 of the men Moses sent out to survey the
 land, and to Osee, son of Nun, he gave the
 fresh name of Josue.

And these were the directions Moses
 gave them for their survey of Chanaan:

Make your way in by the south, and when
 you reach the hill country look well at the
 19 land about you. Are its inhabitants strong
 or weak, many in number or few? Is the
 20 land itself prosperous or starved, has it
 walled cities or unwalled, fertile soil or
 21 barren, is it well wooded or bare? Take
 heart for your enterprise, and bring back
 with you some sample of what the land
 yields. (It was the season, then, at which
 early grapes are already fit to eat.)

So they surveyed the land all the way up
 22 from the desert of Sin to Rohob, on the
 way to Emath. At the southern end of it,
 23 when they reached Hebron, they found the
 sons of Enac there, Achiman and Sisai and
 Tholmai; Hebron had been founded seven
 years before the Egyptian city of Tanis.
 They also made their way to the Ravine of
 24 Grapes and cut off a branch with a cluster
 hanging from it, that needed two men with
 a pole to carry it; these they brought with
 them, as well as some of the pomegranates
 and figs that grew there. It was from this
 25 cluster which the Israelites carried away
 that the place got its name of Nehelescol,
 the Ravine of Grapes.

Forty days had passed before they re-
 26 turned from their survey, after traversing
 the whole country, to find Moses and
 27 Aaron and all the people of Israel still in
 the desert of Pharan, by Cades. To these
 and to the whole multitude they made their
 report, and shewed them what fruit the
 land yielded. And this was the story they
 28 told: When we reached the land where our
 errand lay, we found it indeed a land all
 milk and honey, as this fruit will prove to
 you; but it is a powerful race that dwells
 29 in it, with strong walled cities; such were
 the sons of Enac, whom we saw there. The
 30 south is occupied by Amelec, the moun-
 tain parts by Hethites, Jebusites and
 Amorrites; by the sea, and round the
 Jordan river, the Chanaanites are in pos-
 session. And now, to still the rising outcry
 31 against Moses, Caleb spurred the people
 on to invade the land and conquer it; It
 is ready to fall into your hands, he said. But
 32 his companions told them, We cannot
 attack such a people as this; they are too
 strong for us. And they gave the Israelites
 33 an ill account of what they had seen in
 Chanaan; This country we surveyed, they
 told them, has too many inhabitants

already.¹ Tall of frame are the men we viewed there; nay, some we saw, the race of Enac, of monstrous size as if they were sprung from giants; we looked no bigger than locusts beside them.

14 So, that night, the whole multitude of the Israelites fell to weeping, and were loud in their complaints against Moses and Aaron: Better that we had died in Egypt, better we should meet our end in this waste desert, than march at the Lord's bidding into such a land as that, where we shall fall at the sword's point, and our wives and children be led off as captives! Were it not better to go back to Egypt? A leader, they said to one another, let us set up a leader who will take us back to Egypt! Moses and Aaron, on hearing it, cast themselves down to earth before the whole assembly of Israel; meanwhile Josue the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephone, who had taken their part in surveying the country, tore their garments in dissent. Nay, men of Israel, they cried, it was a land of great plenty we passed through. The Lord, of his mercy, will find a way in for us, and it will be ours, a land that is all milk and honey! Would you defy the Lord's will, daunted by the Chanaanites? Why, they are bread for our eating; they may not hope to defend themselves. The Lord is on our side; never be afraid of them!

At this, all the people cried out, and were for stoning them. But suddenly, over the tabernacle, the glory of the Lord's presence made itself known to the whole of Israel. And the Lord said to Moses, Am I to be always slighted by this people of mine? Will they never learn to trust in me, for all the marvellous deeds of mine they have witnessed? Enough; I will smite them with pestilence, and make an end of them; I will find a people greater and sturdier than this to march under thy leadership.

Good news, Lord, said Moses, for the Egyptians, from whose power thou didst once rescue thy people; good news, too, for the inhabitants of this land. They know how thou dwellest among thy people, letting thyself be seen face to face, sheltering

us with cloud, going before us in a pillar of cloud by day, of fire by night. Are they to be told that thou hast annihilated, at a blow, all this host of thine? Ah, they will say, he could find no means to grant his people their promised home, so he was fain to destroy them in the wilderness! Nay, Lord, vindicate thy power; hast thou not said, The Lord is slow to take vengeance, rich in kindness, pardoning the guilt of the wrong-doer? Though indeed thou holdest no man innocent, and wilt have the son make amends for the father's guilt, to the third and fourth generation. Forgive, I implore thee, this people of thine, as thou art ever abundantly merciful, as thou hast ever shewn favour to us while we made our way from Egypt to this spot.

Then the Lord said, At thy request, I forgive. But as I am the living Lord, whose glory must spread wide as earth, these men who have been witnesses of my greatness, of all the marvellous deeds I did, in Egypt and in the desert, yet must needs challenge my power half a score of times, and disobey my will, these shall never see the land I promised to their fathers; it shall never be enjoyed by those who slighted me. My servant Caleb was of another mind; he took my part, and I will allow him to enter the land which he surveyed, and leave his race an inheritance there. The sons of Amalec and Chanaan may rest secure in their mountain glens; to-morrow you must move camp, and go back to the desert by the Red Sea.

Such was the Lord's message to Moses and Aaron: Will this thankless multitude never cease complaining; must I hear nothing but lament from the sons of Israel? Tell them this, As I am living God, the Lord says, the very words you have used in my hearing shall come true; your bones shall be left to lie in this desert. Of all you that were registered above the age of twenty years, you that have made complaint against me, not a man shall enter the land in which I swore to make a home for you, except Caleb the son of Jephone and Josue the son of Nun. These shall make their way in instead, these children of yours that were to be a prey, you thought.

¹ Literally, 'devours its inhabitants'. In Ez. 36. 13 this implies a failure of a country, through famine, to support its inhabitants. Here, since the fertility of the land has already been admitted (verse 28 above), the emphasis must rather be on the fact that it is too thickly populated to allow of further immigration.

to the enemy; they shall have sight, instead, of the land their fathers belittled. In the desert your bones shall lie; and until the desert has swallowed them up, these sons of yours shall wander to and fro in it for forty years, doing penance for your unfaithfulness. For forty days you surveyed the land, and for each day you shall have a year of penance for your sins, and feel my vengeance. See if I do not make good the threats I have uttered against a thankless and rebellious people, leaving them to faint and die in the desert.

As for the men Moses had sent to survey the country, who returned to embitter the multitude against him by the ill report they brought with them, they died of plague, there in the Lord's presence; of all that went on that errand, only Josue the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephone were left alive.

Meanwhile the people of Israel, upon hearing all this from Moses, were full of remorse; and at dawn of day they were all up on the mountain heights, crying, We confess our fault; now we are ready to attack the land which the Lord has promised us. What, said Moses, Would you go beyond the Lord's word? You will gain nothing by it. The Lord is not on your side; do not march to the attack, or you will be overthrown by your enemies. The Lord will not take part with men who have refused him obedience; you will be met by Amalecite and Chanaanite, and their swords will lay you low. Yet, in their blind confidence, they marched on into the hill country, though the ark of God, and Moses with it, remained there in the camp. And the men who dwelt in the hill country, Amalecites and Chanaanites, fell on them from above, setting upon them and cutting them down till they had pursued them all the way to Horma.

15 The Lord gave Moses this message for the sons of Israel: Here are rules to be kept, when you have reached the settled home I mean to give you. When you offer the Lord ox or sheep in burnt-

sacrifice, or by way of welcome-offering (whether in payment of a vow, or out of devotion, or because you would greet the Lord with acceptable fragrance on occasion of some solemn feast), the man who is immolating such a victim must make the Lord a bloodless offering as well. This must be a tenth of a bushel of flour, kneaded in three pints of oil, with the same measure of wine for a libation, for every lamb offered.¹ For every ram a fifth of a bushel of flour, two quarts of oil, and the same measure of wine, a fragrant offering for the Lord's acceptance. But when, by way of burnt-sacrifice, or offering for a vow, or welcome-offering, thy victim is a bullock, with each bullock thou must use three tenths of a bushel of flour, six pints of oil, and the same measure of wine, a fragrant offering, this too, for the Lord's acceptance. A separate offering must be made to go with each bullock, or ram, or lamb, or kid. Native-born or foreign residents, all must use the same rite in doing sacrifice; precept and award are binding on you and on the aliens that dwell with you, without distinction.

And the Lord gave Moses this command, to be laid on the sons of Israel: When you have reached the land I mean to give you, you must not eat the bread its harvest yields without assigning to the Lord first-fruits from your table. Just as you set apart first-fruits when your corn is threshed, you must give the Lord the first share when your dough is kneaded.

It may be you will neglect one of these commandments through inadvertence; so many has the Lord given to Moses to be handed on to you, from the day when first he spoke to you till now. If it is the whole congregation that has thus unwittingly offended, they must offer a bullock, a burnt-sacrifice to please the Lord with the smell of its burning, and the bloodless offering and libations which due order demands; a goat, too, by way of offering for a fault.² So the priest will make intercession for the whole congregation of Israel, and their fault shall be pardoned. It

¹ The Latin text here appears to join the words 'for every lamb offered' with the sentence which follows; probably through some error, since it destroys the meaning of verse 5 by leaving the victim unspecified.

² In Lev. 4. 13 sqq. the people, in similar circumstances, offer the bullock as a victim for fault, not in burnt-sacrifice, and there is no mention of the goat. Some think the reference there is to faults of commission, here to faults of omission. There is a similar discrepancy between verse 27 here and verses 27 sqq. of Lev. 4.

was an unwitting offence, and even so they have brought the Lord burnt-sacrifice, and a victim for fault, to atone for their error.

- 26 When the whole congregation is guilty of such a fault through inadvertence, not only the people of Israel, but all the aliens that dwell among them, will receive forgiveness. If it is one person only that has unwittingly offended, the sacrifice due for the fault will be a yearling she-goat; and when the priest makes intercession for what was inadvertently done amiss, grace and pardon will be given. This law about faults of inadvertence must be observed by all alike, native-born or foreign resident. But if anyone, citizen or alien, is guilty of an offence through pride, and in a spirit of rebellion against the Lord, he is lost to his people. Would he despise the Lord's word, annul his commandment? That fault deserves death, and he will be held to account for it.

- 32 It happened once, as the Israelites were passing through the desert that a man was found gathering firewood on the sabbath day. When he was brought before Moses and Aaron and the common assembly of the people, they put him in ward, uncertain what they should do with him. But the Lord said to Moses, His life must pay for it; he must be stoned by the whole multitude, away from the camp. So they took him out and stoned him to death, as the Lord had bidden them.

- 37 This, too, was the Lord's word to Moses, Bid the Israelites pass blue cords through the corners of their cloaks, and hang tassels on them; reminding themselves, as they look on these, of all the commandments the Lord has given them. They must not let their thoughts and eyes wander free, into all manner of unfaithfulness, but rather bethink them of the Lord's decrees and carry them out, a people set apart for their God; and that God the Lord, who brought them out of the land of Egypt to make them his own people.

16 And now a conspiracy was made by Core son of Isaar, a Levite of Caath's family, with Dathan and Abiron,

sons of Eliab, and Hon son of Pheleth, a man of Ruben. These rose in rebellion against Moses, and there were two hundred and fifty others, whose names stood high in the councils of the people, that took part with them. And they confronted Moses and Aaron, making their protest thus: You presume too much; are not all the Israelites men set apart? Does not the Lord make his dwelling among all of us alike? We are the Lord's people; who are you that you should take command of us?¹

At hearing this, Moses cast himself down to earth. To Core, and to his faction, he said, Wait until to-morrow; then the Lord will make it plain which of us he has set apart for himself, and admit them to his presence. Those whom the Lord has chosen will find access to him. Let this be the test; bring censers with you, Core and all you that are of his faction, and to-morrow, in the Lord's presence, put incense on the lighted coals in them; so the Lord will make his choice, and we shall know which of us he has set apart; it is you, sons of Levi, that presume too much. And he made this further answer to Core: Listen, men of Levi; the God of Israel has separated you from the rest of the people and made you his own, to do him service in the tabernacle, and stand up, with the eyes of the whole multitude upon you, as his ministers; does not that content you? If he has given thee and all thy brother Levites access to himself, must you needs claim the priesthood too? Must thou and all thy company rebel against the Lord? Aaron, what has he done that you should complain so loudly of him?

Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiron, sons of Eliab, to his presence, but they refused to come. What, they said, wouldst thou lord it over us now? When thou hast brought us away from Egypt, a land that was milk and honey indeed, to die here in the desert? No land of milk and honey for our journey's end, no fields and vineyards to enjoy; what more wilt thou ask of us? Wilt thou pluck out our eyes too? No, we will not come. At this, Moses

¹ It seems to emerge from what follows that two rebellious movements were here combined; a general civil revolt against the leadership of Moses, under Dathan and Abiron, and a revolt of the Levites, under Core, against the privileged position of Aaron's family. The rebels of the former class were swallowed up by the earth, those of the latter perished by fire.

said to the Lord, in great anger, Spurn every gift these men offer thee! Thou knowest that I have never robbed them of an ass, or done them any harm. Then he said to Core, Present yourselves before the Lord to-morrow, thou and the whole of thy company; you shall stand on one side, and Aaron on the other. Bring your censers with you, and you shall put incense on them there; you with two hundred censers, and Aaron with his censer all alone.

There, on the morrow, Moses and Aaron stood, and those others did as they were bidden, and gathered the whole multitude to meet them at the tabernacle door. And the glory of the Lord's presence was revealed to them all. But it was to Moses and Aaron that the Lord spoke; Stand apart, he said, from all the concourse that surrounds you; I mean to make an end of them here and now. Whereupon they fell flat on the ground, crying out, God all-powerful, Lord of every spirit that breathes, wilt thou take vengeance on all for one man's fault? And the Lord said to Moses, Bid all the rest of the people stand apart from the tents of Core, Dathan, and Abiron. And Moses, rising to his feet, went over to where Dathan and Abiron stood; with him were the elders of the people. Withdraw, he told the multitude, from the tents of these rebels; avoid the touch of anything that belongs to them, so that you may not be involved in their guilt. So they withdrew to this side and that, from the dwelling-places of Core, Dathan and Abiron; and now Dathan and Abiron came out and stood at their tent doors, with their wives and children and all their households. Here is proof, Moses said, whether it is at the Lord's bidding I do all you see me do, or prompted by my own spirit. If these men are left to undergo the common lot of mortality, called to their account as others are called to their account, then they are right; the Lord has given me no commission. But if the Lord alters the order of nature, so that earth gapes and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they go down still living to the depths beneath, then you will have proof that they have spoken blasphemy against the Lord.

He had scarce done speaking, when the

ground parted under their feet, gaped³² open, and swallowed them up, with their tents and all that was theirs. Still living³³ they went down to the depths beneath, and earth closed over them, and their names were lost to the muster-roll of the people. And now all the Israelites who stood round³⁴ and heard the shrieks of the dying fled away, in dread that they too would be swallowed up by the earth; but not before³⁵ the two hundred and fifty men who stood there offering incense had perished by fire sent from heaven. Then the Lord said to³⁶ Moses, Bid Aaron's son, the priest Eleazar,³⁷ gather up the censers that lie there among the flames, and scatter the coal in them this way and that. They are forfeit, now,³⁸ through the death of these sinners;¹ he must beat them out into plates, which he will nail to the altar. Incense has been offered to the Lord in them, and they must be consecrated things, a portent and a warning to every Israelite who sees them. So the priest Eleazar took these brazen³⁹ censers from the hands of the dead men the fire had killed, and beat them into plates, which he nailed to the altar, as a warning⁴⁰ to the Israelites of after times. No interloper, that is not of Aaron's stock, must ever come forward to offer the Lord incense, or he will suffer the fate of Core and his company, the fate which the Lord, through Moses, foretold to them.

Next day, the men of Israel were en-⁴¹ raged against Moses and Aaron, for putting the Lord's people to death. A⁴² conspiracy was formed, and the uproar grew fiercer, until Moses and Aaron took refuge⁴³ in the tabernacle. As soon as they entered it, the cloud overshadowed it, and the glory of the Lord's presence was revealed. And the Lord said to Moses, Withdraw⁴⁴ yourselves from this multitude which surrounds you; I mean, after all, to make an end of them. And as they lay there with their faces to the ground, Moses said to⁴⁵ Aaron, Take thy censer, and put incense on the lighted coals in it, and go with all speed to find the people and make intercession for them; already the Lord has begun to wreak his vengeance, and destruction rages among them. Aaron⁴⁷ obeyed, and ran into the midst of the throng where the fire was already making

¹ According to the Hebrew text, 'they are holy things, the censers of these sinners'.

48 havoc; ¹ he offered incense and made intercession for the people, standing there between the dead and the living, and the
49 divine vengeance ceased. Already fourteen thousand seven hundred men had been smitten by it, not counting those who
50 perished in the rebellion of Core. But now the destruction was over, and Aaron went back to meet Moses at the tabernacle door.

2 **17** Then the Lord said to Moses, Bid the Israelites bring thee twelve rods, to represent the twelve tribes, each with the name of the tribe's chieftain written on it; and Levi, too, must have a rod, a single rod representing all its families, with
4 Aaron's name written on it. These thou wilt lay up in the tabernacle, before the ark, my appointed trysting-place with thee. On one of these names my choice shall fall, and the rod which bears that name will sprout.
6 So I will put an end to these complaints with which the men of Israel assail you. Moses handed on this message to the Israelites, and the chieftain of each tribe brought him a rod, twelve rods in all, not
7 counting Aaron's, all of which he laid up in the Lord's presence, in the tabernacle.
8 And when he went back next day he found that the rod of Aaron, representing the tribe of Levi, had sprouted; buds had formed on it and burst into flower, and these flowers, as their petals drooped, turned into almonds. So Moses carried all the rods away from the Lord's presence and shewed them to all the people, and each of the chieftains had his rod returned
10 to him; but Aaron's rod, the Lord told Moses, was to be taken back into the tabernacle, to be kept there in memory of the rebellious Israelites; there must be no more complaining, no more death-penalties.
11 Moses did as the Lord had bidden him; and now the Israelites said to Moses, We have dwindled away; we are dead men,
13 all of us. None comes near the Lord's tabernacle, but he dies for it. Surely he will not go on destroying us, till our race is utterly extinguished?

18 This was the Lord's word to Aaron: For what is done in the sanctuary, for the duties of your priest-

hood,² none but thou and thy sons with thee shall be answerable; but all the sons of Levi are thy brethren, and these, all that come of thy father's tribe, thou mayest call in to relieve thee by their ministry, while thou and thy sons minister in the tabernacle that bears record of me. The Levites shall wait on thy bidding, as the service of the tabernacle requires it, yet never, at their peril and yours, having access to the things of the sanctuary, or to the altar. They shall be content to relieve you by waiting on the needs of the tabernacle and its worship, in which no other tribe may take part. It is for you, if you would not have my displeasure fall on Israel, to guard the sanctuary and serve the altar's needs. If I have separated your fellow-Levites from the rest of the people, and dedicated them as a gift to myself, I have designated them only for the menial offices of my tabernacle; the priesthood is for thee and for thy sons. All the ceremonies of the altar, all that is hidden within the veil, belongs to the priests' charge; it is death for any other to take part.

This, too, the Lord said to Aaron: Hereby I put the offerings made to me at thy disposal; all that the sons of Israel dedicate to me, I pass on to thee and to thy sons, a portion assigned to the priesthood by right inalienable. All that is set apart, when offerings are made to the Lord, is my gift to thee; whatever is offered by way of bloodless sacrifice, or to atone for some fault or wrong done, and vowed to holy uses, belongs to thee and thine. It must be eaten on holy ground, and only by men, this consecrated gift I make thee. The first-fruits which the Israelites dedicate to me, and hold up in my presence, belong at all times to thee and to thy sons and to thy daughters as well; all that are clean of defilement in thy household may partake of them. Do they bring me the best of their oil, their wine, their corn, or any other kind of first-fruits? It is thine; no early fruits of the ground that are brought to the Lord but shall go to thy use; none of thy household that is clean of defilement but may partake. All that the Israelites give in payment of their vows, is thine. Thine, too, is every living thing that handsels the

¹ 'The fire'; according to the Hebrew text, 'the plague' and of your priesthood'.

² Literally, 'for the guilt of the sanctuary'.

womb, and so must be offered to the Lord, be it man or beast; for the first-born of men, and for the first-born of unclean beasts, thou wilt take a ransom instead. (The ransom-price, to be paid after one month, is five silver pieces, by sanctuary reckoning; one silver piece is worth twenty pence).¹ But there is no ransoming the first-born of ox or sheep or goat; they are set apart for the Lord. Their blood is to be shed upon the altar, and their fat burned, to please the Lord with the smell of its burning; but the flesh-meat shall go to thy use; like the breast and the right shoulder, it is thy due. All the sanctuary dues which the sons of Israel offer I give to thee and to thy sons and daughters by a perpetual deed of gift; it is a covenant between the Lord and thy race that time cannot alter.²

This, too, the Lord said to Aaron: You are to hold no lands, no portion is to be assigned to you, among your fellow-Israelites. I am all thy portion; these others have their several possessions, thou hast me. And in return for the service they do me in the tabernacle that bears record of my covenant, I have allotted to the sons of Levi the enjoyment of all the tithe Israel pays. Never henceforward, upon pain of death, must other Israelites come near my sanctuary; it is for the Levites only to do the work of the tabernacle, and make themselves answerable for all the people does amiss; and it shall be a law unalterable, age after age, that they possess nothing else, but live content with the tithe which I have set apart for their use, to defray all their needs.

And the Lord bade Moses give this charge to the Levites: When the sons of Israel pay the tithe I have assigned to you, you must offer to the Lord the first-fruits of them, the tenth part of your tithe, as if you were paying dues from threshing-floor and wine-press of your own; you too must offer the Lord first-fruits of all that comes to you, making them over to the high priest Aaron. And the part of your tithe which you set aside as an offering to the Lord must be the best part, the choice part. When you have offered all that is best and richest, you will have paid your dues, as

surely as if they came from threshing-floor and wine-press of your own; then you may enjoy the rest of the tithe, and your households with you; it is the reward of all your tabernacle service. You must not incur guilt by keeping the best and the richest for yourselves;³ for such misuse of the offerings which the sons of Israel make, death is the penalty.

19 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, Here is the law of sacrifice, divinely instituted. Bid the sons of Israel bring a red heifer, fully grown and free from blemish, one that has never borne the yoke. This you will give to the priest Eleazar, who will take it beyond the boundaries of the camp and immolate it there in the sight of all. He will then dip his finger in its blood, with which he will sprinkle the front of the tabernacle door seven times; the heifer itself he will burn publicly, committing skin and flesh, blood and dung to the flames. Cedar-wood, too, and hyssop and stuff twice-dyed in scarlet must be thrown by the priest into the fire which consumes the heifer. When all this is done, he will wash his clothes and his own person before he enters the camp again, and will hold himself defiled till evening comes; and there will be the same duty of washing, the same law of defilement, for the man who has had the burning of it. The ashes of the heifer must be collected by a man who is still free from defilement, and poured out in some place that is free from defilement; and there the people of Israel will keep them to provide lustral water, the ashes of this heifer that is burned to atone for men's faults. Even the man who has the carrying of the ashes must wash his clothes, and hold himself defiled till evening comes. This is to be a sacred observance for the Israelites, and for aliens who dwell among them, by right unalterable.

When a man has touched a dead body, and for a week counts as defiled, with this water he must be sprinkled on the third and the seventh day if he is to be purified; no purification for him on the seventh day unless he has been sprinkled on the third.

¹ This verse probably refers only to the ransoming of the human first-born (cf. Lev. 27. 6, 12).
² Literally, 'a covenant of salt for ever'.
³ 'You must not incur guilt by keeping'; according to the Hebrew text, 'you will incur no guilt if you set aside'.

13 One who has touched a man's dead body, and will not use this salve for his cleansing, profanes the Lord's dwelling-place; he is lost to Israel, unclean still, and bearing the burden of his defilement, until the lustral water sprinkles him.

14 If a man dies in his tent, this is the rule that must be followed; all those who go into the tent incur defilement for seven days, and so does all the furniture in it; 15 nothing escapes defilement except what is covered with a lid or wrapped up. And if a man is killed or dies in the open, anyone who touches his body incurs defilement for seven days; so does anyone who touches some bone of a dead man, or his 17 grave. It was to atone for such faults the victim was burned; a handful of its ashes must be thrown into a vessel that contains 18 fresh water, and some man who is free from defilement, using hyssop for a brush, must sprinkle the tent with it, and the furniture of the tent, and all those who are defiled by contact with death. So, on the 19 third and on the seventh day, man defiled must be made clean by man undefiled; and on the seventh day he will wash his clothes, and hold himself defiled, even yet, till 20 evening. The man who will not avail himself of such atonement is lost to the congregation; he is a profanation to the Lord's sanctuary until the lustral water has sprinkled him.¹ This command must never be 21 abrogated. Even the man who has sprinkled the lustral water must wash his clothes, and everyone who has touched it is defiled for the rest of the day. The 22 defiled man defiles all he touches; and anyone who touches it is defiled in his turn, till evening.

20 A new year was beginning, when the Israelites, marching in their full strength, reached the desert of Sin. Here, while they were halting at Cades, 2 Mary died and was buried. And now, hard put to it for want of water, the people made common cause against Moses and Aaron, 3 rebelling against their authority. Better for us, they said, if we had died when our brethren died, by the Lord's visitation! 4 What need was there you should call the Lord's people out into a desert that is

death to us and to our cattle? Why must you take us away from Egypt, and bring us out to this sorry place we cannot cultivate? Figs and grapes and pomegranates it yields none, and we have no water, even, to drink.

At this, when they had broken up the gathering, Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle that bore record of the covenant, and there cast themselves down to earth in entreaty. Lord God, they said, listen to the plea made by this people of thine, and open to them thy store-house of fresh water, to content them and put an end to their complaints! Then the bright presence of the Lord was revealed to them; and the Lord said to Moses, Take thy rod with thee, and do thou and thy brother Aaron gather all the people together. Before their eyes, lay thy command upon the rock here, and it will yield water. This water thou bringest out of the rock will suffice to give drink to the whole multitude, and to their cattle. So Moses took up the rod, there in the Lord's presence, as he was bidden, and they made the people 10 gather before the rock. Listen to me, he said, faithless rebels! Are we to get you water out of this rock? Twice Moses lifted 11 his hand, and smote the rock with his rod; whereupon water gushed out in abundance, so that all the people and their cattle had enough to drink. But the Lord said to 12 Moses and Aaron, Why did you not trust in me, and vindicate my holiness in the sight of Israel? It will not be yours to lead this multitude into the land I mean to give them. This is the place called the Water of 13 Rebellion, where the Israelites challenged the Lord, and he vindicated his holiness before them.

From Cades, Moses sent envoys to the 14 king of Edom, with a message to him from his brethren of Israel: Thou knowest what hardships have overtaken us; how our 15 fathers made their way into Egypt, how they and we were ill-used by the Egyptians during the long time we spent there, how 16 we cried out to the Lord, till he listened to us and sent an angel to rescue us from Egypt. And now we are here at Cades, on the frontier of thy dominions; what we ask 17 of thee is leave to pass through this land

¹ See note on Gen. 17. 14. In these verses, 13-20 at least, it seems probable that the punishment threatened is excommunication, not death.

of thine. There shall be no marching through fields or vineyards, no drinking at thy wells; we will travel by the high road, not to right or left, until we have passed beyond thy frontiers. But the Edomites refused to let them pass, threatening armed resistance. Let Israel promise as they would to use only the public highway, to pay in full for all they or their beasts might drink, without haggling over the price, to make a quick passage of it; still Edom refused, coming out to meet them there and then in great force, ready to overpower them. The Israelites, then, since no entreaties could move them to grant the right of passage, left the Edomites alone and turned elsewhere.

So, leaving Cades behind them, they reached Mount Hor, on the edge of the Edomite country; and here it was that Lord said to Moses, Aaron must become a part of his people. For him, there is no entering the land which is your promised home, so unfaithful was he to my word at the Water of Rebellion.¹ Take Aaron and his son with thee to the top of mount Hor, strip the father of his priestly garments and clothe his son Eleazar with them instead; there Aaron shall die, and become part of his race. So Moses did as the Lord bade him; together they went up mount Hor in the sight of the whole multitude, and there he stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on his son Eleazar, and came back with Eleazar alone, leaving Aaron dead on the mountain top. And the whole people, thus apprised of Aaron's death, mourned over him, all alike, for thirty days.

21 There was a Chanaanite king that had his capital, Arad, in the south country; and when he heard that the Israelites had come there, following the Spies' Road, he levied war against them, defeating them in the field and winning spoils from them. Whereupon the Israelites took a vow, promising the Lord that if he would grant them victory over this tribe, they would raze its cities to the ground. In answer to these prayers, the Lord let his people have their way with the Chanaanite king; they killed him, and destroyed all his cities, giving to the

battle-field the name of Horma, that is, Forfeited.

When they left mount Hor, they must needs march along the way that leads to the Red Sea, so as to fetch a compass round the territory of Edom. Before long, the people grew weary of this laborious march, assailing God and Moses with such complaints as these: Why didst thou ever bring us away from Egypt, only to die in the desert? We have neither bread nor water here; we are sick at heart, sick of the unsatisfying food thou givest us. Upon this, the Lord sent serpents among them, with fire in their fangs, that struck at many and killed many of them, till they came to Moses and confessed, We have sinned by making complaints against the Lord and against thee; entreat him to rid us of the serpents. So Moses made intercession for the people; and the Lord bade him fashion a serpent of bronze, and set it up on a staff, bringing life to all who should look towards it as they lay wounded. And so it proved; when Moses made a brazen serpent and set it up on a staff, the wounded men had but to look towards it, and they were healed.

After this the Israelites marched on, and encamped at Oboth, and left Oboth to encamp at Jeabarim, in the desert that faces Moab on the east. Their next march brought them to the valley of Zared; and so they passed on to encamp by the Arnon, a desert stream which meets you at the Amorrite border; it is the frontier of Moab, dividing Moab from the Amorrites. So it came to be written in the Book of the Lord's Battles, What he did by the Red Sea, he will do again in the Valleys of Arnon; among the mountain torrents that come down to rest in Ar, to flow peacefully through the lands of Moab. It was at their next encampment that a well was shown to them; Gather the people together, the Lord had said to Moses, and I will provide water for them; and it was here that Israel first sang the song called, Let the well spring up. They all sang together, Here is the well that was dug by princes; the chieftains of the host laid it open with the staves they carried, with the giver of the law to lead them. So they left the wilder-

¹ The story as it has come down to us in the sacred books does not record the precise circumstances of this incredulity.

19 ncss, and reached Matthana; after Mat-
 thana, Nahaliel, and after Nahaliel, Ba-
 20 moth, and after Bamoth, a valley in the
 Moabite country with mount Phasga at the
 head of it, looking out towards the desert.

21 Here the Israelites sent envoys to Sehon,
 22 king of the Amorrhites, asking him for
 leave to pass through his country, upon
 condition that they kept clear of fields and
 vineyards, drank no water from the wells,
 and marched along the high road until they
 23 reached the end of his dominions. But
 Sehon, sooner than let them pass through
 his territory, mustered his forces and went
 out to meet them, there in the desert.
 24 Upon reaching Jasa, he offered battle, but
 they gave him the sword's point, and con-
 quered all his domain, reaching from the
 Arnon as far as Jeboc and the Ammonite
 country; the Ammonite frontier had strong
 25 garrisons to defend it. Thus Israel took
 possession of all his strongholds, and had
 the Amorrhite cities to dwell in, Hesebon
 and all the smaller towns that depended
 26 on it. It was at Hesebon that Sehon, king
 of the Amorrhites, had made his capital,
 after making war on the king of Moab and
 occupying all the lands he held, up to the
 Arnon.

27 That is the meaning of the old saying:
 To Hesebon, to Hesebon! Strong and
 true be the walls that Sehon is a-building.
 28 Fire from Hesebon, a flame from Sehon's
 town, swallowing up Ar, the city of the
 Moabites, and all that dwell in the hill-
 29 fastnesses by Arnon's side. Woe betide
 thee, Moab; worshippers of Chamas, you
 are undone. Sehon, the Amorrhite king,
 has claimed their sons for exile, their
 30 daughters for bondage; all their domain
 is lost, from Hesebon to Dibon; weary of
 the battle, in Nophe and distant Medaba
 they have taken refuge at last.

31 Israel, then, settled in the land of the
 32 Amorrhites, and Moses sent spies to sur-
 vey Jazer. When they had occupied the
 villages there, and conquered its inha-
 33 bitants, they turned aside, and marched by
 the road which leads to Basan. The king of
 Basan, Og, mustered his people and came
 34 out to give them battle in Edrai; but the
 Lord said to Moses, Do not be afraid of
 him; I am letting thee have thy way with
 him, and all his people, and his territory;
 thou shalt conquer him, as thou didst con-

quer Sehon, the Amorrhite king that dwelt
 in Hesebon. And so it proved; they made
 35 war on him and his sons and all his subjects
 until none were left, and so took possession
 of his country.

22 Their next encampment was in
 the plains of Moab, on the further
 side of Jordan opposite Jericho.

But there was one man that took note of
 2 all this, Balac the son of Sephor. He saw
 how the sons of Israel had defeated the
 3 Amorrhites, how they had struck terror
 into Moab, and could not be halted in their
 4 advance. And he said to the Medianite
 chiefs, Here is a people that will make short
 5 work of all our neighbours, as easily as an
 ox tears up grass by the roots. It was in
 Moab that Balac himself bore rule at this
 time. So he sent envoys to Balaam son of
 6 Beor, the soothsayer who dwelt on the
 Ammonite border, desiring his presence.
 Here is a people on the march from Egypt,
 he said, whose hosts darken the face of
 earth, and they are encamped at my doors:
 7 come and lay thy curse on them, or they
 are too strong for me. I would fain over-
 throw them, drive them out of my country;
 and I know well that a blessing falls where
 thou dost bless, a curse where thou dost
 curse.

So the elders of Moab, chiefs of the
 Medianite country, set out with gifts in
 their hands to fee the soothsayer. When
 8 they reached Balaam, and gave him Balac's
 message, he bade them stay there for the
 night, so that he might answer as the Lord
 should direct him. To this they consented;
 and when God came to Balaam and asked
 9 him, What is their errand, these guests of
 thine? he answered, They have brought
 10 me a message from Balac, son of Sephor.
 He says a people has marched there from
 Egypt, whose hosts darken the face of
 earth, and he would have me come and lay
 11 my ban on them, so that he can make war
 on them and drive them out of his country.
 Do not go with them, the Lord said to
 12 Balaam; do not lay thy curse on the people,
 for a blessing goes with them. So when he
 13 rose next morning he bade the chiefs go
 back to their own country; the Lord would
 not allow him to accompany them. And
 14 when these returned and told Balac how
 Balaam had refused to come with them, he
 15

sent other chiefs, more in number and greater in rank than those whom he had sent first. And the message these brought with them to Balaam in the name of Balac son of Sephor was this; Come to me with all speed; I am ready to grant thee honours and whatever else thou wouldst have, if thou wilt only come and lay thy ban on this people. But Balaam told them, Though Balac should fill his house with silver and gold and offer to give it me, I have no power to go beyond the Lord's bidding by a word great or small. Be pleased to lodge with me to-night, and wait to hear what answer the Lord will give me this time. And that night the Lord came to Balaam and said, If they are here to summon thee, rise and go with them, but do ever what I bid thee.

When Balaam arose in the morning, he saddled his ass and set out in their company. But now God was angry at his going.¹ There rode Balaam on his ass, with two servants attending him, when all at once an angel of the Lord stood in his path to prevent him. And the ass, seeing an angel standing there with drawn sword, edged away from the road and took to the open fields, so that Balaam must needs beat her, to force her into the path again. Next, the angel stood in a narrow entry between two vineyard walls; and at the sight of him the ass cowered close against one of the walls, crushing her rider's foot, and he must beat her forward again. But still the angel of the Lord would have his way; he moved on to a narrow defile, where there was no room to pass right or left, and stood there to intercept them. And now the ass, seeing him standing there, lay down under her rider; so that Balaam fell into a rage, and beat her flanks harder than ever. Hereupon the Lord endowed the ass with the power of speech, and she said, This is the third time thou hast beaten me; what have I done to deserve it? Thou hast deserved it, answered Balaam, by playing me false; if I had but a sword in my hand, I would kill thee. Why, said the ass, am

I not thy own beast, that thou hast ridden these years past? And did I ever play thee such a trick before? Never, said he; and with that the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, to make him see the angel standing there with drawn sword, and he fell to the ground in worship.

How comes it, asked the angel, that thou hast thrice beaten thy ass? I came to intercept thee, because this errand of thine is headstrong and defies my will; if the ass had not turned aside, yielding to my ban, I would have taken thy life and spared hers. I have been at fault, said Balaam, little thinking that thou wert standing in my way; if thou art displeased with my errand, I will go home again. No, said the angel, go with them, but be sure thou utterest no word save what I bid thee. So he went on with the chiefs; and at the news of his coming Balac went out to meet him, at a town where Arnon marks the furthest boundaries of Moab. I sent messengers to summon thee, he said to Balaam; why didst thou not come to me there and then? Didst thou think I had not the means to reward thee for thy pains? And Balaam answered, I have come, as thou seest; but with no message for thee save what the Lord puts on my lips. So together they made their way to this city on the frontier of Balac's dominions.² Here he sacrificed oxen and sheep, sending a portion to Balaam and to the chiefs who had accompanied him; and when morning came, he took him up to the Hill of Baal, whence he could see the furthest outposts of Israel.

23 And first, Balaam would have Balac raise seven altars there, and provide him with as many bullocks and as many rams. When his bidding was done, they offered a bullock and a ram on each altar. Wait here by the sacrifice, he told Balac; I will go and meet the Lord, if he will, and tell thee what message he has charged me with.³ No sooner had he withdrawn than the Lord came to meet him, and Balaam told him how he had raised

¹ God, it would seem, gave Balaam express permission to go with the Moabites, meaning to shew his power by making the prophet bless Israel, instead of cursing them. But he was angry with Balaam for wanting to go (because it argued covetousness in him, II Pet. 2. 15). These two attitudes are here represented as successive, as if Almighty God had changed his mind; such representation of divine things in human terms is common all through the Old Testament. ² 'This city on the frontier of Balac's dominions'; the words probably conceal a proper name, 'City of the Outposts'. ³ It is not certain what is meant, here and in verse 16, by God meeting the prophet; it should perhaps be inferred from 24. 1 that some form of divination by signs is intended.

seven altars, offering a bullock and a ram
 5 on each. With that, the Lord put a message
 on his lips, bidding him return to Balac and
 6 deliver it; so he returned, to find Balac
 standing beside the burnt-sacrifice he had
 made, with the Moabite chiefs about him.

7 Then Balaam prophesied: I have come
 from Aram, from the hills out in the east;
 it was Balac summoned me, the king of the
 Moabites. He bade me come and curse
 Jacob, come with all speed, and lay my ban
 8 on Israel. Curse them, I, when God's
 curse does not light on them? I lay a ban,
 9 where ban from the Lord is none? I will
 climb the high rocks to see them, the hills
 shall enlarge my view; here is a people
 destined to dwell apart, not counted among
 10 the muster-roll of the nations. Sons of
 Israel, countless as the dust, line of Jacob,
 past all numbering, may death find me
 faithful as these, be my end like theirs!

11 And Balac asked Balaam, What trick is
 is this thou hast played on me? I sent for
 thee to curse my enemies; wilt thou bless
 12 them instead? But he answered, What
 words should I use, save what the Lord
 13 bids me utter? Nay, said Balac, come with
 me to another spot, from which thou wilt
 only be able to see a part of Israel, not the
 whole people; from this thou shalt lay a
 14 curse on them. So he took him to the high
 ground at the top of mount Phasga; and
 there, when Balaam had raised seven altars
 15 with an offering of bullocks and rams, he
 would have Balac wait by the burnt-
 16 sacrifice, while he kept his tryst. The Lord
 met him and put a message on his lips to
 17 give Balac. And Balac, waiting there with
 the chiefs of Moab by the burnt-sacrifice,
 asked him what the Lord's word was.

18 And again he prophesied: Stand there,
 Balac, and listen; a message for thee, son
 19 of Sephor! It is not for God to gainsay
 himself, as men do, to alter, like the things
 of earth; must he not make good his word,
 20 fulfil his promise? My errand is to bless,
 21 and I cannot retract the blessing. It is no
 false God that Jacob worships, no senseless

image that has its shrine in Israel; the
 Lord dwells with them as their God; his
 royal trumpets sound for victory. This is
 22 the God that brought them out of Egypt,
 and made them like a wild ox for strength.
 Jacob needs no soothsayer, Israel no di-
 23 vination; time will reveal the marvellous
 things God does for them; a people that is
 24 like a lioness roused, a lion ready to spring,
 never resting till it has devoured its prey,
 drunk the blood of slaughtered men.

And now Balac would have no more,
 25 either of curse or of blessing; but Balaam
 26 said, Did I not warn thee that I must needs
 carry out God's bidding? Come, said
 27 Balac, let me find thee another vantage-
 point; from this perhaps, God will allow
 thee to curse them. And he took him up
 28 to the top of mount Phogor, looking out
 towards the desert. Here too Balaam must
 29 have seven altars, seven bullocks, and
 seven rams; and Balac did as he was bidden,
 30 offering a bullock and a ram on every altar.

24 But this time, seeing clearly that
 it was God's purpose to bless Is-
 rael, Balaam did not go apart, as before, to
 look for portents; he turned towards the
 desert, and there, looking about him, he
 2 saw Israel encamped, tribe upon tribe.
 With that, the spirit of God fell upon him,
 and he prophesied: Thus speaks Balaam,
 3 the son of Beor, thus speaks the man who
 has seen with eyes blindfolded;¹ thus
 4 speaks the man who has heard the words
 of God himself, looked on a vision sent
 from the Almighty, who has fallen into a
 trance, and learned to see aright! How
 5 lovely, Jacob, are thy tents; Israel, how
 fair thy dwelling! Fair as wooded valleys,
 6 as gardens fed by running streams, as
 bowers of the Lord's own planting,² as
 cedars on the river bank! Like a bucket
 7 brimming over at the well, see how their
 posterity spreads from one river-frontier
 to the next! The king that rules over them
 shall rival Agag himself, and take away his
 kingdom from him.³ God has rescued

¹ Literally, 'whose eyes were shut up', but the Hebrew text probably means 'whose eyes were opened'.

² Literally, according to the Latin, 'tents the Lord has fixed', but the word used in the Hebrew text seems to mean some kind of tree (perhaps the aloe), as indeed the context demands.

³ 'Shall rival Agag himself'; literally, 'shall be lifted up close to Agag'. The Latin version can also be rendered, 'shall be taken away because of Agag', and the latter part of the verse, 'his kingdom shall be taken away' can be understood equally in reference to king Saul (I Kg. 15). But a prophecy on this subject is wholly unsuitable to the present context; and the Hebrew text has, 'he shall be lifted up above Agag'. No Agag appears in scripture except the king defeated by Saul; but it may have been a title rather than a name (like 'Pharo'), so that the point of the allusion remains uncertain.

them from Egypt, and made them like a wild ox for strength; nations shall come and swallow up their enemies,¹ crush them utterly, shoot them down with arrows.

9 Though Israel takes his rest, it is but as the crouching lion sleeps; who dares disturb the lioness in her den? A blessing, Israel, on all who bless, a curse on all who curse thee!

10 At this, Balaam clapped his hands together in vexation; It was to curse my enemies, said he to Balaam, that I summoned thee, and thrice thou hast blessed them instead; back home with thee! It was in my mind to raise thee to high honours, but this Lord of thine has thwarted thee of thy ambition. And Balaam still answered, Did I not warn the messengers thou sentest to me, Though Balaam should fill his house with silver and gold and offer to give it me, I have no power to go beyond the Lord's bidding by uttering any word of my own, for good or ill; I can only deliver the Lord's message? I will go back, then, to my own folk; but not till I have instructed thee about the dealings there must be between this folk and thine in the days that are coming.²

15 And once more Balaam prophesied: Thus speaks Balaam, the son of Beor, thus speaks the man who has seen with eyes blindfolded; who heard speech of God, most high, the Almighty, knew his mind, had vision of him, and in a trance, learned to see aright! My vision is not of this time, is not of the things that meet my eyes. I see a star that rises out of Jacob, a stem that springs from Israel's root; one who shall lay low the chiefs of Moab, shall bring devastation on all the posterity of Seth.³ Edom shall fall into his hands; the men of Seir will yield their lands to the enemy. Brave deeds in Israel; such a ruler for Jacob as shall leave no remnant in the captured city! Then he spoke of Amalec, Amalec, first-fruits of the nations, shall

have his very gleanings destroyed; spoke 21
of the Cinites, Though strong be thy fast- 22
ness, though high thy nest, proud race of 23
Cin, it shall not be for ever; Assur shall 24
carry thee away into exile. And once more 25
he prophesied: Alas, who can survive when 26
God brings all this about? Men will come 27
in ships of war from Italy, conquering the 28
Assyrians, laying the Hebrew land waste, 29
doomed themselves, last of all, to perish.⁴

With that, Balaam set out and made his way home; and Balac, too, went back whence he came.

25 Meanwhile, the Israelites were dwelling at Settim; and here they fell a-whoring with the women of Moab. These bade them come and partake of their own sacrifices, and worship their own gods; so that sons of Israel learned the rites of Beelphegor. And the Lord was indignant; he would have had all the clan chiefs hanged on gibbets in the sun's heat, to avert the divine vengeance from the people. But Moses quickly bade the rulers of the people slay all those who had learned Beelphegor's worship.

And now, in full sight of Moses, and of the whole multitude that stood weeping at the tabernacle door, one of the Israelites brought in a Madianite woman to shame his brethren. Whereupon Phinees, son of Eleazar, son of the high priest Aaron, left his place among the multitude weapon in hand, and followed this Israelite into the place of shame; man and woman both he pierced through, groin to groin. With that, the Israelites were rid of the plague that had befallen them; but not till twenty-four thousand of them had perished. And the Lord said to Moses, It is Phinees, son of Eleazar, son of the high priest Aaron, who has averted my vengeance from the sons of Israel; a man roused to such indignation in my cause, that my own indignation has spared them from utter overthrow. Tell 12

¹ According to the Hebrew text, 'they shall swallow up the nations (that are) their enemies'.
² 'The dealings there must be between this folk and thine'; in the Latin, 'what thy folk shall do to this folk', but according to the Hebrew text, 'what this folk shall do to thy folk'. If the former is the true rendering, the allusion is perhaps to Balaam's advice given on this occasion (31. 16), not to the prophecy which here follows.

³ This can hardly be understood of the son of Adam, without destroying the parallelism of the verse; we should expect Moab to appear under another name. Some think the meaning is 'sons of pride' or 'sons of tumult' in the Hebrew.
⁴ The bearing, and in some places the meaning, of verses 20-24 is obscure. The word 'nest' in the Hebrew forms a play upon words with 'Cinite'. In verse 24 'Italy' seems to be a conjecture by the translator; the name used in the Hebrew text is Cethim, applied properly to Cyprus, but occasionally to the Mediterranean world in general. Nor is it certain that 'the land of Heber' refers to the Hebrews:

him, then, that I pledge him my favour; the priesthood is secured by covenant to him and to his heirs for ever, in return for this zeal on his God's behalf, that atoned for Israel's sin. (The Israelite who was killed with the woman of Midian was one Zambri, son of Salu, a clan chief of Simeon; and the woman who died with him was called Cozbi, daughter to Sur, a man of high rank among the Midianites.)

And now the Lord said to Moses, Treat the Midianites as enemies, and smite them down; it was as enemies they treated you, when they baited a trap for you with Phogor's rites, and with their country-woman, the Midianite princess Cozbi, that died when the plague came to punish Phogor's worshippers.

26 When this toll of guilty blood had been taken, the Lord said to Moses and to the new high priest, Aaron's son Eleazar, Make a register, by households and families, of all the Israelites that have reached the age of twenty; that is, all the fighting men. So, in the plains of Moab, across the Jordan opposite Jericho, Moses and the high priest Eleazar summoned them all, the men of twenty years old or more, and passed the Lord's command on to them. And the register was as follows:

The sons of Ruben, Israel's first-born, were called Henoeh, Phallu, Hesron and Charmi. These gave their names to the clans of Ruben, which counted forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty men.

Phallu had a son called Eliab, who was the father of Namuel, Dathan, and Abiron. (It was these two chiefs, Dathan and Abiron, that made head against Moses and Aaron at the time of Core's rebellion, setting the Lord at defiance. The earth gaped open, and Core was swallowed up; many of the Israelites were killed, two hundred and fifty of them by fire, and it was a great miracle that when Core perished, his sons did not perish with him.)

The clans of Simeon were named after his sons, Namuel, Jamin, Jachin, Zare and Saul; they counted twenty-two thousand two hundred. And the clans of Gad were named after his sons, Sephon, Aggi, Suni, Ozni, Her, Arod and Ariel; they counted forty thousand five hundred. Juda had

two sons, Her and Onan, who died in the land of Chanaan; his other sons gave their names to clans, Sela, Phares, and Zara. (This Phares had two sons, who gave their names to the Hesronites and the Hamulites.) Juda counted seventy-six thousand five hundred. The clans of Issachar were named after his sons, Thola, Phua, Jasub and Semran; they counted sixty-four thousand three hundred. The clans of Zabulon were named after his sons, Sared, Elon and Jalel; they counted sixty thousand five hundred. The clans of Joseph were descended from his two sons, Manasses and Ephraim. Manasses' son Machir gave his name to the Machirites; and Machir's son Galaad to the Galaadites; and the clans of Galaad were named after his sons, Jezer, Helec, Asriel, Sechem, Semida and Hepher. (Hepher was the father of Salphaad, who had no sons, but five daughters, Maala, Noa, Hegla, Melcha and Thersa.) Manasses counted fifty-two thousand seven hundred. The clans of Ephraim were named after his sons Suthala, Becher and Thenen. (Heran, the founder of the Heranites, was Suthala's son.) Ephraim counted thirty-two thousand five hundred. All these were the descendants of Joseph. The clans of Benjamin were named after his sons, Bela, Asbel, Ahiram, Supham and Hupham. (Bela's sons gave their names to the Heredites and the Noemanites.) Benjamin counted forty-five thousand six hundred.

Dan had no sons but Suham, the founder of the Suhamites; all the clans descended from Dan were Suhamites, counting sixty-four thousand four hundred. The clans of Aser were named after his sons, Jemna, Jessui and Brie. (Brie had two sons, who gave their names to the Heberites and the Melchielites. Aser had also a daughter called Sara.) Aser counted fifty-three thousand four hundred. And the clans of Nephthali were called after his sons, Jessiel, Guni, Jeser and Sellem. Nephthali counted forty-five thousand four hundred. Thus the whole muster-roll of the Israelites contained six hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty names.

And the Lord told Moses, The land must be divided up under these names, one

34 portion for each.¹ A large portion where
they are many, a small portion where they
are few; their inheritance is to be assigned
to them according to this present register;
35 but always lots must be used to decide
between tribe and tribe, between clan and
36 clan. Great or small, they must be content
with what the lot gives them.

37 The Levites, too, were divided into
clans, named after Levi's sons, Gerson,
38 Caath and Merari. (These are subdivided
into the Levite clans named after
Lobni, Hebron, Moholi, Musi and Core.²)
39 Caath was father of Amram, who married
Jochabed, a daughter of Levi, born to him
in Egypt; the children she bore to Amram
were Aaron and Moses and their sister
60 Mary. Aaron's sons were called Nadab,
61 Abiu, Eleazar and Ithamar; but of these,
Nadab and Abiu were punished with death
62 for offering the Lord unhallowed fire. Of
the Levites altogether, twenty-three thou-
sand were registered; males all of them,
but counting all those who were more than
a month old. They were not reckoned in
the muster-roll of Israel, nor did they
receive lands like the rest.

63 Such was the register of the Israelites
made by Moses and the high priest Eleazar,
when they reached the plains of Moab, by
the Jordan opposite Jericho. Of these, not
64 one had been among those registered by
Moses and Aaron in the desert of Sinai,
and afterwards doomed by the Lord to die
65 in the wilderness; none of those now re-
mained, except Caleb, son of Jephone, and
Josue, son of Nun.

27 Salphaad, then, was descended
from Joseph through Hopher,
Galaad, Machir and Manasses. And now
his daughters, Maala, Noa, Hegla, Melcha
2 and Thersa came forward, preferring a suit
before Moses and the high priest Eleazar
and all the chieftains, at the tabernacle
3 door. This was their plea: Our father died
in the desert, not that he took any part in
Core's rebellion against the Lord; he died
accountable for no sins but his own; and
he died without male issue. Why must his
name be lost to his clan, only because he

had no son? Why may we not inherit side
by side with our father's kinsmen? So
4 Moses submitted their plea to the Lord's
arbitrament, and the Lord said to him,
5 This is a just plea the daughters of Sal-
6 phaad are making. Grant them the right
to inherit side by side with their father's
kinsmen, and succeed to his property.
And make this announcement to the sons
7 of Israel: When a man dies without sons,
8 his property shall pass to a daughter; if he
9 has no daughter, to his brothers; if he
10 has no brothers, to his uncles; if he has no
11 uncles either, to those who are next of kin
to him. This right holds good at all times
by law unalterable; it was the Lord's com-
mand to Moses.

After this, the Lord bade Moses climb
12 the mountain of Abarim, that was near by,
and view the land he was giving to the sons
of Israel as their home. When thou hast
13 viewed it, said he, thou too, like thy brother
Aaron, shalt become a part of thy people.
Both of you earned my displeasure when
14 the people challenged my power in the
wilderness of Sin, by not vindicating my
holiness before their eyes. (This was by
the Waters of Rebellion, at Cades in the
desert of Sin.) To this Moses made an-
15 swer, O God, art not thou Lord of every
16 spirit that breathes? And wilt thou not
17 find them to and fro, marching at their head?
Must the people of the Lord go untended,
like sheep without a shepherd? And the
18 Lord said to him, Make choice of Josue,
the son of Nun, a man endowed with high
19 gifts; lay thy hand upon him, and bid him
stand forth before the high priest Eleazar,
and the whole assembly. There, in the
20 sight of all, give him thy last charge, and
share with him that dignity which is thine,
so that all Israel may learn to obey him.
But whenever some action is planned,
21 the high priest Eleazar will consult the Lord
concerning it; at his word both Josue him-
self and all Israel, and all the company that
goes with them, shall move this way and
that. So Moses did as the Lord had bidden
22 him, presenting Josue before the high priest
Eleazar and the whole assembly, and there
23

¹ The land must be divided up under these names²; it is not clear whether the names of tribes or of clans are meant. Nor is it clear how the two principles of apportionment by numbers and apportionment by lot were reconciled; presumably, lots were drawn between units whose numbers were approximately equal (as Benjamin and Nephthali).

² The words 'subdivided into' are not found in the original but may be inferred from Ex. 6. 16 sqq.

laying his hands on Josue's head, and repeating all the charge which the Lord had given him.

28 This, too, was a message the Lord gave to Moses: Bid the sons of Israel bring offerings to regale me, burnt-sacrifices to delight me with the smell of their burning, at the times appointed. 3 Daily, all the year round, they must offer two yearling lambs, without blemish, in 4 burnt-sacrifice to me, one in the morning, 5 one in the evening, with the tenth of a bushel of flour, kneaded in three pints of 6 pure oil. The burnt-sacrifice you offered at mount Sinai, to delight the Lord with the smell of its burning, must continue for 7 all time. For each lamb, too, you will make a libation in the Lord's sanctuary, of 8 three pints of wine. The second lamb will be offered in the evening, repeating all the morning's ceremonies and its libation, and the Lord will accept the smell of its burning.

9 On the sabbath day you will bring two yearling lambs without blemish, and the fifth of a bushel of flour kneaded with oil as a bread-offering, with due libations 10 poured out sabbath after sabbath; the sacrifice must never be omitted. At the 11 new moon, by way of burnt-sacrifice, you will offer to the Lord two bull-calves and a ram, and seven yearling lambs without 12 blemish, and three tenths of a bushel of flour kneaded with oil by way of bread-offering for each calf, and a fifth for the 13 ram, and a hundredth for each lamb,¹ to delight the Lord with the smell of their 14 burning. And libations of wine will go with each victim, six pints for a bullock, 15 four for a ram, and three for a lamb. Each month, as the year goes round, this shall be your burnt-sacrifice. And together with 16 this repeated sacrifice you will offer the Lord a goat, to atone for faults.

17 On the fourteenth day of the first month, the Lord's paschal feast begins. 18 The fifteenth day is a feast, and for a whole 19 week bread must be eaten unleavened. Its first day will be a day of solemn observance, on which no servile work may be 20 done. The burnt-sacrifice made to the Lord will be the same as that of the new 21 moon. And one goat must be offered in

Daily and yearly Sacrifices prescribed

amends for your faults; all this, over and above the morning sacrifice which is to be made that day as always. Thus you will do on each of the seven days, feeding the fire and delighting the Lord with the smell of your burnt-sacrifice, and the libations that go with it. The seventh day too must be a day of solemn observance, on which no servile work may be done.

Another day of solemn observance, on which no servile work must be done, is the day of first-fruits, when you bring the Lord a bread-offering out of the new crops. You must bring the Lord a burnt-sacrifice, to delight him with the smell of its burning, as at the new moon. There must be a goat, too, offered in amends for fault; all this, over and above the daily sacrifice and its libations. Sacrifice or libation, all that you offer the Lord must be without blemish.

29 So, too, you will make the first day of the seventh month a day of solemn observance, and a holiday from servile work; it is to be marked by a blast of trumpets. It will have its fragrant burnt-sacrifice, of a bull, a ram, and seven yearling lambs without blemish; and the bread-offering to go with them, three-tenths of a bushel of flour kneaded with oil for the bull, a fifth for the ram, a tenth for each of the seven lambs. And a goat will be offered to make amends for the people's faults. All this, over and above the monthly sacrifice and its offerings, over and above the daily sacrifice and its libations; a third offering that day, with the same ceremonies, will delight the Lord with the smell of its burning.

The tenth day of this seventh month is to be solemnly observed as a day of fasting, and also of rest from work. You will sacrifice bull and ram and lambs as before, bread-offerings as before for bull and ram, a hundredth of a bushel of flour for each of the seven lambs, and a goat for your faults. That day, too, will have its special ceremonies of atonement for wrong done, and the daily sacrifice will be made, with its bread-offering and libations, in the customary way.

On the fifteenth day of this seventh month, which is also to be solemnly observed as a holiday, you will begin a week

¹ 'A hundredth'; according to the Hebrew text (here and in verses 21 and 29) 'a tenth'.

13 of observance in the Lord's honour, offer-
 14 ing him a fragrant burnt-sacrifice of thir-
 15 teen bull-calves, two rams, and fourteen
 16 lambs, with the usual bread-offering for
 17 each bull, each ram, each of the fourteen
 18 lambs, and a goat for your faults, over and
 19 above the daily sacrifice and what goes
 20 with it. The next day you will offer the same
 21 number of rams and lambs, but only
 22 twelve calves, all with their customary
 23 bread-offerings and libations; a goat, too,
 24 for faults, over and above the daily cere-
 25 monies. On the third day eleven calves,
 26 and the rest as before; on the fourth day
 27 ten calves, and the rest as before; on the
 28 fifth day nine calves, and the rest as before;
 29 on the sixth day eight calves and the rest
 30 as before; on the seventh day seven calves
 31 and the rest as before. The eighth day, too,
 32 is to be held in all honour as a holiday; and
 33 this day too you will offer fragrant burnt-
 34 sacrifice, but only one bull, one ram, and
 35 seven yearling lambs without blemish,
 36 with their customary bread-offerings and
 37 libations, and a goat for your faults, over
 38 and above the daily sacrifice and what goes
 39 with it. Such are the offerings you must
 make to God at your public festivals, over
 and above those you bring in payment of
 a vow, or out of devotion, burnt-sacrifice
 and bloodless sacrifice and libation and
 welcome-offering.

30 So Moses told the Israelites what
 charge the Lord had given him.

2 He also gave the chief men of Israel's tribes
 1 this command from the Lord: It may be,
 man or woman will take a vow, or an oath.
 If it be a man, he must in any case carry
 out what he promised, and not be false to
 4 his word. But if a woman has made a vow,
 or bound herself by an oath, it may be she
 is only a girl, living in her father's house
 still. Did her father know that she had
 vowed or sworn, and make no protest?
 5 Then she is bound by her vow; she must
 fulfil what she bound herself by oath to
 6 fulfil. Did her father, as soon as he heard
 of it, refuse his consent? Then vow or
 oath are null and void; she cannot be held
 to her promise if her father did not consent
 7 to it. It may be such a girl will marry, still

under her vow, still bound by her youthful
 undertaking; does her husband hear of it
 without protest? She must be held to her
 8 vow thenceforward; she must carry out
 what she promised. Or does he refuse his
 9 consent upon hearing of it? Then he an-
 nulls this promise, this youthful under-
 taking of hers, and the Lord will not hold
 her guilty. Or the woman may be a widow,
 10 or a wife divorced; she must then fulfil her
 promise. Or a wife already living under
 11 her husband's roof, may take vow or oath;
 is she bound to fulfil her promise? Yes, if
 12 he hears of it and makes no protest. But if
 13 he immediately refuses his consent, she
 cannot be held to her undertaking; the
 Lord will not hold her guilty if her hus-
 band's consent is refused.

It may be a wife will bind herself by an
 14 oath, vowing to mortify herself by fasting
 or some other kind of abstinence; it is for
 her husband to decide whether she is to
 keep it or not. If he makes no protest on
 15 hearing of it, but waits till afterwards
 before making his decision, she must pay
 her vow, keep the promise she made; there
 was no protest from him when he heard
 of it. If, after hearing of it, he refuses his
 16 consent, then it is he that will be held to
 account for her fault.¹

Such are the rules the Lord gave Moses,
 17 to govern the conduct of husband and
 wife, or of a father and his daughter when
 she is a girl still living at home.

31 And now the Lord said to Moses,
 1 Soon thou art to become a part of
 thy people; but first take vengeance, in
 2 Israel's name, on the sons of Madian. So
 Moses ordered a muster of men sufficient
 3 to wreak the Lord's vengeance on the
 Madianites, a thousand picked warriors
 4 from each tribe. Thus a force of twelve
 5 thousand, a thousand from each tribe, was
 put under arms; and he appointed Phinees,
 6 son of the high priest Eleazar, to command
 them, entrusting him with the sacred em-
 blems and the trumpets that must sound
 for battle. So they fought against the
 7 Madianites and defeated them. All the
 men-folk they killed, the chiefs of the
 8 tribe, Evi, Recem, Sur, Hur and Rebe

¹ 'After hearing of it'; it is not quite clear whether this means 'immediately on hearing of it' as in the cases considered above, or whether this verse considers the situation of a man who first consents, by silence, to his wife's vow, and would retract his consent afterwards.

among them; Balaam, too, the son of Beor, they put to the sword; and took possession of their women-folk and children, their cattle and all their goods. Nothing that belonged to Madian but was ravaged; cities, villages and strongholds were burnt down, and all the booty, all the captives, and all the beasts they had taken they brought with them to Moses and Eleazar; whatever was of use must be brought back to the camp in the plains of Moab opposite Jericho.

Moses went out to meet them, as they drew near the camp, with the high priest Eleazar and all the rulers of Israel. And it was an angry welcome they had from him, chiefs and commanders and captains that had gone out to fight; What means it, he asked, that you have spared the women-folk? Was it not these that beguiled the sons of Israel, at the prompting of Balaam, and led you to play the Lord false by worshipping Phogor, so that a plague fell on the whole people? All the males must be killed, even the children, and all the women that have had commerce with man; the young girls and all the women that are still virgins you may keep for yourselves.

For seven days you must not enter the camp; whoever has killed a man or touched a man that lay killed must be purified on the third day of the seven, and on the last. Of all the spoil you have taken, every garment, every pot and pan, that is made of goats' skins and goats' hair, or of wood, you must purify too. (This was how the high priest Eleazar expounded the law to the men who had come back after the victory: The Lord has warned Moses that gold, silver, bronze, iron, lead and tin, and all else that can stand the fire's heat, may be purified by fire, but everything else must be cleansed with lustral water.) On the seventh day you will wash your clothes, and so you will be able to come into the camp, purified men.

This, too, the Lord said to Moses, Thou and the high priest Eleazar and the rulers of the people must reckon up the sum of the booty taken, and divide it up into equal shares, giving half to the men who went out to war, and half to the rest of the people. Out of the fighting men's share, set apart one human creature, one ox, one ass, one sheep, in every five hundred; these

must be given to the high priest Eleazar, as the Lord's first-fruits. Out of the share that goes to the rest of Israel, set apart one out of every fifty living things, whether human creatures, oxen, asses or sheep, and give them to the Levites, that have the Lord's tabernacle in their charge.

Moses and Eleazar did as the Lord had bidden them. And this was the booty which the army had taken, six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, seventy-two thousand oxen, sixty-one thousand asses, and thirty-two thousand human creatures, all of them of woman's sex, and such as had never had commerce with man. Half of all was given to the men who had been in battle; and of this they set apart as the Lord's share six hundred and seventy-five sheep, seventy-two oxen, sixty-one asses, and thirty-two human creatures were dedicated to the Lord out of the half-share of sixteen thousand. All these, the full toll of the Lord's first-fruits, Moses gave over to the high priest Eleazar, as the Lord had bidden him; taking them from that half of the public spoils that fell to the warriors. And out of the half that fell to the rest of the people, the three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep, the thirty-six thousand oxen, the thirty thousand five hundred asses, and the sixteen thousand human creatures, Moses took one in every fifty, and gave them, as the Lord had bidden him, to the Levites that had the Lord's tabernacle in their charge.

And now the chiefs and commanders and captains of the army came and told Moses, My lord, we have been calling the roll of the men we had serving under us, and every one answered his name. In thanksgiving for this, we would offer as a gift to the Lord the spoils we have taken severally, such as are of gold; anklet and armband, ring and bracelet and necklace; and do thou make intercession for us to the Lord. So Moses and the high priest Eleazar accepted all this gold in all its varied shapes; sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty sicles in weight, as a gift from the commanders and captains, each of them giving the spoils he had seized for himself; and they took it into the tabernacle that bore witness of the covenant, and put the Lord in mind of the Israelites continually.

32 The tribes of Ruben and Gad were rich in flocks, and their herds were past all reckoning. And now, seeing how well fitted were the lands of Jazer and Galaad to feed beasts, they brought a petition to Moses, and the high priest Eleazar, and the rulers of the people. Here is Ataroth, they said, here are Dibon, and Jazer, and Nemra, and Hesebon, and Eleale, and Saban, and Nebo, and Beon, all given over by the Lord into the hands of Israel at the first onslaught; and all of this is good grazing land. My lord, we have many beasts to feed, and we would ask a favour of thee; grant us this land for our portion, instead of making us cross the Jordan to win it.

What, answered Moses, are your brethren to go and fight while you sit idle here? Would you daunt the spirits of the Israelites, so that they have not the courage to cross over into the land which the Lord means to give them? Why, this was what your fathers did, when I sent them from Cades-Barne to bring back a report of the land; they passed through the whole extent of it, until they reached the Valley of Grapes, and came back to daunt the spirits of their fellow-Israelites, so that none of them ever entered the territory which the Lord had assigned to them. So angry was he that he bound himself by an oath, None of the men who made their way out of Egypt and then would not follow me, men of twenty years and more, shall ever see the land which was my promised gift to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. None of them, except Caleb the son of Jephone and Josue the son of Nun, the men who carried out my will. Still angry, he led us this way and that through the desert, till the generation that had offended him died out. And now you come forward in the spirit of your fathers, the heirs and scions of their guilt, to make the Lord more angry with Israel than ever. Refuse to follow him, and he will leave his people here in the desert so you will be the death of us all.

But still they came closer, and would have their say; We mean only to build folds for our sheep, byres for our cattle,

and cities where our children can dwell in safety; then we will go forward, armed and girded for battle, in the van of Israel, until we have won them their territory. We must have walled cities to protect our children and our possessions from sudden attack by our neighbours; but we will not go back to these homes of ours till the other Israelites have won their inheritance; and we will not demand any lands on the further side of Jordan, our portion once secured to us on the east of it. Be as good as your word, then, Moses said; arm yourselves to do battle under the Lord's eye, and cross over Jordan in battle array, all of you that are fighting men, till the Lord has overthrown his enemies and won the whole land for himself. So neither the Lord nor Israel will have any fault to find with you, and you shall hold, under the eye of the Lord's favour, the territory of your choice. If you do not make good your word, you will be sinning openly against God; and be sure that your sin will not go unpunished. Build cities for your families, byres and folds for your sheep and cattle, and then fulfil your promise. We are thy servants, the men of Gad and Ruben said to Moses, and will do as our master bids; leave children and wives, sheep and cattle in the cities of Galaad, and go out ourselves, armed for battle, as servants at their master's command.

So Moses gave the word to the high priest Eleazar, and Josue the son of Nun, and the heads of all the clans in Israel, that the tribes of Ruben and Gad were to receive Galaad as their portion once the whole land was conquered, if they would consent to let all their armed men cross the Jordan and do battle under the Lord's eye with the rest. If they would not undertake to help carry the war into Chanaan on those terms, then they must wait and win their portion among the other tribes.¹ But Ruben and Gad protested that they were willing to yield the Lord the service he asked of them; to invade Chanaan under his eye, and still be content with the portion granted them on the further side of Jordan. So Moses gave the dominions of

¹ The text says that if the men of Ruben and Gad refuse to help in the invasion of Chanaan, they are to have their portion among the other tribes (i.e. West of Jordan). The sense must be that if they will not carry out their part of the bargain just made, they will lose their rights in Transjordan, and be compelled to go over and win territory like the rest.

Sehon, that had been king of the Amorrites, and Og, the king of Basan, with all the cities that were contained in the whole region, to Gad and to Ruben and to half the tribe of Manasses, that were descended from Joseph's son. And the men of Gad rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, Etroth, Sophan, Jazer, Jegbaa, Bethnemra and Betharan, all fortified cities, and folds, too, for their sheep. The men of Ruben rebuilt Hesebon, Eleale, Cariathaim, Nabo and Baalmeon, under other names,¹ and Sabama too; they gave names of their own to these cities when they rebuilt them. Meanwhile the descendants of Machir, that was Manasses' son, had made their way into Galaad and plundered it, slaughtering the Amorrites who dwelt there; so Moses gave Galaad to the clan of Manasses' son Machir, and there they took up their abode. Other Amorrite towns were taken by Jair, a tribesman of Manasses, who called them Havoth-Jair, that is, Jair's villages; and Nobe, who invaded and captured Chanath with its daughter-towns, called this after his own name, Nobe.

33 Here is a list of the stages through which the Israelites journeyed, when Moses and Aaron had led their armies out of Egypt. It was Moses that kept a record of the places where they encamped, now here, now there, at the Lord's bidding. They set out from Ramesses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the second day of the paschal feast, in full sight of the Egyptians, who must perforce let them go. And indeed these had enough to do burying their first-born, whom the Lord had smitten when he took vengeance on the powers of Egypt.

Their first encampment was at Socoth, and from Socoth they marched to Etham, on the verge of the desert; and from there they marched along past Pihahiroth, which is opposite Beelsephon, and encamped by Magdalu. From Pihahiroth they went across through the heart of the sea into the wilderness, and after three days' march in the desert of Etham, halted at Mara. From Mara they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and se-

venty palm-trees, and pitched their tents there. When they left it, they encamped by the Red Sea, and from the Red Sea they moved their camp to the desert of Sin, from the desert of Sin to Daphca, thence to Alus, thence to Raphidim, where the people could not find enough water to drink. Then from Raphidim to the desert of Sinai, thence to the Graves of Greed, thence to Haseroth, thence to Rethma, thence to Remmonphares, thence to Debna, thence to Ressa, thence to Ceelatha, thence to mount Sepher. Then from mount Sepher to Arada, thence to Maceloth, thence to Thahath, thence to Thare, thence to Methca, thence to Hesmona, thence to Moseroth, thence to Benejaacan, thence to mount Gadgad. Then from mount Gadgad to Jetebatha, thence to Hebrona, thence to Asiongaber, thence to the desert of Sin, that is, to Cades. It was after they had left Cades that they encamped on mount Hor, at the verge of the Edomite territory; and now, at the Lord's command, the high priest Aaron went up to the top of mount Hor and died there. This was on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year since the Israelites left Egypt, and Aaron had now reached the age of a hundred and twenty-three. Now, too, the Chanaanite king who had his capital, Arad, in the south country, heard that Israel was marching against Chanaan.²

From mount Hor they moved their camp to Salmona, thence to Phunon, thence to Oboth, thence to Ijeabarim, within the frontiers of Moab, thence to Dibongad, thence to Helmondeblathaim, thence to the hill country of Abarim, to mount Nabo. When they left the hill country of Abarim, they removed to the plains of Moab, facing Jericho on the other side of Jordan, their camp stretching across the whole Moabite plain from Bethsimoth to Abelsatim.

And here the Lord spoke to Moses giving him a message for the Israelites: When you have crossed Jordan, and find yourselves in the land of Chanaan, you must destroy all its inhabitants, break down their pillars, shatter their idols, devastate their mountain shrines. The land

¹ Some think this is a direction to the Hebrew reader, in a public recitation, to substitute other names for Nabo and Baalmeon, which were called after heathen gods; cf. Ps. 15, 4. ² Some think this verse has crept in here by mistake; see 21, 1, where a similar historical notice follows the description of Aaron's death.

must be swept clean before you settle in it. Here it is that I mean to give you your home, which you will divide up by lot, wide lands for the many, a narrow strip for the few, each clan and each household receiving such portion as the lot has assigned to it. If you refuse to root out the nations that now live there, those who are left will be eyesores to you, barbs in your side, to dispute with you the land that is yours;¹ and meanwhile, I will plague you with the plagues that should have been theirs.

34 And the Lord bade Moses give this message too to the Israelites: When you have entered Chanaan and duly taken possession of it, these shall be the frontiers that bound it. The southern end of your territory will begin at the desert of Sin, by Edom, bordered on the east by the Sea of Salt. Its border on the south shall curve along the Scorpion Pass till it crosses over to Senna, and reaches southward as far as Cades-Barne; then it will go to the town called Adar, and pass on to Asemona. From Asemona it will curve round to the Brook of Egypt, ending at the shore of the Great Sea. On the western side, your territories shall begin at the Great Sea; they shall have no other frontier than this. Your northern border will stretch from the Great Sea to Summit mountain, and so by Emath to the edge of Sedada, and on to Zephrona and the village of Enan; all this on the north. From this village of Enan you will mark out your eastern border till it reaches Sephama, passing from Sephama to Rebla, close to the well of Daphnis, and from there to the eastern shore of Lake Cenereth. So it will fall into the Jordan valley and end at last with the Sea of Salt. These shall be the frontiers that bound your land.²

So Moses passed on word to the Israelites that this was the territory they were to divide up by lot; the Lord's destined gift to nine and a half out of the twelve tribes. (All the clans of Ruben's tribe and of the tribe of Gad, with half the

tribe of Manasses, two and a half tribes in all, had received their portion on the eastern bank of Jordan opposite Jericho.)

And now the Lord said to Moses, These are the names of the men who will divide up the land for you. First, the high priest Eleazar and Josue the son of Nun, and then the chieftains of the several tribes, as follows. For Juda, Caleb the son of Jephone, for Simeon, Samuel the son of Ammiud, for Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chaselon, for Dan, Bocci the son of Jogli. And among Joseph's descendants, for Manasses, Hannuel the son of Ephod, for Ephraim, Camuel the son of Sephthan. For Zabulon, Elisaphan the son of Pharnach, for Issachar, Phaltiel the son of Ozan, for Aser, Ahitud the son of Salomi, for Nephthali, Phedael the son of Ammiud. These were the men the Lord appointed to divide up Chanaan between the Israelites.

35 This was another message the Lord gave to Moses on the eastern bank of Jordan opposite Jericho; he was to bid the Israelites make provision for the Levites out of these lands of theirs. The Levites were to have cities with precincts about them; cities for the Levites themselves to live in, and precincts for their flocks and cattle,³ stretching a thousand yards beyond the city walls. Two thousand cubits to the east, as many to the south, as many towards the western sea, as many to the north;⁴ the city was to lie in the middle with precincts all round it. Six of the towns granted to the Levites would be sanctuaries for the outlaw, offering a refuge to homicides, and there would be forty-two more, making forty-eight cities in all, with precincts attached to them. All these cities were to be a toll levied from the lands of the Israelites, in greater number from those who held more, in less number from those who held less; they would make their grant to the Levites according to their several capacities.

And the Lord spoke to Moses giving

¹ 'Eyesores to you, barbs in your side'; the Hebrew text here has 'spikes in your eyes, thorns in your sides': the Latin translates the former word by 'nails' (or possibly 'warts'), the latter by 'spears'. The sense is evidently 'they will be a permanent irritation to you'.
² The Sea of Salt is the Dead Sea, the Great Sea the Mediterranean; Summit mountain will be some part of the Lebanon range, and Lake Cenereth is the Sea of Galilee (or Gennesaret).
³ In view of 18. 20, it may perhaps be inferred that the Levites farmed for their own maintenance, not for profit.
⁴ 'Yards' and 'cubits' in the Latin both translate the same word in the Hebrew. If we follow the Hebrew text, it is difficult to reconcile the directions given in verses 4 and 5 and it seems likely that there has been some corruption.

him this message for the Israelites: When you have crossed Jordan and reached Chanaan, you must decide which of your cities are to be sanctuaries for men who have shed blood unwittingly. Such a man, if he takes refuge there, will be beyond the reach of avenging clansmen, until such time as he can appear and have his cause decided by the people. Of the cities appointed as sanctuaries, three must lie beyond the Jordan, three in Chanaan itself; and they shall be open not only to Israelites but to the aliens that lodge or dwell among you, as a refuge for all who have shed blood unwittingly.

In such causes, anyone who struck a deadly blow with a weapon of iron must be reckoned a murderer, and put to death; and the penalty is all the same if the deadly blow was struck with a stone, or with a piece of wood. Any kinsman of the dead man may strike the murderer down, strike him down without more ado as soon as he meets him. Anyone, that is, who thrusts at a man out of malice, or lies in wait for him and discharges a weapon at him, or makes a deadly assault on him because they are enemies, is a murderer, to be struck down by the kinsmen of the dead man as soon as they meet him. But if it was by chance, without any malice or feud between them, and this is proved in the hearing of the people, after due consideration of the pleas brought by the slayer and by the dead man's kin, then he is innocent, and must be rescued from the avenger's power. He must be taken back, by award of the court, to his city of refuge, and make his abode there until the death of the high priest then anointed. Once the slayer leaves the confines of the sanctuary town, anyone who has a feud against him may strike him down wherever he meets him, without incurring guilt; he should have remained in his city of refuge until the high priest died. On the high priest's death, the slayer is free to return home. These laws shall hold good among you everywhere and always.

Witnesses are needed before the murderer can be punished; the word of a single witness does not suffice for his condemnation. You are not to accept blood-money from the murderer; he is to be put to death there and then. Nor, upon any condition,

must you allow the outlaw who has taken sanctuary to return home until the high priest's death; this would bring pollution on the land that is yours. The blood of an innocent man involves the whole land in such guilt as can only be expiated by the murderer's own blood; and you must keep your territory clean of such defilement if I am to dwell among you; the Lord himself is the guest of Israel.

36 And now a plea was brought to Moses, before all the rulers of Israel, by the chiefs of the clan descended from Galaad, son of Machir, son of Manasses, that came of Joseph's stock. Thou art our master, they said, and the Lord has commanded thee, in dividing the land between the sons of Israel, to give a portion to the daughters of Salphaad, the portion which should have gone to their father. If these marry into another tribe, their land will go with them, and it will be lost to our tribe, transferred to the possession of another. The fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, will come round, but still the division of holdings will remain disturbed, and the land belonging to one tribe will be held by another.

And Moses, at the Lord's bidding, made this declaration to the Israelites, The sons of Joseph are in the right, and this is the ruling which the Lord gives concerning the daughters of Salphaad. Let them marry whom they will, so long as it is within their own tribe. The portions assigned to the sons of Israel must not pass from tribe to tribe; all men must take wives from their own tribe and clan, and all women must marry within their own tribes, so that property may remain within the clan. The tribes must not intermingle, but remain separate according to the Lord's plan for them. So the daughters of Salphaad carried out the Lord's bidding, and all of them, Maala, Thersa, Hegla, Melcha and Noa married their own cousins, men sprung from Manasses, that was son of Joseph. So the portion granted to them remained within their father's tribe and clan.

Such were the decrees and awards which the Lord delivered to the Israelites through Moses on the eastern bank of Jordan opposite Jericho.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

IT was thus Moses spoke to the people of Israel while they were still on the other side of Jordan, in the desert plain that looks towards the Red Sea, with Pharan and Thophel and Laban and Haseroth, a country where gold abounds, for its frontiers; the plain that is spanned by a journey of eleven days from Horeb to Cades-Barne, by way of mount Seir.¹ It was the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, when Moses handed on to the Israelites the commands which the Lord had entrusted to him. He had now given them victory over Schon, king of the Amorrhites, that lived at Hesebon, and Og, king of Basan, that lived at Astaroth and Edrai, still beyond the Jordan, in the Moabite country.

Moses, then, began to expound the law, with these words: We were still at Horeb when the Lord our God said to us, This mountain has been your home long enough; it is time for you to turn back, and make your way to the hill country of the Amorrhites and its neighbourhood. Low ground and high ground, southern plain and sea-coast, all Chanaan including mount Lebanon, right up to the great river Euphrates, I have given it all (said he) into your hands; go in and take possession of it; it is the home the Lord promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their posterity after them.

It was at this time, too, that I said to you, The charge of you is too heavy for my own strength, such increase has the Lord your God given you. To-day, you are countless as the stars in heaven; may the Lord, the God of your fathers, add many thousands yet to your number, and grant you the blessing he has promised! But I have not strength to bear, alone, the weight of all your affairs, all your quarrels; you must give me men of ripe wisdom and quick minds, high in repute among their fellow-

tribesmen, to be appointed your rulers. And when I had your answer, approving my design, I chose out of all your tribes men of wisdom and repute, and I appointed them to be your rulers, with powers over a thousand men, or a hundred, or fifty, or ten together, issuing commands to you as need arose. And this was the charge I gave them: Listen to the pleadings of each man, and give a just award to citizen and to stranger alike. Listen impartially to great and small, without undue regard for any man; it is God's justice you are administering. If any quarrel seems hard to decide, refer it to me, and I will take cognisance of it myself.² At this time, too, I gave you all the commandments you were to follow.

So we left Horeb, and traversed that wide desert whose terrible aspect is well known to you, on the way to the hill country of the Amorrhites, as the Lord bade us. And when we reached Cades-Barne I told you, Now you have made your way to these mountains of the Amorrhites, which the Lord means to give you for your own. The land you see before you is the Lord's gift to you, a divine gift; march in and take possession of it, in fulfilment of the promises he made to your fathers; let there be no cowardice, no shrinking here. Whereupon you all preferred a request to me that men should be sent out to view the land, and bring back word how best to approach it, what cities you should first assail; and I, listening to your words with approval, chose out twelve such men, one from each tribe. These set out, and traversed the hill country as far as the Valley of Grapes; viewed the whole land, and brought back with them such sample of its fruits as would show us how fertile it was; This is a fair land, they said, that the Lord means to give us.³

But you had no heart for the enterprise, 26

¹ It is not certain whether the first words of the sentence refer to what went before, or to what follows. The geographical indications here given seem to be very vague, and have occasioned much controversy.

² A country where gold abounds' should perhaps be a fresh proper name, Dizahab. ³ See Ex. 18.

⁴ See Num. 13 and 14. In that passage, the demand of the people for a reconnaissance is not mentioned.

put no trust in the promises of the Lord
 27 your God. The whisper went round in
 your tents, The Lord wishes us ill; that is
 why he has brought us away from Egypt,
 to leave us at the mercy of the Amorrhites,
 28 and so make an end of us. What enterprise
 is this? The messengers we sent have
 taken the heart out of us, with their tales
 of a great multitude of men, taller in stature
 than we are, of cities walled up to the skies,
 29 of the sons of Enac they saw there. And
 I reasoned with you, Do not be afraid, do
 not shrink before them; will not the Lord
 30 God who is your leader fight on your side,
 as he did in Egypt for all to see? Your own
 eyes have witnessed how the Lord your
 God carried you through the desert as a
 man carries his little son, all the long road
 32 you have travelled to reach this spot. But
 even so you had no confidence in the Lord
 33 your God, that had led you on the march
 and marked out your encampments for
 you, guiding you on your journey in fire
 by night, in cloud by day.
 34 Listening to this talk of yours, the Lord
 was angry with you, and he took an oath
 35 that none of that worthless generation
 should live to see the fair land that was his
 36 promised gift to your fathers, except Caleb
 the son of Jephone. He was to see it, he
 and his sons should have the gift of the
 ground his feet had trodden, because he
 37 had carried out the Lord's will. And what
 marvel that the people should feel his dis-
 pleasure, when the Lord was angry with
 me too for your sakes? There is no enter-
 38 ing there, he told me, for thee either. Josue
 the son of Nun, thy servant, shall go in
 instead of thee; bid him take heart and
 play the man; it shall be for him to appor-
 39 tion Israel its lands. These little ones of
 yours, that were to pass, you thought, into
 captivity, these sons of yours, that cannot
 yet discern right from wrong, shall have
 leave to enter; theirs the land shall be, my
 40 promised gift. As for you, turn your steps
 back towards the Red Sea again, back into
 the desert.

41 Ah no, you answered me, we confess our
 fault against the Lord; we ourselves are
 ready to set forth and do battle, as the Lord
 our God would have us. And even as you

were on your way to the hill country, all
 armed, the Lord gave me a message for
 4 you, Do not march to the attack, or you
 will be overthrown by your enemies; I am
 at your side no longer. My warning went
 4 unheard; puffed up with pride, you dis-
 obeyed the Lord's word and marched on
 into the hill country, till the Amorrhite
 4 mountain-dwellers came out to meet you,
 and chased you away, thick as a swarm of
 bees, cut you down all the way from Seir
 to Horma. Many were the complaints you
 4 uttered in the Lord's presence when you
 came back, but he would not listen to you,
 and long you waited in idleness, there at
 Cades-Barne.

2 So we went back towards the Red
 Sea, back into the desert, as the Lord
 had bidden me, and for a long time the
 centre of our wanderings was the hill
 country of Seir. Then the Lord said to me.
 You have spent long enough roaming
 about these hills, you must go northwards
 now. And give the people this message,
 Your way lies by the frontiers of your own
 brethren, the sons of Edom. They will be
 alarmed at your coming, and you must take
 good care not to assail them. These moun-
 tains of Seir are the portion I have given
 to Esau, and you are not to have a foot of
 ground there for your own. Food you may
 have, but it must be bought at a fair price;
 you may draw and drink their water, but
 not without payment. Do you grudge that,
 when the Lord has so prospered all your
 enterprises, watched over your journey
 through this wild wilderness, secured you
 from want by forty years of his compani-
 onship?

So we passed beyond these brethren of
 ours, the Edomites of Seir, taking the road
 that leads over the level plain, from Elath
 and Asiongaber.¹ And when we reached
 the path that leads into the desert of Moab,
 the Lord said to me, Do not levy war
 against the Moabites, or attack them; I do
 not mean to give thee any of their lands.
 Ar is the territory I have given to the sons
 of Lot for their home. The earliest in-
 habitants of the country were the Emim,
 a great race of warriors, so tall in stature

¹ Free passage seems to have been granted by the Edomites on this occasion (verse 29 below); the incident must not be confused with that described in Num. 20. 14 sqq., when the Israelites were marching eastwards, not northwards.

that they might have come of Enac's family; and indeed men held them to be giants of Enac's breed, but the Moabite name for them is Emim. (So, too, Seir had its earlier inhabitants, the Horites, but they were dispossessed and destroyed by the sons of Esau, who took possession of the land just as Israel took possession of the land which the Lord gave him.)

So we moved forward, and reached the brook Zared, minded to cross it. Between our departure from Cades-Barne and the crossing of the brook Zared lay thirty-eight years of wandering, till all the fighting men of that generation had passed away from this camp of ours, as the Lord swore they should; on all of them his hand fell, and they were lost to our ranks. And when all those warriors were dead the Lord had a command to give me: To-day thou shalt pass beyond the frontiers of Moab, at the city called Ar, and reach the neighbourhood of the Ammonites. Do not levy war against them or threaten battle; I do not mean to give thee any of the Ammonites' land; here too the children of Lot must dwell. (This, too, was reckoned a land of giants; it was a giant race that lived there once, the Zomzommim, as they are called by the Ammonites, a people great and powerful, tall in stature as the Enacim themselves. But the Lord dispossessed them to make room for the Ammonites, and these made their dwelling there instead. Just so he had destroyed the Horites, that once lived in Seir, and given their land to the Edomites, who enjoy it to this day: the Hevites, too, that dwelt in Haserim, right up to Gaza, were dispossessed by the Caphtorim; these left their home and settled in the land of the Hevites, whom they destroyed.)¹ March on, then, and cross the ravine of Arnon; here is the prey I have given thee, Sehon, the Amorrite king who reigns at Hesebon. Join battle with him, and set about the conquest of his land. To-day I will begin making thy name a name of terror, so that every nation on earth, hearing it, shall be overcome with fear, sudden as the throes of a woman in travail.

So, from the desert of Cademoth, I sent

an embassy to Sehon king of Hesebon, with peaceful overtures. We will pass through thy land, I said, by the common highway, not turning aside to right or left. Sell us food to eat, and we will pay for it; allow us water to drink, and we will pay for it. Only grant us leave to pass through, like the Edomites in Seir and the Moabites in Ar, so that we can reach the Jordan, and cross over it into the land which the Lord our God is giving us to be our home. But Sehon, king of Hesebon, would not let us pass; the Lord your God gave him a hard heart, a stubborn will, so as to put him at your mercy; and it has happened under your eyes. I am ready, the Lord told me, to deliver him into thy power, and his land with him; set about the conquest of it; and when Sehon offered battle at Jasa, coming out to meet us with all his forces, the Lord our God gave us the victory over him. We made an end of him and of his sons and of all his people, took all his cities there and then, putting all that dwelt there, men, women, and children, to the sword, and spared nothing except the beasts we drove off for our use, and such plunder as captured cities yield. From Aroer on the bank of Arnon, where it lies in its valley, right up to Galaad, there was no town or city but came into our hands; the Lord our God put all in our possession except the Ammonite country we might not enter, and all that lies in the ravine of Jeboc, and the mountain cities, and those other lands from which he bade us turn away.²

3 Then we marched on by the road that leads to Basan, and Og, that was king of Basan, came out to meet us with all his forces, and offered battle at Edrai. Do not be afraid of him, the Lord said to me; both he and his people and his country are at your mercy, and you must treat him as you treated the Amorrite king Sehon, who reigned at Hesebon. So the Lord our God gave us a fresh victory over Og, king of Basan, and all his people, and we exterminated them, there and then laying waste all his cities, all the sixty cities of Argob in Basan, where Og reigned; not a town escaped us. All sixty were fortified with

¹ It is not certain whether verses 20-23 are to be regarded as part of what God said to Moses, or as a footnote. 'The Cappadocians' is curiously used in the Latin to translate 'the men of Caphtor', that is, of Crete. ² *vv.* 26-37: see Num. 21. 21 sqq.

high walls, gates and bars; and there were other, unwall'd towns past numbering.

6 We made an end of them, as we had made an end of Sehon, that reigned in Hesebon, destroying all the inhabitants of their cities, men, women and children, plundering their cattle and all the plunder their cities yielded.¹ The territory we wrested at this time from the power of the two Amorrhite kings was the land beyond Jordan, from the Arnon ravine up to mount Hermon (which the Sidonians call Sarion, 10 and the Amorrhites Sanir); all the lowland cities, and the whole of Galaad and Basan up to Selcha and Edrai, where Og, king of 11 Basan, reigned. (This Og, king of Basan, was the only one left of the old giant breed; at Rabbath, in the Ammonite country, they still shew his iron bedstead, nine cubits long and four cubits broad, as we lesser men reckon the size of a cubit.)

12 The land thus conquered, from Aroer on the Arnon to the middle of the hill country of Galaad, I gave, with its cities, 13 to Ruben and Gad. There was room, too, for half the tribe of Manasses in the rest of Galaad and in Basan, that is, the country of Argob; (Basan is also called the Land 14 of Giants. It was Jair, a descendant of Manasses, that won possession of Argob, right up to the borders of Gessuri and Machati, and called Basan after his own name, Havoth-Jair, that is, Jair's villages, 15 which is the name they bear still.)² The Machirite clan of Manasses found their 16 home in Galaad as well as in Basan; but the rest of Galaad I gave to Ruben and Gad, reaching half-way up the Arnon ravine, with the border-lands that run up to the river Jeboc, where the Ammonites 17 have their frontier, the wild plains, too, and the eastern bank of Jordan from Cene-reth as far as the desert sea called the Sea 18 of Salt, and the spurs of Phasga. At the same time I charged you of the three tribes, The Lord your God is giving you this territory for your home, but all of you that are fighting men must march in the van with the other tribes of Israel, your brethren, leaving your wives and children and cattle behind you; I know well that you are rich in cattle. These must be left in the 19 cities I have assigned to you, until the Lord

grants to your brethren, as to you, peaceful possession of their lands, the lands he means to give them across the Jordan. Then you can go back, and each shall enjoy the portion I have assigned to him.

Then, too, I said to Josue, Thy own eyes 21 have witnessed what light work the Lord your God made of these two kings; it will fare no better with the kingdoms thou wilt find beyond the river. Do not be afraid of them; the Lord your God means to do battle for you.

Then, too, I pleaded with the Lord, and 22 this was my prayer: Lord God, thou hast given thy servant proof already of thy greatness, of the strength thy arm can wield; what other god in heaven or on earth can rival thy deeds, can match his power with thine? Let me go across, then, 23 and have sight of this fair land beyond the Jordan, of its noble hills, and of Lebanon itself! But the Lord, through your fault, 24 was angry with me, and would not listen to me. Enough, he said, speak to me of this no more. Go up if thou wilt to the top 25 of Phasga, and turn thy eyes west, north, south and east; the sight of it thou mayest have, but thou shalt not cross yonder stream of Jordan. Give charge to Josue, 26 bid him take heart and play the man; he it is that shall march at the head of this people of mine, and distribute to them the land thou must be content with seeing. So we lay encamped, there in the valley, opposite the shrine of Phogor.

4 And now, Israel, pay good heed to the laws and the decrees I am making known to you. It is yours to observe them, if you would have life; if you would find your way into the land promised you by the Lord God of your fathers, and take possession of it. There must be no adding to this message of mine, no retrenching it: the commands I lay upon you are the commands of the Lord your God; keep them well. Your own eyes have witnessed what sentence the Lord passed against Beelphegor, purging out from among you all that worshipped at his shrine, while you, who remain faithful to the Lord, have lived to remember it. Be well assured that the laws and decrees I have given you

¹ *vs.* 1-7: see Num. 21. 33 sqq.

² The words in brackets in verses 9-14 are probably footnotes written at a later time, not part of what Moses said.

come from the Lord himself, and must still be observed when you have taken possession of the land that is to be yours. Keep them in honour and live by them; these are to be the arts, this the wisdom, that you teach the world, as men come to hear of these laws, and say to themselves, Surely they must be wise, surely they must be discerning folk, that belong to so great a nation as this! And indeed no other nation is so great; no other nation has gods that draw near to it, as our God draws near to us whenever we pray to him. What other nation can boast that it has observances and decrees so rightly ordered as we have in this law of ours, this law which I am setting before your eyes to-day?

Keep anxious guard, then, Israel, as thou lovest thy own life. Never let the memory of what thy own eyes have seen fade from thy heart, as long as thou livest; hand it on to thy sons, and thy sons' sons, the memory of that day when thou didst stand in the Lord's presence at mount Horeb. Summon the whole people, the Lord said to me, so that they may hear these words of mine, and learn, and teach their children after them, to fear me all their life long. And you, as you came close to the spurs of the mountain, found it sending up flames high as heaven, all wreathed in darkness and cloud and mist. From the heart of those flames the Lord spoke to you, so that you could hear his voice, but had no vision of his form. He told you of this covenant, that you were to keep; uttered ten warnings, which he wrote down on two stone tablets; bade me, at that same time, hand on to you the observances and decrees you were to follow in the land that should one day be your home.

Be watchful, then, at the peril of your lives. When the Lord spoke to you from the heart of the flame on mount Horeb, there was no outward shape you saw. And will you be deluded into carving some outward image or likeness, of man or woman, of beasts that roam on the earth or birds that fly in the air, of creeping things on land or fish that dwell in the waters, down at the roots of earth? Wilt thou be led astray as thou lookest up at the sky, at sun

and moon and all the host of stars, into making gods of them, worshipping those creatures which the Lord thy God has made, to be the common drudges of every nation under heaven?¹ Why else did the Lord choose you out, deliver you from Egypt's furnace of iron, but to make you a people all his own, as you are this day?

What though I, through your fault, have incurred the Lord's anger, so that he has sworn never to let me cross Jordan, and see the fair land he means to give you? What though I must die here, still on Jordan's further bank? You will cross over it; that fair land will be yours. Never forget, then, the covenant the Lord thy God has made with thee; never fashion thyself those images the Lord has forbidden thee to fashion; the Lord thy God is a fire that burns all before it, loves thee with a jealous love. Sons will spring from you, and beget sons in their turn; what if you should go astray, when you have been long settled in the land, fashion yourselves some idol, and rouse the Lord your God to indignation at the sight of your evil-doing? I call heaven and earth to witness this day; the land which now lies within your grasp, beyond Jordan, will soon be yours no longer. Your enjoyment of it will be cut short, and the Lord will make an end of you, scattering you over the world and leaving but a few of you to live in a land of exile, where you must needs worship the gods which men's hands have made, things of wood and stone that cannot see or hear, cannot taste or smell. There, if thou wilt have recourse to the Lord thy God, if thou wilt but have recourse to him with all thy heart, in the bitterness of thy tribulation, thou wilt find him again. Yes, when all these threats have come home to thee, thou wilt turn back to the Lord thy God at last, and listen to his voice. The Lord thy God is a God of mercy; he will not forsake thee, will not utterly destroy thee, and will not forget the sworn covenant he made with thy fathers.

Search the history of the days that went before thee, far back as the time when God made man on the earth, wide as earth's end from earth's end; is there any other record

¹ 'The common drudges'; this is the sense of the Latin, but the Hebrew text has 'which the Lord thy God has assigned to all the nations under heaven'. Some would interpret this as a paradoxical expression, the sense of which is only made clear if we add the words 'for their worship'.

33 of such happenings? That a people should hear the voice of God speaking out of the heart of the flames, as thou didst, and live to tell of it? That God should intervene, and single out for himself one nation above all the rest; that he should try men's hearts with portent and with marvel, fight against them with constraining force, with open display of his strength, with plagues terrible to see? All this the Lord your God did for you in Egypt, and your own eyes have witnessed it; proof to you that this Lord is God, that no other can compare with him. From heaven he uttered his warnings, and on earth his voice came to thee from the heart of that dread fire he shewed thee; and all because he loved thy fathers, and had chosen out their posterity. He rescued thee from Egypt, and marched on before thee with the great power that is his, ready to dispossess proud nations that were more than a match for thee at thy coming, and make their lands thine; it has happened here under thy eyes. Be sure, then, of this henceforward, and keep it before thy mind, that the Lord is the God who reigns in heaven above and on earth beneath; there is no other. His laws and decrees thou must observe, as I have proclaimed them to thee, if thou and thy sons after thee are to prosper, and have long enjoyment of the land the Lord thy God means to give thee.

41 Then Moses set apart three cities on the east of Jordan, as a place of refuge, if he could but escape to one of them, for the man that had killed his neighbour unwittingly, without having any feud against him in times past. These were Bosor, out in the desert, in the plain that belongs to Ruben, Ramoth in Galaad, for Gad, and Golan in Basan, for Manasses.

44 Here follows the law which Moses proclaimed to the sons of Israel; these are the commandments and decrees and awards he gave to the Israelites that had marched with him out of Egypt. It was beyond Jordan that he gave them, opposite the shrine of Phogor, in the country that once belonged to the Amorrite king Sehon, who reigned in Hesebon. But now Moses had defeated him, and the sons of Israel,

coming back from Egypt, had overrun both his territory and the territory of Og, king of Basan. These were the two Amorrite kings that reigned east of the Jordan, from Aroer, on the banks of Arnon, to the hill of Sion, that is, of Hermon;¹ ruled all over the plain that lies east of Jordan, down to the Desert Sea and the spurs of mount Phasga.

5 Here, then, Moses called the whole of Israel together, and said to them, Listen, Israel, to the observances and the decrees I now proclaim in your hearing; learn them well, and live by them. When we were at Horeb, the Lord our God made a covenant with us, such a covenant as he never made with our fathers, but kept it for us, who stand here, living men, to-day.² Face to face he spoke with us on the mountain, out of the flames; and yet I must be your representative all the while, a mediator between the Lord and you to tell you what his commands were, such dread of those fires kept you back from the hill-side.

And thus he spoke: I am the Lord thy God, it was I who rescued thee from the land of Egypt, where thou didst dwell in slavery. Thou shalt not defy me by making other gods thy own. Thou shalt not carve thyself images, or fashion the likeness of anything in heaven above, or on earth beneath, or in the waters at the roots of earth, to bow down and worship it. I, thy God, the Lord Almighty, am jealous in my love; be my enemy, and thy children, to the third and fourth generation, shall make amends; love me, keep my commandments, and mercy shall be thine a thousand-fold.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God lightly on thy lips; if a man uses that name lightly, he will not go unpunished.

Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the Lord thy God has bidden thee. Six days for drudgery, for doing all the work thou hast to do; when the seventh day comes, it is a sabbath, a day of rest, consecrated to the Lord thy God. That day, all work shall be at an end, for thee and for every son and daughter of thine,

¹ In the Hebrew, this hill of Sion in the Hermon range is distinguished from mount Sion at Jerusalem by a different initial letter. ² The sense would seem to be that God's covenant was made for the benefit of Moses' immediate bearers, not for that of their fathers, who were now dead in the wilderness.

thy servants and serving-women, thy ass, too, and thy ox, and all thy beasts, and the aliens that live within thy city walls. It must bring rest to thy men-servants and thy maid-servants, as to thyself. Remember that thou too wast a slave in Egypt; what constraining force the Lord used, what a display he made of his power, to rescue thee; and now he will have thee keep this day of rest.

Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord God has bidden thee; so shalt thou live long to enjoy the land which the Lord thy God means to give thee.

Thou shalt do no murder.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

Thou shalt not set thy heart upon thy neighbour's house or lands, his servants or handmaids, an ox or ass or anything that is his.

All this the Lord proclaimed to the whole multitude of you, there on the mountain, speaking aloud from the heart of the flames, the cloud, and the darkness; this and no more. And he wrote it down on two tablets of stone which he entrusted to me. And you, what thoughts were yours, when you listened to this voice that came out of the darkness, saw the mountain all aflame? You came to me, elders and chieftains of the tribes, and pleaded with me; The Lord our God has given us sight, now, of the splendour and the greatness that is his, we have been able to listen to his voice coming out of the heart of the flames; to-day has proved to us that a man may see God and live to tell of it. Must we court death, with this raging fire ever ready to devour us? Die we surely must, if we hear the voice of the Lord God again. Frail mortality cannot listen, as we have listened, to the voice of the living God speaking from the heart of the flames, without incurring death at last. Do thou go near, and listen to all the commands the Lord thy God has for thee; thou shalt proclaim it to us, and we will obey.

Hearing this, the Lord said to me, I have listened to the plea this people of mine has made to thee, and all they have said is well said. Ah, had they but hearts so true that they would always fear me, always keep my commandments! Then it should go well with them, and with their sons for all time. Go and bid them return to their tents; and do thou remain here at my side while I make known to thee the laws and observances and decrees I would have taught, the laws of that country which I am giving them for their home.

It is for you, then, to observe the commands which the Lord has given you, never swerving to right or left, but still treading the path which the Lord your God has marked out for you; so that you may enjoy, in long prosperity, the land which shall be yours.

To me, then, the Lord your God entrusted the proclaiming of those laws, and observances, and decrees, so that you would have a rule to live by, yonder in the land that is to be your home. Go in fear of the Lord thy God; here is a lifelong task for thee, and thy sons and thy grandsons after thee, to observe all the laws and decrees I here make known to thee; so thou wilt keep what thou hast won. The Lord thy God, Israel, has promised thee a land that is all milk and honey; but if thou art to prosper and multiply there, thou must needs listen to his commands, and mark them well, and live by them.

Listen then, Israel; there is no Lord but the Lord our God, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the love of thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and thy whole strength. The commands I give thee this day must be written on thy heart, so that thou canst teach them to thy sons, and keep them in mind continually, at home and on thy travels, sleeping and waking; bound close to thy hand for a remembrancer, ever moving up and down before thy eyes; the legend thou dost inscribe on door and gate-post.

A time will come when the Lord has granted thee entrance into the land which he promised to thy fathers, Abraham,

¹ See Ex. 20. 2-17. The commandment which forbids a man to covet his neighbour's wife here precedes all the other regulations about covetousness, and is divided off from them in the Hebrew text as a separate commandment.

Isaac and Jacob; when he has given thee possession of cities great and fair, not of thy building, houses that abound in wealth, not of thy making, wells not of thy digging, vineyards and oliveyards not of thy planting; when thou hast eaten of these and taken thy fill. Then beware; then thou wilt be in danger of forgetting that it was the Lord brought thee out of the land of Egypt, where thou hadst dwelt in slavery. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, to him only shalt thou do service, and swear by no other name than this. All the neighbouring peoples have their own gods; do not fall away into worship of them; the Lord thy God, who dwells so close to thee, is jealous in his divine love, and if he is roused to anger with thee, he will sweep thee off the face of the earth. Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the proof, as thou didst at the Place of Challenge; it is for thee to live by his commandments, by the decrees and observances he has enjoined on thee, to obey the Lord's good pleasure. So shalt thou prosper, and the fair land which the Lord promised to thy fathers shall be thine to have and to hold; he will be true to his word, and dispossess all those enemies of thine at thy onslaught.

And so, in time to come, when one of thy sons asks thee what is the meaning of all the decrees and observances and awards which the Lord your God has given you, this shall be thy answer: We dwelt in Egypt once, as Pharaoh's slaves, and the Lord our God rescued us from Egypt by his constraining power, subduing Pharaoh and his court with portents and marvels, great and grievous, under our eyes. So rescued, he brought us here, and gave us entrance into this fair land which he had promised to our fathers; warning us that we must observe all these laws of his, and go in fear of the Lord our God. Then the prosperity that is ours to-day will be ours all our life long; he will have mercy on us, if he sees us ever faithful to his commandments, ever obedient to his will.

7 Here then, is the land thou art to invade and conquer. To make room for thee in this land, the Lord thy God means to dispossess a multitude of nations at thy onslaught, Hethite, Gergesite, Amorrhite, Chanaanite, Pherezite, Hevite

and Jebusite; seven nations thou art no match for, in number or in strength, but the Lord thy God will give thee victory over them. Thy part is, to exterminate them, never parleying with them, never pitying them. There must be no bonds of marriage between you; as thou wouldst deny thy daughter to any son of theirs, so thou must deny thy son to any daughter of theirs, or she will tempt him away from his allegiance into the service of alien gods, rousing the Lord's anger, to thy speedy destruction.

This, rather, you must do; overthrow their altars, break their idols, cut down their sacred groves, set fire to their carved figures, to shew that yours is a people set apart for its own God, chosen by its own God, out of all the nations on earth, as his own people. If the Lord has held you closely to him and shewed you special favour, it was not that you overshadowed other peoples in greatness; of all nations you are the smallest. No, it was because the Lord loved you, because he was true to the oath which he had sworn to your fathers, that he delivered you by force, reclaimed you from the slave's life you were living in the power of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And thou wilt find it ever the same; the Lord thy God is God almighty, is God ever faithful; if men will love him and keep his commandments, he is true to his word, and shews mercy to them while a thousand generations pass; if they make him their enemy, his speedy retribution overwhelms them, brings them, without more ado, the reward they have deserved.

Remember, then, all the laws and observances and decrees I proclaim to thee this day, and live by them. Listen to those decrees, be true to them, and live by them, and the Lord thy God will be true to his covenant with thee, to the merciful promise which he made to thy fathers. He will prove his love by granting thee increase, blessing womb and soil alike with fertility, corn and wine and oil, herd and flock, in the land which that promise has made thine. Thou shalt be blessed as no other people is blessed; man and woman, sire and dam shall breed, and the Lord will keep every kind of sickness far from thee; the fierce afflictions of Egypt, thou knowest them well, he will send not on thee

6 but on thy enemies. All the nations the Lord means thee to conquer shall fall an easy prey to thee; and for these thou shalt have no glance of pity; beware of worshipping their gods, to thy sure destruction.

7 But it may be the thought will come into thy mind, These nations outnumber me; shall I have the strength to dispossess them? Away with these fears; remember what the Lord thy God did to Pharaoh and to the rest of the Egyptians, the great plagues which thy eyes witnessed, the portents and the marvels, the constraining force the Lord thy God used, the display he made of his power, to rescue thee. It is thus he will deal with all these nations thou darest; nay, the Lord thy God will send horns among them, to destroy the very fugitives that are in hiding from thee. No, do not be afraid of them; the Lord thy God fights in thy company. Little by little, now here, now there, he will dispossess these nations; thou couldst not destroy them all at once without letting the wild beasts breed, to thy hurt. But deliver them over he will at thy coming, beating them down till he makes an end of them, leaving all their kings at thy mercy, till at last the very names of them are forgotten on earth; none shall be able to resist thy victorious onset.

5 All their images thou shalt commit to the flames, with no eye for the gold and silver they are made of; keep nothing for thyself, or it will lead thee into sin; the curse of the Lord thy God rests upon it. Never must thou bring any relic of an idol into thy house; it is a forfeited thing, and thy life too shall be forfeit. Shun it with loathing, turn away from the corruption of its touch; it is a forfeited thing.

8 Life, increase, entrance into the land the Lord promised to thy fathers, secure possession of it, all shall be thine if thou wilt take good heed to follow the commandments I am giving thee this day. Do not forget the long journeying by which, for forty years, the Lord thy God led thee through the desert, testing thee by hard discipline, to know the dispositions of thy heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or not. He disciplined thee with hunger, and then sent down

manna, food unknown to thee and to thy fathers; he would teach thee that man cannot live by bread only, there is life for him in all the words that proceed from the mouth of God. Never did the garments that covered thee wear out with age, never wast thou footsore, these forty years. And dost thou doubt that the Lord was chastening thee, as a man chastens his own son, training thee to keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and follow the path he chooses, and live in fear of him?

And now the Lord thy God means to settle thee in a fair land, a land that has water coursing down in streams, and deep wells that break out from plain and hill; a land of wheat and barley, of vine and fig-tree and pomegranate and olive, a land where oil flows, and honey. Here without fear of want thou mayest win thy livelihood; all shall be thine in abundance; the very stones of that land yield iron, and there is copper to be mined from its hillsides; here thou mayest eat thy fill and bless the name of the Lord thy God for the fair land he has given thee. Thou wilt be in danger, then, of forgetting the Lord thy God, of neglecting the laws and decrees and observances thou hast learned this day. Thou wilt eat thy fill, thou wilt build thyself fair houses to dwell in, thou wilt have herds and flocks, gold and silver and all good things shall be thine; oh beware lest thy heart should swell with pride, and forget the Lord thy God! He it was that rescued thee from thy bondage in Egypt, and led thee through a wide wilderness full of terrors, where there were serpents with fiery breath, and scorpions, and vipers, and no water to drink. He it was that brought out streams from the solid rock, and fed thee, in that desert, with manna, the food unknown to thy fathers. So he disciplined and tested thee, and then at last shewed mercy to thee. Never wert thou to flatter thyself that valour of thy own, strength of thy own, had won thee wealth; rather to bethink thyself of the Lord thy God, and the strength he gives thee. How faithful he is to the promise he made thy fathers, thou canst see this day. Forget the Lord thy God, betake thyself to other gods as their slave and worshipper, and I warn thee, here and now, that it shall be thy utter ruin. If you pay no heed to the voice

of the Lord your God, you shall be swept away no less surely than these nations the Lord means to sweep away at your coming.

9 Listen, Israel; this day thou art to cross the Jordan, and beyond it there are great nations to be dispossessed, more than a match for thee, with huge cities walled as high as heaven; a strong folk and tall, the breed of Enac, that thou hast seen or heard tell of; none can withstand them. 2 And this day will prove that it is the Lord thy God that passes on before thee, like fire that swallows up and consumes all before it, beating them down and making an end of them, scattering them before thee all in a moment, in fulfilment of the promise he gave thee. But do not flatter thyself, when the Lord thy God destroys them thus at thy onslaught, do not flatter thyself it was for any merit of thine he gave thee possession of this land thou hast invaded, when in truth it was the wickedness of those other nations that brought them to ruin. No, if thou dost invade and conquer their lands, it is for no merit of thine, no right dispositions of thine; they are to perish at thy onslaught in punishment of their own ill-deeds, and because the Lord must needs fulfil the promise which he made on oath to thy fathers, Abraham, 6 Isaac and Jacob. Be well assured thou hadst no claim to the possession of this fair land the Lord thy God is bestowing on thee, a stiff-necked nation as thou art. 7 What, has memory failed thee? Remember what provocation thou didst give the Lord thy God, out in the desert. From the very day of thy leaving Egypt, all the way to the place where thou standest, there has been nothing but rebellion against the 8 Lord. At Horeb itself thou didst challenge him, and in his anger he would have 9 destroyed thee. I went up to the mountain where I was to receive the two stone tablets that recorded the covenant the Lord was making with you and on the mountain, without food and drink, I spent forty days 10 and forty nights. There I received two stone tablets, inscribed by his own divine fingers with all those commandments he gave you on the mountain, from the heart of the flames, when the people met there 11 in full assembly. Forty days and as many

nights had passed when he gave me the two stone tablets that recorded the covenant, and said, Bestir thyself, go back down the mountain with all speed; they have been quick to leave the paths thou didst shew them, this people thou didst bring out of Egypt with thee, and have made themselves a molten image. This, too, the Lord said to me, Here is a race that will not bear the yoke; let me have my way, and efface their very memory on earth, and thou thyself shalt be at the head of a greater people, a stronger people than this.

So I went down the mountain, that was all aflame, with one stone tablet in either hand; and when I saw what sin you had committed against the Lord your God, forsaking all at once the path he had shewn you, and making yourselves a molten calf, I flung down the two tablets from my hands and broke them, there in your presence. And now for another forty days and forty nights I lay at the Lord's feet, without food or drink, in amends for the sin you had committed against the Lord, your defiance of his displeasure; so great was my fear of that vengeful anger of his, roused now and ready to destroy you. And once again the Lord listened to me. Aaron, too, he would have destroyed in his grievous anger, and for him, too, I must offer entreaty. As for this abomination of yours, this calf you had made, I took it up and gave it to the flames; then I cut it in pieces and ground it all to dust, which I threw into the stream that flows down the mountain side.¹

At the Place of Burning, too, and at the Place of Challenge, and at the Graves of Greed, you roused the Lord's anger; and when he sent you out to battle from Cades-Barne, bidding you go and take possession of the land he had given you for your home, you defied the will of the Lord your God, and refused to trust him or listen to his commands; always you have been rebels since the day when I first knew you. And I spent forty days and forty nights lying at the Lord's feet, praying him not to carry out his threat of destroying you. Lord God, I said in my prayer, do not make an end of this people of thine, this dear possession thou didst claim for thyself so signally, when thou didst rescue them

¹ *vt.* 9-21: see Ex. 32.

from Egypt in the Egyptians' despite.
 7 Remember thy servants Abraham, Isaac
 8 and Jacob; turn away thy eyes from the sin
 they have committed, this stubborn, re-
 bellious people of thine. Wilt thou let it be
 said in the land from which we escaped,
 The Lord was their enemy; he promised
 them a home, but had no power to win it
 for them, and only led them out so as to
 9 make an end of them in the desert? They
 are thy people, thy dear possession,
 rescued by thee so signally, with such
 display of thy power!

10 Then it was the Lord said to me,
 Carve two tablets of stone, like
 those others, and come to meet me at the
 2 top of Horeb.¹ Make an ark of wood, and
 put these tablets in it, when I have in-
 scribed them with all the contents of those
 3 other tablets thou didst break.² So I made
 an ark of acacia wood, and carved two
 fresh tablets like the old; these I bore in
 4 my hands as I went up the mountain, and
 on these the Lord wrote down, as he had
 written down before, the ten command-
 ments he gave you out of the heart of the
 flames, when the people were assembled
 5 there. These, when I had come back from
 the mountain top, I laid up in the ark
 which I had made, as the Lord had bidden
 6 me, and there they remain. (It was when
 the Israelites had moved their camp from
 Beeroth in the Jacan country to Mosera
 that Aaron died, and his son Eleazar be-
 came high priest instead; then they went
 on to Gadgad and to the well-watered
 valley of Jetebaatha.)³ And now the Lord
 set apart the tribe of Levi, to carry the ark
 that bears record of his covenant, and to
 minister in his presence, and to impart
 blessing in his name, as they still do; that
 is why the Levites have no lands assigned
 to them like their brethren, the Lord thy
 God has promised them that he himself
 will be their portion. Forty days and
 nights, then, as before, I remained there
 on the mountain top, and once more the
 Lord listened to me, and spared you from
 destruction. March on, he said, put thyself

at the head of my people; they shall enter
 and take possession of the land which was
 my promised gift to their fathers.

What return, then, Israel, does the Lord
 12 thy God ask of thee? This, that thou
 shouldst fear the Lord thy God, and follow
 the path he chooses for thee, and love him,
 and serve the Lord thy God with all thy
 heart and soul, and keep those divine com-
 13 mandments and observances I enjoin on
 thee this day, as the conditions of thy hap-
 piness. This Lord God, that is master of
 14 the heavens, and the heaven above the
 heavens, of earth, too, and of all that they
 contain, would yet knit thy fathers closely
 15 to him in his great love, and make choice
 of you, their sons, above all other nations
 in the world; the proof of it is before you.
 It is for you, then, to rid your hearts of
 16 defilement,⁴ a stiff-necked people no
 longer; the Lord your God is God of all
 17 gods, Lord of all lords, how great a God,
 how strong, how terrible! He will not
 flatter the great, or take bribes from the
 rich; he gives redress to the orphan and
 18 the widow; he is a friend of the wanderer,
 and gives him food and clothing. You too
 19 must befriend the wanderer; were not you
 strangers yourselves in the land of Egypt?

Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and
 20 serve none but him, hold close to him, and
 make thy vows in his name; he is all thy
 21 renown, this God of thine whose marvels
 and whose judgements thy own eyes have
 witnessed. When thy fathers made their
 22 way into Egypt, they were but seventy
 souls, and now see what increase the Lord
 has given thee, so that thou canst vie with
 the stars in heaven for number.

11 Yours, then, to love the Lord your
 God, and be true at all times to every
 decree and observance, every award
 and command of his; yours to remember
 2 those past things which do not lie within
 the memory of your children. They were
 never warned by the sight of those mar-
 vellous things the Lord your God did, that
 constraining force of his, that display of his
 power. What portents were done in Egypt,
 3

¹ Literally, 'the mountain', but it is evident from the context that the narrative is now resumed where it was left off in 9. 21.

² It is not clear whether we are to understand that Moses put the stone tablets in a chest specially made to contain them until the tabernacle should be built, or whether (as verse 5 seems to imply) the Ark itself is here meant. If so, the historical order of events is given somewhat confusedly. Cf. Ex. 34. 1; 37. 1.

³ *v.* 6-7 seem to be a note, taken from some record of the wanderings, which is perhaps put in here to illustrate 9. 20 above.

⁴ Literally, 'circumcise your hearts'.

to humble king Pharaoh and all his subjects,
 4 the army, too, of the Egyptians with their horses and chariots, all drowned in the Red Sea when they went in pursuit of you, and never heard of again to this day! In the
 5 desert, on your way to this place, you saw strange things, when the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up Dathan and Abiron, the sons of Eliab, that was son of Ruben, with their households and their tents, and all that belonged to them, alone
 7 among the sons of Israel. If your eyes have witnessed all these great acts the Lord
 8 did, it was so that you might learn to keep all those laws of his which I now proclaim to you. So you will take possession of the
 9 land that awaits you yonder, a land all milk and honey, a gift which the Lord promised on oath to your fathers and their sons after them; so will you live long to enjoy it.
 10 You must know that the land which lies before you is not like Egypt, where you lived formerly, a garden watered by sluices
 11 wherever the seed is sown; it is a country of hill and dale, that waits for rain from
 12 heaven to water it, so that the Lord your God himself must be at pains to tend it, watching over it from year's end to year's
 13 end. And if you obey the commands I am giving you now, by loving the Lord and
 14 serving him, heart and soul, then he will send your land rain in autumn, rain in spring, to give you a harvest of wheat, and
 15 wine, and oil; your beasts will have grass to graze on in the countryside, and you
 16 food to your hearts' content. But do not let your hearts be led away into forsaking the Lord your God, and enslaving your-
 17 selves to alien worship; or the Lord, in his anger, will shut the doors of heaven; no rain will fall, earth will yield no crops, and soon the fair land the Lord means to make yours will know you no longer.
 18 Keep these words of mine in memory, treasure them up in your hearts, let them be bound close to your hands as a remembrancer, let them hang before your eyes.
 19 Teach them to your sons, thoughts to be pondered well, at home and abroad, sleeping and waking, the legend you inscribe on
 20 door and gate-post. So this land which the Lord promised to your fathers, to be their own as long as there is a sky above us, shall be held by you and your sons in

long possession. Remember the commandments I am giving you, live by them, love the Lord your God, be true to him, follow all the paths he has chosen for you, and the Lord will scatter all these nations at your coming, and you shall dispossess them, though you be no match for them in number or in strength. All shall be yours, wherever your feet shall tread; the desert, and Lebanon, and the western sea, and the great river Euphrates shall be your frontiers. None shall be able to withstand you; such fear of you, such dread of your coming will the Lord, in his faithfulness, spread abroad wherever you go.

Such is the choice I set before you this day, blessing or curse. A blessing, if you will obey the commands I now give you from the Lord your God; a curse, if you disobey those commands, and forsake the path I am shewing to you, and follow the worship of other gods, untried till now. When the Lord has given you entrance into the land which is to be your home, you will proclaim the blessing from mount Garizim, and the curse from mount Hebal.* (These lie beyond Jordan, on its western side, in the territory of those Chanaanites who hold the plain near Galgal, where a long valley stretches up into the hills.) Cross Jordan you will, to conquer the land which the Lord your God means you to have and to hold; and look well to it that all the observances and decrees I proclaim before you to-day are carried out faithfully.

12 Here follow the laws and decrees you must observe in the land which the Lord God of your fathers means to give you, if you are to have lifelong enjoyment of it. The nations you will dispossess have gods of their own, and build shrines for these on some high mountain, some hill, under the first green tree they can find. All these shrines you must overthrow, demolish their altars, break their monuments, burn their sacred pillars, hew down their idols, and abolish the very memory of them from the places where they stood. It is not such worship as this that you will offer to the Lord your God; the Lord your God will choose out one tribe among you, and one place in that

* Literally, 'you will set the blessing on mount Garizim, and the curse on mount Hebal'.

tribe, to be the sanctuary of his name, the shrine of his presence; to that place you will go, when you would bring burnt-sacrifice and offering, tithe and first-fruits of your labour, vowed gifts and unwowed, first-born of cattle or of sheep. There, in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your households shall eat, glad at heart, what your own hands have reaped with his blessing to aid them.

No, it will not be for every man, there as here, to worship when and where he pleases. So far, you have not reached your resting-place, that secure way of living which the Lord your God will then grant you. But when you have crossed Jordan, and are living in the land he has destined for your home, looking round you with fearless eyes, no enemy to molest you, then the Lord your God will choose a place to be the sanctuary of his name. There you will present before him all that I now enjoin, burnt-sacrifice and offering, tithe and first-fruit and choice things vowed to his honour. There you shall regale yourselves in the Lord's presence, with sons and daughters, men-servants and maid-servants, and the Levites, too, that dwell in your cities, with no part and lot of their own such as you have.

No, do not present thy burnt-sacrifice in the first place that offers; bring thy victims to one place, in one tribe, of the Lord's own choosing, and there carry out all that I enjoin upon thee. Wouldst thou eat meat? Slay, then, and eat, there in thy own city, whatever the bounty of the Lord thy God has given thee. Marred by blemish or by wound, whole, unblemished, and fit for sacrifice, it is all one; eat boldly as thou wouldst eat the flesh of red deer or roe,¹ so long as thou dost not eat it with the blood; that must be poured out like water on the ground. But where tithes of corn or wine or oil are in question, or the first-born of herd and flock, gifts to the Lord vowed or unwowed, or the first-fruits of thy crops, these thou mayest not eat in thy

own city. Take them to the place the Lord thy God has chosen and eat them there in his presence; make good cheer and regale thyself, there before the Lord thy God, with all the good things thy labour has earned; let son and daughter, man-servant and maid-servant, share it, and the Levite, too, that has his dwelling in thy city; never neglect the Levite, all thy days on earth.

Wide lands the Lord thy God means to give thee, as he has promised; and often thou wilt be fain to indulge appetite, and eat flesh-meat, when the place the Lord has chosen for his name's sanctuary is far away. Slay, then, and eat what beasts thou wilt, out of thy herd or thy flock, there in thy own city as I bid thee. Have no scruple; eat such meat as if it were the flesh of red deer or roe, let the undefiled and the defiled alike be thy guests; only do not eat it with the blood, it is the blood that animates living things, and this life of theirs must not be eaten with the flesh, but poured out like water on the ground. So shall it be well with thee and with thy sons after thee; thou hast done all the Lord requires of thee. But all that thou hast consecrated or vowed to the Lord thou must take with thee to the place the Lord has chosen, and make due offering, of flesh and blood both, on the altar of the Lord thy God; all the blood of thy victims thou must pour away on the altar, and be content with the flesh for thy food.² All these commands of mine thou shalt remember and obey; well for thee and for thy sons in perpetuity, if thou dost ever what is the Lord thy God's good pleasure.

When the Lord thy God has routed the nations thou art to dispossess, and they give way before thee, and thou art dwelling in the land that once was theirs, do not imitate the folk thou hast conquered; do not hanker after their observances, and say, Why may I not worship as these worshipped before me? Not so shalt thou approach the Lord thy God; all that the Lord hates most, these did, very abomin-

¹ In the Hebrew text, there is here no reference to the condition of the animals; it is laid down, as in verse 22 below, that those who partook of the non-sacrificial meal need not be ceremonially 'clean'.

² In the desert, where flesh food was scarce and the Israelites lived at close quarters, it seems that every slaughtering of cattle was accompanied by sacrifice. The law here laid down makes it clear that in Chanaan more liberty would be allowed: an Israelite might slaughter for food without sacrificing, without selecting beasts that came up to sacrificial standards, without demanding of his company the ceremonial purity which sacrifice demanded. An ox or a sheep might be killed as freely as wild game. But, even in such private meals, the meat must be eaten without blood; and all beasts or produce that had been consecrated to God must be taken to the national place of worship.

ably, sacrificing their own sons and daughters by fire to these gods of theirs. In worshipping the Lord, thou shalt do only what I bid thee, neither more nor less.

13 Prophet or dreamer may arise, of thy own race, and foretell some signal event which afterwards comes about; even so he must not persuade thee to follow the worship of alien gods, untried till now. Do not listen to such words from prophet or dreamer; it means that the Lord thy God is putting thee to the proof, to see whether he has the love of thy whole heart and thy whole soul or not. Follow and fear the Lord your God, obey no commands, listen to no voice but his; serve him and be true to him. The punishment of such a prophet or dreamer shall be death; he has counselled rebellion against the Lord God, who delivered your race from its slavery in Egypt; he would tempt thee away from the path the Lord thy God has marked out for thee; rid thy company of such plague as this.

Suffer none to whisper that counsel in thy ears, brother nor son nor daughter, nor the wife thou dost cherish in thy bosom, nor the friend thou lovest as thy own self. Whoever bids thee follow the worship of alien gods, unknown to thee and to thy fathers, gods of any other nation in the wide world, near or far, do not consent, do not listen. Have no glance of pity for them, throw no merciful cloak over their guilt; put them to death without parley.

The hand of every Israelite must be lifted against them, but thine first of all. One who would so tempt thee away from the worship of the Lord thy God, that rescued thee from slavery in Egypt, must die by stoning; so that all Israel may be apprised of it, and take warning, and none dare to do the like thenceforward.

Or it may be, when the Lord thy God has given all of you cities to dwell in, word will reach thee of such happenings, not in thy own city but in some other. Somewhere, unworthy sons of Israel are seducing their fellow-citizens, bidding them follow the worship of alien gods untried. Careful and anxious be thy search, to find

out the truth of the matter; and if it proves that the report was true, and the foul deed has been done, then, without delay, put all the inhabitants of that city to the sword, and destroy it, with all that is in it, even the cattle in its byres. Make a pile in the streets of all its household store, and burn that with the city itself, as forfeit to the Lord thy God. Let it be a ruin for all time, never to be rebuilt. It is all forfeit, be sure thou dost not treasure any relic of it. So the anger of the Lord thy God will relent, and he will have mercy on thee, and make a great nation of thee, as he swore to thy fathers; let him find thee attentive to his voice, observant of all these commands of his, ready to do his will.

14 Learn to carry yourselves as the children of the Lord your God. Do not disfigure yourselves or shave your heads bare when a man dies, you, a people set apart for the Lord, chosen out of all nations on earth to be his very own. Do not eat any food which brings defilement. You may eat such beasts as the ox, the sheep, and the goat, red deer and roe, gazelle and wild goat, addax and oryx and zemer;¹ any creature which has cloven hoofs and chews the cud. You must not eat those which have the hoofs single, even though they chew the cud; the camel and the hare and the rock-rabbit, and all other ruminants that do not divide the hoof, you must count unclean. And the sow, which has cloven hoofs but does not chew the cud, is also unclean; you must not eat the flesh of such beasts, or touch their carcasses.

Among the creatures that live in water, you may eat those that have fins and scales; whatever lacks fins and scales is unclean, not for your eating. There are birds you may eat without fear of defilement; others which you must avoid as unclean, eagle and griffon and osprey, kite and falcon and vulture and all else of their kind, anything that belongs to the raven tribe, ostrich, night-owl, sea-mew, and hawks of every kind, stork, swan, ibis, cormorant, coot, night-jar and pelican, with curlews of every kind; the hoopoe, besides, and the bat. Creeping things that have wings are

¹ Zemer; this is the word used in the Hebrew text, probably denoting the wild sheep. The Latin interprets it 'camelopard'; but it seems more likely that only animals found in Palestine are here mentioned. Many of the beasts and birds referred to here, as in Lev. 11, cannot be identified with certainty.

20 unclean, and must not be eaten. Any meat
that is not unclean may be used for food,
21 except what has fallen dead; make a present
of this to some neighbour, not of
Israel's race, or sell it to an alien, it is not
for your eating, a people set apart for the
Lord your God.

Seething a kid in its dam's milk is a rite
forbidden thee.

22 Every year, thou wilt set apart a tenth
23 of all the crops thy land yields, and come
to the place the Lord thy God has chosen
for the sanctuary of his name, to feast on
it there in his presence; a tenth part of thy
corn and wine and oil, and the first-fruits
of thy herds and flocks; so thou wilt learn
24 to fear the Lord thy God continually. But
perhaps the journey will be too long, the
place which he has chosen too far distant,
and the load too great, so bountiful has the
25 Lord thy God been to thee. Why then, sell
all this tithe of thine, and bring the pro-
ceeds of the sale with thee to the place he
26 has chosen. With this money thou mayst
buy all thou wilt, oxen and sheep, wine
and mead, to thy heart's content; and on
these thou shalt feast in the presence of the
Lord, thou and all thy household making
27 good cheer together, and the Levite, too,
that dwells in thy city; do not neglect the
Levite, that has no part or lot such as thou
28 hast. Every third year, thou wilt set apart
a fresh tithe of all the revenue thou then
29 hast, and lay it by at home, so that the
Levite, who has no part or lot such as thou
hast, and the wanderer and the orphan and
the widow that are thy fellow-citizens, may
eat and have their fill. So, to whatever
employment thou dost turn thy hand, the
blessing of the Lord thy God shall be with
thee.

15 As each seventh year comes round,
there shall be a cancelling of debts,
2 and thus it shall be ordered; now that the
Lord has granted discharge, no one shall
demand repayment of money lent to his
3 fellow-citizen, his fellow-Israelite. From
an alien that has come to dwell in the land
thou mayst exact it, but thy own fellow-
countryman must be granted discharge.
4 No one among you must be destitute, beg-

ging his bread, if the Lord is to grant thee
his blessing in the land he means to give
thee for thy own.¹ Bless thee he will, as he
5 has promised, if only thou wilt listen to his
voice and observe all the commandments
I enjoin upon thee this day; so that many
6 nations shall be thy debtors, and none thy
creditor, many thy servants, and none thy
master.

It may be that one of thy brethren, thy
7 fellow-citizen in the land the Lord thy God
means to give thee, will fall on evil days.
Do not steel thy heart and shut thy purse
against him: be generous to his poverty,
8 and lend him what thou seest he stands in
need of. And here a base thought may
9 come into thy mind, which thou must put
away from thee; that the seventh year, the
year of discharge, is too close at hand. Do
not, at such a time, turn thy back on this
brother of thine, and refuse to lend him
what he would fain borrow; his plea will
come before the Lord, and thou wilt be
held guilty. Lend freely, and use no craft
10 in relieving his necessities; so at all times,
to whatever employment thou dost turn
thy hand, the blessing of the Lord thy God
will be with thee. For indeed there will be
11 no lack of poor men in the land that is to
be thy home;² I must needs warn thee,
then, to be open-handed towards thy
brother, thy fellow-countryman, when he
is poor and in want.

When any of thy own race, Hebrew men
12 and women, are sold to thee as slaves and
have worked for thee six years, in the
seventh year thou shalt set them at liberty.
And the freed slave must not be allowed to
13 go away empty-handed; make provision
for him out of flock and threshing-floor
and wine-press the Lord has blessed for
thee. Do not forget that thou too wast
14 a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord
thy God ransomed thee; there is good
cause for the command I now lay upon
thee. But it may be he will refuse to leave
16 thee, for the love he bears to thee and to
thy household, and for the happiness he
finds in thy service. Take an awl, then, and
17 bore through his ear with it into the door
of thy house, in token that he is thy slave
in perpetuity; and for a maid-servant do the

¹ The Hebrew text here seems to have a slightly different turn of sense: 'Although indeed there will be no one destitute among you . . . if thou wilt but listen . . .', etc. ² This verse is in apparent contradiction to verse 4; there the ideal, here the actual state of things is foreshadowed.

18 like. But if thou dost let them go free, do not turn thy back on them; for six years they have been earning a workman's hire. So the Lord thy God shall bless all thy enterprises.

19 Thou shalt set apart for the Lord thy God all the first-born of thy cattle and sheep; the calf must never feel the yoke, and the lamb never be shorn; year by year thou wilt come to the place the Lord has chosen, with all thy household, and feast upon such offerings in the presence of the Lord thy God. But if any beast has a blemish, or is lame or blind or misshapen or maimed in any way, it cannot be offered to the Lord thy God; eat it, then, within thy own city gates, and bid whom thou wilt, defiled or undefiled, to share it with thee, as if it were the flesh of red deer or roe, being careful only not to eat the blood with it; that must be poured out like water on the ground.

16 Mark well that first spring month when the crops are yet green; it is time to celebrate the pasch in the Lord's honour. In that month, at dead of night, the Lord thy God rescued thee from Egypt. In the place which the Lord thy God has chosen for the sanctuary of his name, flock and herd alike must provide their paschal victims. At this feast, no bread must be eaten that has leaven in it; for seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, the food of perilous times, when thou didst escape from Egypt in fear; never as long as thou livest shall the manner of thy departure from Egypt be forgotten. No leaven, then, must be found in all thy domain during those seven days; and of the victim slain on that first evening nothing must remain till the morrow. This paschal victim is not to be immolated in a city here, a city there, among all the cities the Lord thy God means to give thee; no, the Lord thy God will choose out one place to be the sanctuary of his name, and there thou wilt immolate the paschal victim at set of sun, the time of thy escape from Egypt. In this place of the Lord's choice it must be cooked and eaten; then, when morning comes, thou wilt make thy way back to thy own dwelling-place. For six days thou wilt eat unleavened bread; on the seventh thou wilt keep holiday in the Lord's honour, and rest from work.

From the day when the sickle is first put to thy crops, count seven whole weeks, and then keep the Feast of Weeks, honouring the Lord thy God with an offering freely made out of the fruits thy labour has earned, in that measure in which the Lord has prospered thee. Make good cheer in the presence of the Lord thy God, with son and daughter, serving-man and serving-maid, with the Levite who dwells in thy city, wanderer and orphan and widow that are thy neighbours, in the place the Lord thy God has chosen for his name's sanctuary. Never forget that thou too wast a slave once in Egypt; the more reason why thou shouldst obey this order I give thee.

The Feast of Tent-dwelling thou shalt observe for seven days, at the time when corn and wine are all gathered in, keeping holiday again and making good cheer, with son and daughter, serving-man and serving-maid, Levite and wanderer, orphan and widow that are thy neighbours. For seven days, in the place he has chosen, thou shalt keep holiday in honour of the Lord thy God; so greatly will he prosper thy harvest and all the enterprises thou dost set thy hand to, that thou wilt have good reason to rejoice. Three times a year, then, all thy men folk shall present themselves before the Lord thy God in the place of his choice; at the three feasts of the Pasch, of Weeks, and of Tent-dwelling. No one shall present himself before the Lord empty-handed; each will have a gift to bring, in that measure in which the Lord his God has prospered him.

In all the cities the Lord thy God gives thee, thou shalt appoint judges and magistrates among thy fellow-tribesmen. And these are to settle their neighbours' quarrels by just award, and listen to both parties, not moved by influence or bribery; such power a bribe has to rob even the wise of clear vision, to alter the sentence even of the just. Right is right, and ever thou must keep it in view, if thou wouldst live long in the enjoyment of the land which the Lord thy God means to give thee.

There must be no sacred wood around the Lord's altar, no tree of any kind, nor must thou make thyself an image and set it up there; all such worship is hateful to the Lord thy God.

17 Never shalt thou offer in sacrifice sheep or ox that has any blemish or defect; such impiety is hateful to the Lord thy God.

2 It may be that, in one of the cities the Lord thy God gives thee, men and women of thy race will be found so defiant, so false to his covenant, that they will forsake him, and enslave themselves to the worship of other gods, the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, in contempt of my commandment. If this news is brought to thee, make careful enquiry into what thou hast heard; and if it proves that the report was true, and the foul deed was done among thy fellow-Israelites, away with such recreant men or women to the city gate; there let them be killed by stoning.

6 But there must be two witnesses or more if the death penalty is inflicted; one witness will not suffice when a man's life is in question. First the witnesses, then the rest of the people must put a hand to the deed, and so thou wilt rid thyself of the plague that infects thy company.

3 It may be that some matter of law will be too hard for thy unravelling; was it killing or murder? Is this claim just or that? Was the infection leprous or not? There is no agreement between the judges at thy own city gate. Up, then, make thy way to the place the Lord thy God has chosen, and have recourse to the priests of Levi's race, to the judge who then holds office; thou hast but to ask them, and they will make the right decision known to thee. Thou must needs give effect to the sentence they pronounce, these officers of the Lord's chosen sanctuary; when they have told thee what the divine law prescribes, thou shalt abide by their award, without swerving to right or left. If anyone is contumacious, rejecting the authority of the priest who then ministers to the Lord thy God, and the judge's sentence, his life must pay for it. Rid Israel of this plague, so that all the people may take warning when they hear it, and there may be no contumacy thenceforward.

When you reach the land the Lord your God is giving you, and make it your own,

¹ Literally, 'lead his people any more into Egypt, being elated with the number of his horsemen' (in the Hebrew text, 'so as to multiply his horsemen'). What is here discouraged is not, probably, an attempt to invade Egypt, but an attempt to secure an alliance with Egypt which would enable Israel to put cavalry into the field. Cf. III Kg. 4. 26, 10, 28; Is. 31. 1.

² Cf. III Kg. 11. 1-8.

³ Cf. II Par. 34.

and settle in it, you will resolve to have a king of your own, like the nations about you. The king you appoint must be the man the Lord your God chooses, one of your own race; you must not let an alien, who is not of your blood, bear rule over you. Once appointed, he must not raise troop after troop of horsemen, and turn his people's eyes back towards Egypt, flushed with the pride of horsemanship; the Lord strictly enjoins you never to tread that way again. He is not to wed a multitude of wives, that will seduce his heart from its loyalty; he is not to amass great treasures of silver and gold.² And now he sits enthroned in his kingdom; let his first act be to borrow this schedule of the law from the priests of Levi's race, and have a second copy made of it.³ And that scroll he will keep by him, studying it all his life long, so that he may learn to serve the Lord his God, and follow all the rules and observances which the law enjoins. Never let his heart, puffed up with pride, disdain his brethren; never let him swerve from these commandments to right or left, if he and his sons are to enjoy long dominion over the race of Israel.

18 The priests that are of Levi's race, having no part or lot of their own such as the rest of Israel have, will share the burnt-sacrifices and offerings that are brought to the Lord, that is all the claim they have upon the revenues of their fellow-Israelites; has not the Lord told them that he is to be all their portion? When the whole people or some one Israelite offers sacrifice, be the victim ox or sheep, the priests can claim the gift of shoulder and maw; they can claim the first-fruits, too, of corn, and wine, and oil, and part of the wool that is brought in at sheep-shearing. Out of all thy tribes, the Lord has chosen Levi and his children to stand up and minister in the Lord's name for ever. If a Levite gives up his home in any city of Israel, for love of the place the Lord has chosen, and comes to dwell there instead, he shall have a right to minister in the name of the Lord his

8 God among the rest of his Levite brethren who then wait on the Lord's presence, and to receive the same portion of food as the others, the sale of his patrimony notwithstanding.¹

9 When thou reachest the land which the Lord thy God means to give thee, take good care not to imitate the abominable ways of the men who dwell there. None must be found among you to consecrate son or daughter by making them pass through the fire, to consult soothsayers, or keep watch for dream-revelations and omens; 11 there must be no wizard, or enchanter, none who consults familiar spirits and divinations, and would receive warnings 12 from the dead. All such things are hateful to the Lord; it is to punish them for such evil doings that he means to destroy these nations at thy onslaught. Thine to stand before the Lord thy God perfect and un-reproved; let them listen to soothsayer and diviner, these other nations thou wilt dispossess; not such is the schooling thou 15 hast received from the Lord thy God. No, the Lord thy God will raise up for thee a prophet like myself, of thy own race, a brother of thy own; it is to him thou must 16 listen.² Was it not thy own plea, that day when all were publicly assembled at mount Horeb, that thou mightest hear the voice of the Lord thy God no longer, have sight of that raging fire no longer, lest it should be thy death? And the Lord told me, All that they have said is well said. 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like thyself, one of their own race, entrusting my own message to his lips, so that he may instruct them at my bidding. Whoever refuses obedience to these commands which he gives in my name, shall feel my vengeance. If anyone is so presumptuous as to prophesy in my name when I have given him no message to deliver, or prophesy in the name of alien gods, his life must pay for it. 21 Perhaps thy unspoken thought would ask, how thou shouldst recognize those messages which do not come from the 22 Lord? I will give thee a test; If the prophet foretells something in the Lord's name, and it does not come about, this was no

message from the Lord; it was the prophet's vain conceit that imagined it; let no word of his strike terror into thee.

19 When the Lord thy God has dis- possessed those other nations, and thou hast overspread their country, and all its cities and houses are thine, set apart three cities in the midst of the territory he has granted thee; cities that may be reached by well paved roads, and so placed as to divide up the whole of thy land into three districts. One of these must be near at hand, when blood has been shed and the slayer would take sanctuary. Such a man must be granted his life, on these condi- tions; the blow must have been struck unwittingly, and there must be no proof of a feud between the two men in time past. A man, for instance, may have gone out with a friend of his, in all innocence, to cut wood; and as he is cutting the axe may fly out of his hand, or the iron come loose from the handle, striking the other and killing him. The author of such mis- chance will fly for his life to one of the cities aforesaid. It may be the dead man's next of kin will set out in pursuit, to take revenge; and if the distance is great, he may overtake and kill this innocent man, who cannot be shewn to have borne ill-will to the dead kinsman. That is why I bid thee set apart three cities each at an equal distance from the next. In years to come, the Lord will enlarge thy domain, as he swore to thy fathers he would, and give thee the whole of this land where he has promised thee a home; provided always that thou dost keep his commandments, and do all that I bid thee this day, loving the Lord thy God, and following continually the path he has chosen for thee. Then it will be time to double the number of the cities aforesaid, adding three others, to prevent the blood of innocent men being shed, here in this land the Lord is giving thee for thy own, and the guilt of that blood defiling thee.

But it may be that someone who has a grudge against his neighbour will plot against his life, starting up out of an ambush and inflicting on him a mortal hurt,

¹ It is not clear what the Levite's patrimony consisted in; presumably he had some rights in his original city which he sold away, and it is here laid down that he may keep the price of this sale, although sharing with the other Levites the offerings made by the worshipper. ² See Jn. 1. 45; Ac. 3. 22.

and then flee to one of these cities for
 112 refuge. Then let the elders of that city send
 and dislodge him from his place of retreat,
 and so hand him over to the dead man's
 113 next of kin, to die. Have no mercy on him;
 it shall go ill with thee, if thou dost not rid
 Israel of that defilement which the blood
 1 of an innocent man has brought on it.

114 If thy neighbour's domain is bounded
 by some landmark, set up by men of old
 time, where thy home is in the land the
 Lord has granted thee, do not take it up
 and remove it elsewhere.

115 Whatever be the offence or crime a man
 is charged with, it shall not suffice for one
 witness to appear against him; every ques-
 tion must be settled by the voice of two
 116 witnesses or more. It may be that a false
 witness will appear, accusing a man of this
 or that misdeed. When such a claim is
 117 made, the two parties will be brought
 forward in the Lord's presence, before the
 118 priests and judges then in office; and if
 these, after careful examination, find that
 the witness gave false evidence against his
 119 fellow-Israelite, they must inflict on him
 the same punishment he would have
 brought on this brother of his. Thou must
 120 rid thyself of the plague, so that others
 may be warned by hearing of it, and none
 dare to do the like again. No pity must be
 121 shewn him; life must answer for the life
 he would have sworn away, eye for eye,
 tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for
 foot.

20 When thou dost go out to war
 against thy enemies, never be
 daunted by the sight of horsemen and
 chariots, and a host greater than thy own
 arrayed against thee; the Lord thy God,
 who rescued thee from Egypt, fights on
 122 thy side. When the hour of battle draws
 near, the high priest will take his stand
 there in front of the ranks, and say to the
 123 people, Listen, Israel; as you join battle
 to-day with your enemies, there must be
 no faint hearts among you, no flinching, no
 124 yielding, no trembling here. The Lord
 your God is here in the midst of you, and
 will fight on your side against your ad-
 versaries, to deliver you in the hour of

peril. And then, in the hearing of the
 5 whole army, each chieftain will make this
 proclamation to the men of his own com-
 pany: Is there anyone here who has built
 a new house, and not yet handselled it?
 Let him go back home; shall he be slain in
 battle, and leave another to handseil it?¹
 Is there anyone here who has planted a
 6 vineyard, and not shared the first vintage
 of it with his neighbours?² Let him go
 back home; shall he be slain in battle, and
 another take his place? Is there anyone
 7 here that is betrothed to a maid, and has
 not taken her to himself? Let him go back
 home; shall he be slain in battle, and leave
 her to wed another? And when so much
 8 is said, let them add this further pro-
 clamations: Is there anyone here whose
 spirits are daunted by terror? Let him go
 back home, or he will daunt the spirits of
 his brethren, and make them cowards too.
 And now, having said their say, let the
 9 chieftains keep silent, and let each of them
 set about marshalling his company for
 battle.

When thou dost lay siege to a city, first
 10 of all thou shalt offer terms of peace. If
 11 these are accepted, and the gates opened
 to thee, the lives of all the citizens shall be
 spared, and they shall become thy subjects,
 paying thee tribute. But if they refuse to
 12 listen, and offer battle, go forward to the
 assault; and when the Lord makes thee
 13 master of it, put only the men folk to the
 sword, not the women and children, not
 14 the cattle or anything else that the city
 contains. Divide the spoil among the host,
 and enjoy as thou wilt all the plunder the
 Lord thy God has allowed thee to take
 from thy enemies. All this, when thou art
 15 concerned with some city far away from
 thee, not one of those in which thou art to
 find a dwelling. But in the cities that are
 16 to be thy own, no living thing must be
 left. All of them must be put to the sword,
 17 Hethite and Amorrhite and Chanaanite
 and Pherezite and Hevite and Jebusite, as
 the Lord thy God has bidden thee; or they
 18 will teach your race to perform such de-
 testable worship as they perform in honour
 of their own gods, and be false to the
 Lord.

¹ It is not clear whether this implies a religious dedication; we do not read elsewhere of houses being so treated. Cf. I Mac. 3. 56. ² There is no reference in the Hebrew text to this exercise of public hospitality.

19 When a city must be taken by force of arms, and thou hast been a long time besieging it, do not lay waste the whole countryside with thy axe, and destroy the trees that yield food. Trees are not men, to increase the number of the city's defenders. Spare the fruit-trees, and be content to cut down such wild trees as are fit for other use; and so build engines to reduce the city that defies thee.¹

21 When, in this land of thine, a dead man's body is found and there is no knowing who slew him, elders and judges must betake themselves to the spot where he lies, and find by measurement which of the neighbouring cities is nearest at hand. It is for the elders of the nearest city to do what must be done. They will choose out from the herd a heifer that has never borne yoke or ploughed furrow, and in some wild and rugged glen, that was never ploughed or sown, this heifer must have its neck broken. Priests must be there, of Levi's race; these are the men whom the Lord thy God has chosen to minister to him, and give their blessing in his name, and also to decide between right and wrong, clean and unclean. And the elders of this neighbouring city, close to the dead man,² will wash their hands over the heifer that lies slain in the glen, protesting, Not ours the hand that shed this blood; our eyes never witnessed the deed; be merciful, Lord, to Israel, the people thou hast claimed for thyself; do not charge Israel, thy own people, with guilt because it is stained with an innocent man's blood. So shall they be quit of all blame for the murder. Do my bidding, and the guilt of blood wrongfully shed shall never rest upon thee.

22 When the Lord gives thee victory over thy enemies in battle, and thou bringest back prisoners, dost thou see among them a woman so fair that she wins thy heart, and thou wouldst marry her? Take her, then, into thy house; and there she must shave her head and pare her nails close, and lay aside the garb of a captive, that she wore till now. Let her have a month,

dwelling in thy house, to bewail the loss of her father and mother; then thou mayest take her to thy bed and make her thy wife. But if afterwards, she does not answer thy mood, she must go free; thou hast no power to sell her or exercise lordship over her, when once thou hast robbed her of maidenhood.

If a man twice married loves one wife and is weary of the other, and has children by both, but his first-born by the wife he spurns, how shall he divide up his possessions between them? He shall have no power to make the son of the loved wife his heir, in preference to that other. Recognize the first-born he must, though of the mother he be weary; a double share of all his goods belongs to the son that was engendered first; the birthright is his.

Is there a son so rebellious and unmanageable that he defies his parents' bidding, and will not brook restraint? Such a son they must bring by force to the city gate, where the elders are assembled, and make complaint to them, This son of ours is rebellious and unmanageable; he pays no heed to our remonstrances, but must ever be carousing, ever at his wantonness and his cups. Thereupon the citizens shall stone him to death, so that you may be rid of this plague, and every Israelite that hears of it may be afraid to do the like.

When a man is guilty of a capital crime, and his sentence is to hang on a gallows, his body must not be left to hang there on the gibbet, it must be buried the same day. God's curse lies on the man who hangs on a gibbet, and the land which the Lord thy God gives thee for thy own must not suffer pollution.

22 If thou seest ox or sheep that belongs to thy fellow-Israelite going astray, do not hurry past; take it back to its owner, if he is a neighbour of thine, and known to thee. If not, shelter it thyself till he enquires, and restore it. And so with an ass or with a garment or any other lost thing that belongs to thy fellow-Israelite; do not leave them where thou

¹ In verses 19-20 the meaning of the Hebrew text is not quite clear, and it has perhaps suffered from a slight corruption; the sense given to it in the Latin seems the most probable. ² 'Close to'; literally, in the Latin, 'coming close to', but it does not appear from the context that the dead body was present when the heifer was slaughtered.

findest them, as if it did not concern thee.

If his ox or his ass falls down by the way-side, do not hurry past; help him to lift it up again.

A woman must not wear man's clothes, or a man go clad like a woman; all such doings are hateful to God.

If thou findest in thy path, in a tree or on the ground, a mother bird sitting on her nestlings or her eggs, do not carry her off with her young; let her go, and be content with her brood; so shalt thou prosper and live long.

When thou buildest a new house, make a parapet about its roof; if anyone should lose his footing and fall to the ground, thy house is polluted with blood, and the guilt is thine.

Do not sow thy vineyard with a second kind of seed, or both the crop thou hast sown and the fruit of thy vineyard are forfeit. Do not plough with an ox and an ass together; or wear garments woven of linen and wool together.¹

Thou shalt wear tasselled strings at the four corners of the garment thou wearest.

It may be that a husband will grow weary of the wife he has taken, and look about him for pretexts to put her away. Such a man will perhaps fasten an ill name on her, by complaining that when he bedded her she was found to be no maid.

Thereupon her father and mother must bring her before the elders at the city gate, and the proofs of her maidenhood with her; and the father will say, I gave this man my daughter in marriage, and now he is weary of her; that is why he would fasten an ill name upon her by telling me he found my daughter no maid. And here are the proofs of my daughter's maidenhood. With that, he will spread the cloth out in sight of the elders; and these will lay hold of the man and beat him, fining him, moreover, a hundred sicles of silver, for fastening an ill name on a maid of Israel. He must pay them to the woman's father, and must keep her as his wife; as long as he lives he may not put her away. If the charge he made was true, and the woman was found indeed to be no maid, then the citizens must cast her out of her father's door and stone her to death; this was a foul deed done in a woman of Israel, to play

the wanton in her own father's house; rid thy company of such a plague as that.

If a man beds with another's wife, both must die, adulterer and adulteress, and so Israel is rid of a plague.

A man has fallen in with a maid betrothed to some other, and mated with her. Was it done in the city? Then both must be taken to the city gate and stoned to death; she, because she made no outcry, with all the city close at hand, he, because he robbed his neighbour's wife of her maidenhood. Or did the man fall in with this betrothed maid in the countryside, and force her to grant his will? Then he alone must die; no harm shall befall the woman. She has not deserved death; she was defenceless as a man suddenly attacked and killed by a brigand; cry as she might, far out in the countryside, no one could come to her aid.

If a man falls in with a maid still unbetrothed, and forces her to do his will, and the matter is brought to judgement, the man who mated with her must pay her fifty sicles of silver, and keep her as his wife, now that he has robbed her of her maidenhood; as long as he lives he may not put her away.

A man must not take his father's wife, and come between his own father's sheets.

23 The emasculate, the mutilated, are not to be admitted into the Lord's assembly. Nor is there any place in the Lord's assembly for a bastard, born out of wedlock, or for any of his descent, though ten generations have passed. Nor, though ten generations have passed, may one of Ammonite or Moabite descent be admitted to the Lord's assembly; this disability they have incurred for all time, by refusing to provide food and drink, when Israel came on their way from Egypt. Nay, they hired Balaam the son of Beor to come from Mesopotamia of the Syrians and curse thee; only the Lord would not listen to Balaam, and transformed that curse of his into a blessing, so well he loved thee. No peace with these, no friendly dealings with these at any time, while thy life lasts; but for the Edomites thou shalt have no repugnance, they are thy brethren, nor for the Egyptians, in whose land thou didst

¹ See note on Lev. 19. 19.

8 formerly dwell; their descendants in the third generation may be admitted to the Lord's assembly.

9 When thou goest out to war against thy
10 enemies, keep clear of all offence. Should any of you incur defilement at night in his
11 sleep, he must leave the camp, and not return to it all day; at sunset, when he has
12 washed, he may enter the camp again. If thou wouldst ease thyself, thou must have
13 a place to go to away from the camp, and carry a scoop at thy girdle, so that when thou art eased thou canst dig about thee
14 and heap loose earth over thy excrement. In this camp of thine the Lord thy God goes to and fro, waiting to deliver thee and give thee victory over thy enemies; all must be holiness there, no defilement be seen in it, lest his presence should be withdrawn.

15 If a man escapes from bondage and takes refuge with thee, thou shalt not give
16 him back into the hands of his lord; let him settle where he pleases, and live at peace in some city of thine; leave him unmolested.¹

17 No Israelite, man or woman, shall be
18 devoted to a life of shame; wouldst thou bring into the temple of the Lord thy God the wages of a harlot, or the price of nameless sin? Either of these is hateful to the Lord thy God.

19 Do not charge interest to thy fellow-Israelite when thou lendest him money or
20 grain or anything else of thine. Keep that for the alien; to thy brother thou shalt lend without interest all that he needs; so the Lord God will bless every enterprise of thine in the land which is to be thy home.

21 If thou makest a vow to the Lord thy God, do not defer payment of it. The Lord thy God will hold thee to thy promise;
22 thou delayest at thy peril. Hadst thou refrained from making the vow, it would have been no sin in thee, but once the word
23 has been spoken, it must be made good; thy own lips pronounced it, and thy will was under no compulsion, the promise must be kept.

24 When thou art passing through thy

neighbour's vineyard, eat the grapes to thy heart's content, but take none away with thee. And when thou art passing through
2 a neighbour's corn-field, thou mayst break off ears and rub them in thy hands; but sickle put none to thy neighbour's corn.

24 Does a man take a wife, and then, after making her his own, find some taint of defilement in her, so that he loves her no longer? He must draw up a writ of separation and hand it to her before he sends her away from his house. Does she, after parting from him, marry a second husband, who also wears of her and sends her away with a writ, or perhaps is lost to her by death? Her first husband may not take her back again, now that she is contaminated, a thing detestable in the Lord's eyes.² Do not bring guilt on the land which the Lord gives thee for thy home.

A man newly married will not serve in the wars, or have any other public duty enjoined upon him; he is free to abide at home and cheer his wife for a year's space.

Thou shalt not accept mill or mill-stone as a debtor's pledge; that is to let a man pledge his whole livelihood.

If anyone is found leading his fellow-Israelite into a trap,³ and selling him as a slave for profit, he must die; rid thyself of such a plague as that.

Be on thy guard against the visitation of leprosy. Do as the priests of Levi's race instruct thee at my bidding, and be exact in the performance of it; never forget how the Lord thy God punished Mary, on thy way here out of Egypt.

When thou wouldst enforce a claim for debt against thy neighbour, do not go into his house to wrest his pledge from him; stand without, and let him bring thee what he can. A poor man's pledge must not spend the night with thee; give it back to him before set of sun. When he calls down a blessing on thee, glad to have his own cloak to sleep in, it will win thee favour from the Lord thy God. And if thou hast a hired servant that lives from hand to mouth, be he thy fellow-Israelite, or some

¹ From the reference to 'some city of thine', it is clear that foreigners are in question; and the law may be meant to protect, not so much slaves who have run away from their owners, as refugees who have escaped from their oppressors in some neighbouring country.

² 'A thing detestable'; the Latin translates here as if the wife herself was meant, but the sense of the Hebrew text is more probably that the act mentioned is detestable to the Lord. In any case, it is clear that divorce was permitted to the Hebrews. ³ In the Hebrew text, 'stealing'; in the Latin, 'seducing'.

alien that shares thy land and city, do not withhold his wages; pay him his day's wages before set of sun. It is all he has, in his poverty, to support life with; cries he to the Lord, thou art a sinner manifest.

A father must not die for his son's guilt, or a son for his father's; no guilt but his own shall bring a man to death.

Do not refuse alien or orphan his rights at law; do not make the widow give thee her cloak as a pledge; remember that thou wast once a slave in Egypt, and the Lord thy God rescued thee; with good right I enjoin so much upon thee.

If thou art harvesting the corn in one of thy fields, and a sheaf lies there forgotten, do not go back for it; leave it for the alien, the orphan and the widow; so the Lord thy God will prosper all thy undertakings. Do not go over thy olive-trees again, the fruit once picked, leave the rest to alien, orphan and widow; leave to alien, orphan and widow the clusters that hang on thy vines when the vintage is over, still ungathered. Do not forget that thou wast once a slave in Egypt; not without reason I enjoin this upon thee.

25 Not always will the judges be content, in settling a dispute, with giving the rightful claimant his due, and dismissing the other; it may be this other deserves a beating. If so, they will have him laid on the ground and beaten in their presence, and his punishment will be greater or less according to his guilt; provided always that the number of lashes must not exceed forty. Wouldst thou see thy brother go away all mangled?

Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn on thy threshing-floor.

When two brethren share the same house, and one dies childless, his widow must not take a husband elsewhere; the survivor must wed her, and beget children in his dead brother's name. And the first son she bears him he must account as the dead man's heir, so that his line shall not be lost to Israel. It may be he will refuse to take his brother's wife, although the law binds her to him. Then the woman will make her way to the city gate, and protest to the elders there, This brother-in-law of mine refuses to wed me and beget children

in his brother's name. Thereupon they will summon and question him, and if he persists in refusing to take her, the woman will go up to him, there in the presence of the elders, and take off one of his shoes, and spit in his face. This, she will say, is for the man who would not continue his brother's line, and Barefoot Breed is the name by which he will be known in Israel.

If two men fall out and come to blows, it may be that the wife of the weaker man will come up to his rescue, and lay hands upon the other, taking shameful hold of him. That hand of hers must be struck off, and no mercy be shewn to her.

Thou shalt not carry two different weights in thy wallet, one heavy and one light, or keep two bushel-measures in thy house, one great and one small. A just weight and a true, a full bushel-measure and a true thou shalt use always, if thou wouldst have long enjoyment of the land the Lord thy God means to give thee. All such knavery is hateful to the Lord thy God; he is the enemy of wrong-doing.

Do not forget how Amalec treated thee on thy way here from Egypt. Reckless of the divine vengeance, he crossed thy path and cut off the stragglers from thy ranks, as they halted for weariness, faint with hunger and toil. When the Lord thy God allows thee to rest secure, master of all the nations that dwell in the land he has promised thee, thou shalt blot out Amalec from human remembrance; keep this in mind constantly.

26 When thou hast reached the land which the Lord is to make thy home and taken possession of it, and settled there, thou wilt set apart first-fruits out of all thy crops. These thou wilt put in a basket, and then carry them to the place the Lord thy God has chosen as the sanctuary of his name. And thus shalt thou address thyself to the priest who bears office at the time: I make acknowledgement this day before the Lord thy God, that the land he promised to us in our fathers' days is now my home. Thereupon the priest will take the basket from thy hand, and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God. In that divine presence, thou wilt continue thy protestation:

¹ Cf. Ruth 4. 7.

My fathers were wanderers, hunted to and fro in Syria, when they made their way into Egypt and began to dwell there, only a handful of them; but they grew to be a great people, hardy and numerous. Whereupon the Egyptians treated us ill and persecuted us, and the burden we must bear was insupportable; so we cried out to the Lord God of our fathers, and he listened to our plea, and took pity on our affliction, the toil and oppression we suffered; rescued us from Egypt by force, with his arm high uplifted to strike great terror, and perform great wonders and portents, and brought us here, where he has given us a land that is all milk and honey. That is why I am offering first-fruits, now, out of the land which the Lord has given me. So leave them theft, in the presence of the Lord thy God, and when thou hast paid worship to this Lord and God of thine, go home to feast on all the good things he has given thee, with all thy household, with Levite and wanderer that are thy neighbours.

And when thou hast finished taking tithes of all thy harvest, every third year, when tithes are due; when thou hast given them to Levite and stranger, to orphan and widow, in thy own city, so that they can feast and have their fill, what prayer wilt thou make before the Lord thy God? I have stripped my house, thou wilt tell him, of all that I had vowed away, given it to Levite or to wanderer, to orphan or to widow, as thou badest me; I have not neglected thy will, or forgotten thy commands. None of it has been eaten when I was in mourning, or set apart when I was defiled, or devoted to the dead; no, I have obeyed the Lord my God, and done all thy bidding.¹ Look down, then, from that sanctuary of thine, that dwelling-place high in heaven, and bless thy people Israel; bless the land thou hast given us, that land, all milk and honey, which thou didst promise to our fathers before us.

Here and now the Lord thy God gives thee these commands, these decrees, bidding thee observe them and fulfil them, heart and soul. Here and now thou art choosing the Lord to be thy God, whose

guidance thou wilt follow, whose prescriptions, laws and commandments thou wilt observe, whose rule thou wilt obey. Here and now the Lord is choosing thee to be his own people, as he promised thee, living by his precepts; his will is to exalt thee high above all other nations he has made, for his own praise and glory and renown, a people consecrated to the Lord thy God, claiming his promise.

27 And now Moses, with the elders of Israel, gave the people this charge: Hold fast all the commandments I have been enjoining on you this day. When you cross the Jordan and reach the land which the Lord means to give you, raise up great stones, and smooth them over with plaster; on these, now that Jordan is passed, and the land I promised, all milk and honey, is yours, the whole tenour of this law must be written down. These plastered slabs, of which I am now speaking, must be set up on mount Hebal, on the further bank of Jordan; and there an altar must be built to the Lord your God, out of stones which no iron has ever touched, stones still rough and unpolished. On this, offer the Lord burnt-sacrifice, and slay victims for a welcome-offering; eat and make good cheer in the Lord's presence; and then write on the slabs, clearly and distinctly, the whole tenour of this law.

Then Moses, with the priests of Levi's race, said to the whole of Israel: Give heed, Israel, and listen; this day the Lord thy God has made thee his people. Obey his word, and live by all the commandments and decrees I am giving thee.

And at the same time Moses gave the people this message: Jordan once crossed, six tribes must stand on mount Garizim for the blessing of the people, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin, and six tribes must stand opposite, on mount Ebal, for the cursing, Ruben, Gad, Aser, Zabulon, Dan and Nephthali. And now the Levites shall cry this proclamation aloud to the whole of Israel. Cursed be the man who makes graven or molten image, a thing detestable to the

¹ The sense is evidently that the worshipper has not profaned the sanctity of his tithe-offering by letting it come in contact with any defilement; the exact nature of the transgressions he has avoided is less clear.

Lord, however skilled its workmanship, however secret its hiding-place. And here all the people shall answer, Amen. Cursed be the man who refuses to honour father or mother, Amen. Cursed be the man who moves his neighbour's land-mark, Amen. Cursed be the man who guides the blind amiss, Amen. Cursed be the man who denies justice to alien, orphan and widow, Amen. Cursed be the man who mates with his father's wife, and comes between his own father's sheets, Amen. Cursed be the man who mates with any beast, Amen. Cursed be the man who mates with his sister, born of the same father or the same mother, Amen. Cursed be the man who mates with his wife's mother, Amen. Cursed be the man who wounds his neighbour secretly, Amen. Cursed be the man who accepts a bribe, to swear away an innocent life, Amen. Cursed be the man who does not hold fast to every word of this law, and live by it; and all will say, Amen.

28 And now, if thou wilt listen to the Lord thy God, carrying out faithfully all those commandments of his which I enjoin upon thee, the Lord thy God will make thee greater than any other nation on earth; and all these blessings which follow shall come to meet thee, if only thou wilt obey his will. Blessed shalt thou be in town and country, blessed with fertility of womb and of soil, with increase of thy stock in byre and sheep-fold, with rich store in barn and granary, blessed in thy journey and blessed in thy coming home. When thy enemies raise war against thee, the Lord will make them cover before thy onslaught; the host that came out against thee in one company shall flee away in seven. Upon all thy store-houses, upon every enterprise of thine, the Lord will send down his blessing; a land of blessing shall be thine.

If only thou wilt be true to the commandments of the Lord thy God, and follow the paths he has chosen, he will fulfil his promise, and make thee a people set apart for himself; so that all the nations of the world will go in fear of thee, the people that is named by such a name as his. The Lord will make thee rich in all good things; fruitful thy own race, fruitful thy

cattle, fruitful this land, his promised gift to thy fathers. The Lord will open to thee the rich stores of heaven, and grant thy land rain when the season comes for it; he will prosper all thy enterprises, making thee the creditor of many nations, the debtor of none; for thee to lead, for others to follow; for thee the heights, for them the lower place. All this, if thou wilt obey the commandments of the Lord that I enjoin on thee this day, holding fast to them and living by them, not swerving to right or left, not following the worship of other gods than thine.

But if thou dost refuse to listen to him, and carry out faithfully all the commandments and observances I now enjoin on thee, all these curses that follow shall come to meet thee instead. Cursed shalt thou be in town and country, cursed with empty barn and bare granary, with barrenness of womb and of soil, with leanness of thy stock in byre and sheep-fold, cursed in thy journey and cursed in thy coming home. Want and distress the Lord will send thee, and failure in all thy enterprises, to crush thee down and make a quick end of thee, still faithless, still following thy own devices. The Lord will infect thee with plague, till the land thou hast won knows thee no more; the Lord will smite thee with wasting, and fever, and ague, with burning heat, with blight and mildew, hunting thee to the death. Heaven above thee shall be bronze, and earth iron under thy feet; dust will be all the rain he gives thee, and ashes shall fall from the skies to overwhelm thee. The Lord will make thee cower before the onslaught of thy enemies; the host that went out against them in one company shall flee away in seven, till thy race is scattered over all the kingdoms of the world, and the carcase that is left of thee will be left for every bird in heaven and every beast on earth to prey upon, with none to drive them away.

The Lord will smite thee with the Egyptian scab, and swelling in the groin, and the itch; there shall be no curing thee. The Lord will drive thee distracted, benighted and crazed in thy wits, till thou wilt grope thy way at noon like a blind man in the dark, and lose thyself; never a day when thou art not wronged and oppressed, and there shall be none to deliver thee.

30 Wed a wife, and another shall bed her, build a house, and thou shalt not dwell in it, plant a vineyard, and the vintage shall not be thine. Thou wilt see thy own ox slain, and never a morsel for thee, thy ass carried off, and never restored, thy sheep given to thy enemies, and no help for it.

32 Nay, thy sons and daughters will be enslaved to alien masters, and thy own eyes shall see it, and ache continually at the sight; no power left thee to resist it. Thy crops, too, the fruit of thy own toil, will be carried off by a people till now unknown to thee; always thou wilt be suffering some wrong, always oppressed, till thou art numb with terror at the sights thy own eyes have witnessed.

35 The Lord will smite knee and calf of thine with the foul scab, till it covers thee from head to foot, past all remedy.¹ Exile awaits thee, awaits the king thou hast chosen to rule over thee; the Lord will carry thee away into a land thou and thy fathers never heard of, where thou must needs worship alien gods, of wood and stone; and to all the nations among whom the Lord bids thee dwell, thy name shall be a proverb and a by-word. Much sown and little reaped, where the locust has eaten; vines planted and dressed, and no vintage gathered, no wine drunk, because the weevil has ravaged them; olives everywhere, and no oil to anoint thee, because they drooped and withered away; sons and daughters born, and no comfort to thee, all carried away into exile. No tree of thine, no crop of thine, but the mildew shall spoil it. The aliens that dwell in thy land will outpass and over-shadow thee, humbled now and no match for them; they shall be the creditors now, and thou the debtor; it is for them to lead, for thee to follow.

45 And other curses shall befall thee, hunting thee down until they overtake thee, for thy utter ruin; and all because thou wouldst not listen to the Lord thy God, and hold fast to the commandments and observances he enjoined upon thee. It shall be a warning and a prodigy, the fate that shall come upon thee, and upon thy race in perpetuity. Because thou wouldst

not obey the Lord thy God in happiness and content, when thou hadst enough and to spare, thou must learn, now, to obey those enemies the Lord will send out to conquer thee; obey them in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and every kind of want; a yoke of iron shall be fastened on thy neck, and shall crush thee down. From far away, from the very ends of the earth, the Lord will send a nation to sweep down on thee like a bird of prey; a nation whose very speech is unknown to thee; hard-hearted, with no respect for age, no pity for helpless children. All that thy herds, all that thy lands yield, they will take for food, careless of thy ruin; neither wheat nor wine nor soil nor herd nor flock shall be left to thee; all will be laid waste. In thy cities, too, they will press hard on thee, battering down everywhere those high walls, those strong walls; all over this land, which the Lord thy God is now giving thee, there shall be siege at thy gates. Thou wilt be fain to eat thy own offspring, the flesh of thy own sons and daughters, the Lord's gift to thee; so bitter the stress and the want these enemies of thine shall bring upon thee. The man that lived softly hitherto, in all comfort, will grudge food to his own brother, to the wife that lay in his bosom, and that food the flesh of his own sons; nothing else is left him, so hard the siege is pressed against all thy cities. The woman, so tender, so dainty, that would not put her foot to the ground, would not walk a single step, too delicately nurtured for that, will grudge the flesh of her own sons and daughters to the husband that lay in her bosom. She will eat what comes out from her own body, eat her own son that is newly born, there in secret; what else has she, hard pressed by the siege that is brought against these cities of thine?

If thou dost not carry out faithfully every word of the law this book contains, going in fear of the great name, the terrible name, the Lord thy God, then the Lord will send worse plagues still on thee and on thy posterity, heavy plagues and of long continuance, grievous and lasting visitations. The fierce afflictions of Egypt (thou

¹ The Latin in verses 21-35, but not in the rest of the chapter, uses the language of imprecation rather than of prophecy: 'May the Lord infect thee', etc., but it has seemed better to give a uniform value to the expressions used, throughout the chapter.

61 hast dreaded them ere now) shall be thine instead. And all the sicknesses and plagues of which this book makes no mention the Lord will bring thee, till he has crushed thee down; only a few will be left out of a number that was countless once as the stars in heaven, because thou wouldst not listen to the Lord thy God.

62 Hitherto the Lord had taken delight in blessing thy race and increasing it; now he will take delight in destroying and overwhelming it, dispossessing it of the land he has given thee for thy home. This way and that, among all the nations from earth's end to earth's end, the Lord will scatter it; and in exile thou wilt worship such alien gods as thou and thy fathers never heard of, gods of wood and stone. And even there thou wilt find no rest, no sure ground under thy feet. Nought will the Lord leave thee but cowed spirits, and eyes that fail, and a heart eaten up with sorrow. Thou wilt see thy life hanging on a thread; day and night thou wilt go in fear, not counting life itself thy own. In the morning thou wilt say? Will it never be evening? and in the evening, Will it never be morning? such will be the terrors that daunt thee, so cruel the sights that meet thy eyes. The Lord will carry thee back over the sea to Egypt, the Lord who once told thee thou shouldst never see that road again. There the men and women of your race shall be slaves, on sale to their enemies, and find no master to buy them.

29 These are the terms of that covenant which the Lord would have Moses make with the sons of Israel, there in the country of Moab, in addition to the covenant he made with them on mount Horeb. Moses gathered all Israel round him, and said to them, Your own eyes have witnessed, in the land of Egypt, the Lord's dealings with Pharao and his court and all his kingdom; the challenge of all those wonders and portents, plain to your view. But to this day the Lord has not enlightened your hearts; yours are blind eyes, yours are deaf ears still. Has he not been your guide all through those forty years in the desert? And all that time the garments

that covered you did not wear out, the shoes on your feet did not perish with age; you had no bread with you, no wine or strong drink, but you ate and drank your fill; and can you doubt that you have the Lord your God to protect you? And here, at our journey's end, it is still the same; Sehon King of Hesebon and Og king of Basan came out to give us battle, but we conquered them, and divided up their territory between Ruben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasses. Hold fast, then, to the terms of this covenant, and fulfil them if you would order your lives as wise men do.

You stand here, all of you, in the presence of the Lord your God, for a single purpose, leaders of tribes with their tribes around them, elders, counsellors, the whole assembly of Israel; your children, your wives, and the aliens that share your camp; servants, too, that hew wood and draw water at your bidding. It is to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a sworn covenant he would make with you this day; he would make you his people, and be himself your God; such is the promise he has made to you, such was the oath he took to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And it is not only with you that I ratify this covenant, this oath; it is with others, too, that are not here to make it.

Ours is a race, as you know, that has dwelt in Egypt; since then, we have made our way through the midst of many peoples, and as we passed you saw detestable and shameful sights, saw how they worshipped idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold. Pray God there may be no man or woman here, no household or tribe, that is false at heart to the Lord our God, ready to forsake him and serve those other, alien gods. From such a root as that, gall and wormwood must needs spring. Does such a man, listening to the terms of this oath, flatter himself with the thought that all will be well with him, and that he can go on in his perverse ways, till the damp ground imparts its moisture to the dry? Then the Lord will not spare him. The divine anger will burn high in indignation

¹ Literally, 'that you may know that I, the Lord, am your God'. ² This seems to be a proverb, which reads in the Hebrew text, 'to carry off the well-watered with the thirsty'. The idolater foresees that the whole people will suffer for his guilt, having probably in the mean time imitated his bad example.

against such a man, and all the curses of which this book makes mention will fall upon him, till the Lord has effaced his memory among living men, singled him out among the whole people of Israel for a miserable end, for every curse that gives this law and covenant its sanction.

21 A warning that land will be, which the Lord so visits with plague and affliction; a warning to the next generation, and their children after them, and to strangers who come from far off to see it.¹ Here is a land he has burnt up with brimstone and salty fumes, till it is sown no more and no green thing grows there, overwhelmed as he overwhelmed Sodom and Gomorrha, Adama and Seboim, when his anger raged fierce against them. And all will ask, Why has the Lord treated this land so? What means this anger, this terrible vengeance of his? And the answer will come, It was because they forsook the covenant which the Lord had made with their fathers when he rescued them out of the land of Egypt; because they enslaved themselves to the worship of alien gods unknown to them, gods that were no gods of theirs. That is why the Lord's vengeance fell heavy on this land, and he brought on them all the curses which the book of his law contained, so hot his anger burned, so fierce his indignation; dispossessing them of their own land and banishing them into a country of strangers, for all to see.

29 The Lord our God keeps his own secrets; what he will reveal, he has revealed to us, and to our children in perpetuity; ours to live by this law and by all the terms of it.

30 And perhaps when thou hast had experience of all this, and hast met first the blessing and then the curse I have here pronounced before thee, thou wilt feel compunction of heart, there in thy exile among the countries where the Lord has scattered thee, and wilt turn back to him again. Once more thou and thy children will be true, heart and soul, to those commandments of his which I have enjoined upon thee.² And the Lord, in pity, will restore thee from banishment, will gather in those sons of thine from the lands

in which he has dispersed them. Yes, though they should be sundered far apart as pole from pole, the Lord thy God will bring them back again, summoning them to return and take possession of the land where their fathers dwelt; granting them his blessing, till they are more in number than ever their fathers were. He will rid thy heart, and the hearts of thy children, of all defilement, and thou wilt find life in loving the Lord thy God, heart and soul: the curse he laid upon thee he will lay upon thy enemies instead, upon the men who would hate and persecute thee. So thou shalt return to thy obedience, listening to the Lord thy God and carrying out all the commandments I am giving thee this day; and the Lord thy God will prosper thee in all thy enterprises, children born to thee: thy cattle and thy lands fruitful, all things thine in abundance. Once more the Lord will take delight in blessing his people, as he did in their fathers' days; but only if thou wilt obey him, and hold fast to the commandments and observances this law contains, returning heart and soul to him, thy Lord and thy God.

It is not above thy reach, it is not beyond thy compass, this duty which I am now enjoining upon thee. It is not a secret laid up in heaven, that thou must needs find someone to scale heaven and bring it down to thee before thou canst hear what it is, and obey it. It is not an art, practised far overseas, that thou must wait for some one to go voyaging and bring it back to thee before thou canst learn to live by it. No: this message of mine is close to thy side: it rises to thy lips, it is printed on thy memory; thou hast only to fulfil it.

See, I have set before thee this day a choice between life and death, between good fortune and ill. Thou art to love the Lord thy God and follow the path he has chosen for thee, to hold fast by all his commandments and observances and decrees, if thou wouldst live and thrive and prosper through him in the land that is to be thy home. If thy heart becomes estranged from him, so that thou dost no longer obey him, but art tempted away into worshipping other gods and doing them service, then I warn thee here and

¹ Verses 22-29 as well as chapter 30, seem to follow directly upon the thought of chapter 28, and verses 1-21 should perhaps be regarded as a kind of parenthesis.

now that it will be thy ruin; the land thou art winning for thyself on the other side of Jordan will be thine only for a little.

- 19 I call heaven and earth to witness this day that I have set such a choice before thee, life or death, a blessing or a curse. Wilt thou not choose life, long life for thyself and for those that come after thee? 20 Wilt thou not learn to love the Lord thy God, and obey him, and keep close to his side? Thou hast no life, no hope of long continuance, but in him; shall not the land which he promised as a gift to thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, be thine to dwell in?

- 31** All this Moses obediently proclaimed to the people of Israel; 2 and then he said to them, Here am I, a man of a hundred and twenty years of age, no longer fit to lead you on your expeditions; and besides, the Lord has told me that I am not destined to cross yonder stream of 3 Jordan. It is the Lord your God that will lead you across, it is he that will dispossess all these nations to make room for you; and he has chosen Josue here to march at your 4 head. These nations are to fare no better than the Amorrhite kings, Sehon and Og; 5 the Lord means to overthrow them, and you, when he gives you the victory over them, must remember what I told you, and 6 make an end of them. Play the man, and keep your courage high; there must be no cowardice, no flinching before them. The Lord your God is himself your leader now; he will not play you false and forsake 7 you. Then Moses summoned Josue, and said to him in the presence of all Israel, Play the man, and keep thy courage high; it is thy task to lead this nation into the land which the Lord promised to their fathers, and divide it up between them. 8 The Lord goes with thee to lead this army of thine; he will not play thee false and forsake thee; there must be no cowardice, no flinching here. 9 And now Moses committed this law to writing, and gave it to the priests of Levi's race, bearers of the ark that attested the Lord's covenant, and to the elders of Israel. Every seven years, he told them, when the year of discharge comes round, 10 and with it the feast of Tent-dwelling, at the time when all Israel meets in the place

the Lord has chosen, to present themselves before him, their Lord and God, the terms of this law must be read out in the presence and in the hearing of the whole people. All alike will be assembled there, not only 12 men but women and children, and the aliens too that dwell among you; all alike must listen, and learn to fear the Lord your God, and carry out faithfully all the terms of this law. The very children, still all un- 13 taught, must listen now, and learn to fear the Lord their God, as long as this land you are winning for yourselves beyond Jordan is their home.

- After this the Lord said to Moses, Thou 14 hast not long to live; summon Josue, and take him with thee to meet me at the tabernacle; I have a charge to give him. So Moses and Josue took their stand together beneath the tabernacle that attested the covenant, and there the Lord appeared in 15 a pillar of cloud that rose above them at the tabernacle door. And the Lord said to 16 Moses, Thou wilt be laid to rest among thy fathers, and before long this people of mine, settled now in the land they have invaded, will begin to play the wanton, and to worship alien gods; will forsake me, and cancel their covenant with me. Then my 17 anger will burn fiercely indeed; I will forsake them in my turn, and deny them my favour, and they will fall a prey to woes and afflictions of every sort, until at last they begin to say, It is because the Lord is no longer with us that we are encountering afflictions such as these. And still I will 18 hide myself, and turn no glance towards them, to punish them for their wickedness in betaking themselves to alien gods. I would have you, then, set down a song 19 in writing, and teach the people to know it by heart and sing it; a song that will vindicate me against the sons of Israel. I mean to settle them in this land that is all 20 milk and honey, my promised gift to their fathers; and they will no sooner have eaten their fill and grown fat on it, than they will turn to alien gods and worship them; they will defy me, and annul their covenant with me. Woes and afflictions will come 21 upon them, and it is then that this song, still remembered by their posterity, will vindicate me against them. So Moses put 22 the song in writing, and taught it to the men of Israel.

23 The Lord also gave a charge to Josue, the son of Nun, Play the man, and keep thy courage high; it is thy task to settle the sons of Israel in the land I have promised to give them, and I will be with thee in the doing of it.

24 And now, when Moses had finished his work of setting forth the terms of this law in a book, he gave orders to the Levites, that carried the ark of the Lord, what they should do with it. Take this book, he said, and lay it up by the side of the ark that bears witness of the Lord's covenant, to vindicate him against you. I know well how rebellious you are, how stiff-necked; even in my life-time, and in spite of my presence among you, you have always been rebelling against the Lord, and when I am dead, worse must follow. Summon the elders and counsellors among all the tribes, and let me say my say in their hearing; let me call upon heaven and earth to bear witness against them. I know well enough that when I am dead you will ruin all, and it will not be long before you stray from the path I have shewed you; and I know that when the Lord sees you living amiss, and provoking his anger by your doings, calamity will fall upon you in the end.

30 And so Moses, with the whole assembly of Israel listening to him, pronounced the words of the song which follows, never pausing until it was all finished.

32 Listen, you heavens, while I have my say; earth, be attentive to the words I utter; here is teaching big with import as the rain, here are warnings that must soak in like the dew, wholesome as showers are to the grass, as moisture to the growing crops. The renown of the Lord shall be my theme; to our God belongs majesty; the God who shelters us, how perfect is all he does, how right are all his dealings! God, faithful and unerring, God, holy and just! And these, his sons, are lost to him, his sons no longer in their defilement; a generation of false aims and rebellious will. What, reckless still, inconsiderate still! Is this the return thou wouldst make to that father who calls thee

his own, that creator who fashioned thee? Cast thy mind back to old days; nay, trace the record of each succeeding generation; ask thy father what news he has to tell, thy forefathers, what word they have for thee. The Ruler of all has divided the nations apart, sundering Adam's children and giving to each people its own home, peoples as numerous as the sons that sprang from Israel;¹ but one was the Lord's treasured possession, his own people; it was Jacob he had marked out for his own domain.

He sought them out in the wilderness, there in the fearful desert spaces, gave them the guidance, taught them the lessons they needed, guarded them as if they had been the apple of his eye. (So the eagle that would incite its young to venture in the air now hovers above them, now spreads its wings and takes them up to rest on its own shoulders.) None but the Lord was their guide on that journey, there was no alien god to be found then in their company. And afterwards he settled them in a country of high hills, where they could eat the food their own lands yielded. Honey oozed from its rocks, on its barren uplands the olive could flourish; cheese from the herd, milk was theirs from the flock, the flesh of well-fed lamb and ram, cattle of Basan's breed, and he-goats; they ate the choicest wheat, drank the heady juice of the grape.

A people so well loved! And now, pampered, they would throw off the yoke. Pampered, full-fed, swollen with pride, they forsook that divine creator, revolted against their deliverer. He must endure the rivalry of alien worship, must look on indignantly at their detestable doings. Not to their God they offered sacrifice, but to devils, to gods yet untried, upstart gods of yesterday, whom their fathers never held in awe. What, forsake the sheltering Power that gave thee birth, forget the very Lord who created thee? The Lord was roused to anger when he saw it, saw his own sons and daughters defying him. I will turn away from them, he said, and see what comes of it; here is a rebellious race, a

¹ According to the Jewish authors, there were then seventy nations in the world, as Jacob had seventy sons when he went into Egypt (Gen. 46. 27). Others would understand the sentence as meaning that in dividing up the world Almighty God left one country over for Israel to occupy, but this sense is less easily derived from the text.

21 thankless brood. They have deserted me for a god that was no god, phantoms have been my rivals; now I will desert them in my turn, for a people that is no people of mine; their rivals shall be men as impious as themselves.

22 My anger shall be like a raging fire that burns down to the depths of the abyss, that consumes earth and all that earth yields, scorches the very roots of the hills.

23 I mean to heap all my plagues upon them, exhaust all the arrows of my vengeance.

24 What famine shall gnaw them, what winged terrors eat them up with destructive fangs! I will send wild beasts, too, to prey on them, poisonous serpents shall creep upon them through the dust. Havoc without, terror within doors; for man and maid, for infancy and old age, the same doom! Indeed, I had thought to make away with them altogether, blot out their very name from all human remembrance; but no, I held my hand; were these enemies of theirs to provoke me with taunts? Should the victors boast it was their own power, not mine, that had won the day?

28 How lost they are to right judgement, this people of Israel, how slow of discernment! Ah, if they would only take thought, and read their lesson, and foresee what is still far away! When they see their thousands put to rout by one man, ten thousand fleeing with two men in pursuit, can they doubt what is the cause of it? It means their own God has relinquished them; that the Lord's decree has given their enemy the mastery; that enemy himself will bear witness that his gods are no match for our God. Does he enjoy my favour? No, says the Lord,¹ he is but a wild vine, such as grows in Sodom, or in the purlieus of Gomorrha, yielding grapes like gall, clusters of bitterness, yielding wine like the adder's venom, the rankling poison of the viper. Be sure that I keep the record of his wickedness stored away under seal in my treasure house; vengeance is for me; I will repay when the time comes. A slip of the foot, and ruin is upon them; little waiting now before the appointed day comes.

36 Never doubt it, the Lord will give his people redress, will take pity on his ser-

vants, when he sees their strength so spent, the number of them so dwindled, whether bond or free. He will ask, What has become of those gods of yours, once so well trusted, that shared, once, the fat of your victims, the wine you poured in libation? Will they not bestir themselves, and come to your aid, protect you in your hour of need? Now you shall learn that I alone am God; there are no others to rival me; it is mine to kill and to quicken, mine to smite and to heal; from my power there is no deliverance. See, I lift up my hand, and swear by my own eternal being that I am whetting this bright sword of mine, to execute speedy judgement; I mean to take vengeance, now, on my enemies, requite them for all their malice. Now to glut my arrows with their blood, now to flesh this sword of mine with the slaughter of my enemies, warriors slain in battle and unhelmeted captives! Do honour, you nations, to the Lord's people; he means to avenge the blood of his servants, to punish their enemies, to be reconciled once again with the land of Israel.

So when Moses had performed his errand, reciting the whole of this song in the hearing of the assembled people, with Josue the son of Nun at his side, he made an end of all his long discourse to the Israelites, in these words, Pay good heed to the appeal I have made to you this day, and hand it on to your children, bidding them hold fast to all the terms of this law and carry them out faithfully. These duties are not lightly enjoined on you; to every man of you they are life itself. Only by performing them can you hope for long enjoyment of this land across Jordan which is to be your home.

It was on the same day that the Lord said to Moses, Climb this mountain of Abarim (that is, of the Further Side; it is the same as mount Nebo, in the Moabite country opposite Jericho), and view the land of Chanaan, which I mean to give the sons of Israel for their own. On that mountain thou art to die. This height climbed, thou must needs become a part of thy people, as thy brother Aaron died and became a part of his people on Mount Hor. You disobeyed me, in full sight of the

¹ These words are not expressed in the original, but have to be understood if we are to follow the train of thought.

whole people, at the Water of Rebellion in the desert of Sin, when you did not vindicate my holiness before the sons of Israel. 52 Thou shalt have sight, nevertheless, of this land which is my gift to the Israelites, the land it shall not be thine to enter.

33 And this is the blessing which God's servant Moses gave to the sons of Israel before he died.¹ See where the Lord comes forth, he said, from Sinai, where he rises high above the hills of Edom before us, dawns on us from mount Pharan; thousands of his holy ones were about him, and on his right hand his law shone to them like fire. How he loves those tribes of his! All his holy ones dwell in his protecting care, can gather at his feet, and partake of his instruction. We had a law given to us by Moses, the heirloom of Jacob's posterity, and our king dwelt among us, his favoured people, with the chieftains and all the tribes of Israel assembled about him.

6 Let Ruben live on, never wasting away yet never growing populous.

7 And this was Juda's blessing. Listen, Lord, to Juda's plea, and restore him to his place among the people, so that he may fight for it and defend it against its enemies.

8 And of Levi he said, The touchstones of Wisdom and Truth are for the man thou hast set apart, testing him at the place of Challenge, proving his worth at the Water of Rebellion.² This is one who said to his father and mother, You are no acquaintance of mine, and to his brethren, I do not recognize you. Here are men that treated their own children as strangers, paying heed rather to thy warnings, keeping true to thy covenant; Here, they said to Jacob, are the decrees thou must obey, here, Israel, is the law that governs thee. When thou art angry, Lord, it is theirs to offer incense, and burn sacrifice upon thy altar.

11 Bless all he has, Lord, and prosper all he does; smite his enemies and put them to rout, never let them rise up again to plot against him.

¹ There is much disagreement about the interpretation of the Hebrew text in this chapter, and it may even be defective (the tribe of Simeon, for instance, is not mentioned). In many places the Latin version differs considerably. ² It is not clear why the tribe of Levi is here described as having distinguished itself on the occasion recorded in Ex. 17; cp. Ex. 32. 26-28. ³ Literally, 'on his shoulders', but the Hebrew word used also applies to slopes of ground, and it is pointed out that Jerusalem stood actually on the frontier between Juda and Benjamin. ⁴ It is not clear what ruler (literally, 'teacher') is referred to; some think there is an allusion to Moses' own grave, which, however, must have been in the territory of Ruben.

Moses blesses the twelve Tribes severally

Of Benjamin he said, First in the Lord's love, he shall dwell secure in that companionship. God will spread his pavilion over him at all times, rest on those hills.³

Of Joseph he said, His is a land rich in blessing from the Lord, enriched with dew by the heavens above us, with springs by the depth beneath, enriched by ripening suns and engendering moons, enriched by every influence of ancient mountains and immemorial hills, enriched by earth and all the foison earth yields. Let the blessing of that God who once appeared in the bush light upon the head of Joseph, light on his brow who is separated like a Nazirite from his brethren. What is the pride of the first-born bull-calf, or of the wild ox, but his two horns? Such horns has Joseph, that can toss nations to the ends of the earth: the hordes of Ephraim, the legions of Manasses!

Of Zabulon he said, Happy art thou, Zabulon, and thou too, Issachar, at home and abroad. Peoples shall be their guests on the mountain height, where their solemn sacrifice is offered. The wealth of the sea shall foster them, the treasures that lie hidden in the sands.

Of Gad he said, Blessed is Gad in the breadth of his lands; he lies there like a lion, ready to take head and arm for his prey. He too has achieved eminence; did not those lands of his enshrine such a ruler as took his part among the chiefs of the people, executing the Lord's justice, his decrees concerning Israel?⁴

Of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp; a torrent that comes down in full flood from Basan.

Of Nephthali he said, Nephthali shall enjoy great plenty, be rich in the Lord's blessings; seaward and southward he shall extend his frontiers.

Of Aser he said, Aser is a son highly favoured; let him stand well with his brethren; let him have oil to wash his feet in, iron and bronze to make shoes for him. Let thy age be peaceful as thy youth.

The beloved people has a God great as no other; he rides in heaven to deliver thee, the clouds making way for his majestic coming; there, on high, is his dwelling, and yet the eternal arms reach down to uphold thee. He will dispossess the enemy at thy onslaught, and doom him to destruction; Israel shall live unmolested, Jacob shall see no rival near him, in a land full of corn and wine, under skies curtained with dewy mist. Blessed, Israel, thou art, a people like no other, finding in the Lord thy deliverance, the shield that protects thee, the sword that wins thee renown! Thy enemies shall forswear their enmity, and thou shalt tread their pride in the dust.¹

34 And so Moses went up from the Moabite plain on to mount Nebo, the peak of Phasga that rises opposite Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the territory of Gad right up to Dan, and all Nephthali, and the country Ephraim and Manasses were to hold, and the whole land of Juda, with the sea coast for its frontier; the south, too, and the plain that stretches from Jericho, among its palm trees, up to Segor. This, the Lord told him, is the land of which I spoke to Abraham, Isaac and

Jacob, promising to give it to their race. I have granted thee the sight of it; enter it thou mayst not.

There, then, in the land of Moab, Moses died, the Lord's servant, still true to the Lord's bidding. And there the Lord buried him, in a valley belonging to the Moabite country that looks towards Phogor; but where his tomb is, remains to this day unknown. He was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, and still his eyes had not grown dim, and his teeth stood firm.² And the sons of Israel mourned for him thirty days, there in the plains of Moab.

And now the days of mourning for Moses had come to an end, and Josue the son of Nun, full of the gift of wisdom since Moses laid hands on him, took command of the Israelites; and they obeyed him, as the Lord through Moses had bidden them. There was never such another prophet in Israel as Moses; what other man was the Lord's familiar, meeting him face to face? Were ever such wonders and portents as the Lord empowered this man to perform in Egypt, till Pharao and all his court and kingdom obeyed the Lord's will perforce? Were ever such great miracles done as Moses did, for all Israel to see?

¹ Literally, according to the Hebrew text, the last sentence reads 'Thy enemies shall cringe before thee, and thou shalt trample on their high places'; in the Latin version, 'Thy enemies shall deny thee, and thou shalt trample on their necks'.
² 'His teeth', so the Latin version; the Hebrew word used probably means 'his vigour'.

THE BOOK OF JOSUE

HIS servant Moses dead, the Lord gave a charge to Josue, son of Nun, that till now had waited on Moses' needs. Now that my servant Moses is dead, he told him, it is for thee to cross yonder stream of Jordan, taking the Israelites with thee into the land I am giving them for their own. My promise to Moses holds good; there is no piece of ground your feet shall tread but I will make it yours, all the Hethite country, that has the desert, and Lebanon, and the great river Euphrates, and the open sea on the west for its frontiers. While thou yet livest, there shall be no withstanding Israel's onset; I will be with thee as with Moses, never leave nor let thee. Courage, then, play the man; thy task is to divide up this land between the tribes, my promised gift to their fathers. Play the man thou must, and keep thy courage high, carrying out faithfully the law my servant Moses enjoined on thee; never swerve to right or left, and thou shalt order thy life truly. The law thou hast in writing must govern every utterance of thine; night and day thou must ponder over it, so as to carry out all the terms of it faithfully; so wilt thou guide thy steps truly and prosper. Courage and a man's part, that is what I ask of thee; no room for fear and shrinking back, when the Lord thy God is at thy side wherever thou goest.

And now Josue bade the chieftains make their way through the midst of the camp, giving the people orders to prepare themselves food; in two days' time they were to cross the Jordan and set about conquering the land which the Lord would make their home. And he warned Ruben and Gad, and the separate half of Manasses, Do not forget the message that was given you by Moses, the Lord's own servant. The Lord your God, he told you, has granted you secure possession of all that is yours. In that land which Moses assigned to you beyond Jordan your wives and children and cattle shall await you, while you that are warriors go over in the van of your brethren, and fight in their cause. A day

will come when the Lord your God will give them, too, undisturbed possession of their appointed home; then you shall go back and settle in your own lands, where the Lord's servant Moses assigned them to you, east of Jordan. And they answered. We will do all thy bidding, go out upon all thy errands, obey thee as we obeyed Moses in all things. And may the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. Whoever thwarts thy will or refuses to obey any order of thine shall die for it; courage, then, play the man.

2 Josue was at Setim; and from Setim he despatched two of his men on a secret errand, bidding them survey the country opposite, and the city of Jericho. These had made their way into the house of a harlot, called Rahab, and were lodging there, when news came to the king of Jericho that spies from the camp of Israel had crept in under cover of darkness; and he sent word to Rahab, bidding her bring out the men she was harbouring; they were spies, come to search out every corner of the land. Her first act was to hide the two men away; then she made answer. True enough, they were here; I had no means of knowing whence they came. But when darkness fell, and the gates were a-shutting, they crept out, both of them. I cannot tell what way they took, but if you give chase at once you will catch them. Meanwhile, she had taken them up to the roof of her house, and covered them over with the stems of flax that lay there. Men were sent out in pursuit along the road that leads to the Jordan ford; and as soon as these had gone out, the gates were shut behind them.

The two men had not yet fallen asleep in their hiding-place when the woman came up on to the roof and spoke to them. Past all doubt, she said, the Lord means to give you the mastery; your coming has spread terror amongst us, and there are faint hearts everywhere in the land. The story has reached us, how the Lord dried

up the waters of the Red Sea, when you marched through it out of Egypt, how you conquered Sehon and Og, the two Amorrite kings that reigned beyond Jordan, and made an end of them. You see daunted men, cowards with no heart left in them to withstand your onslaught. This Lord who is your God must be the God that rules in heaven above us, and in the world that lies beneath it. And now I have done you a kindness; swear to me by this Lord of yours that you will repay it to me and mine. Pledge yourselves faithfully to grant me the safety of my father and mother, my brethren and my sisters, with all that is theirs; that our lives shall be spared in the slaughter. Keep our secret, said they, and our lives shall answer for yours. When the Lord makes us masters of thy country, we will remember and spare. So she let them down by a rope from the window of her house, which was built into the city wall. Take refuge in the hills, she told them, or you may meet the pursuers returning. Hide there for three days, until they are back again; then you may go safely on your way.

And they said to her, The oath we have given thee shall be binding only on one condition. When we march in, the signal we shall look for will be this red rope of thine; tie it to the same window from which thou hast let us down. Father and mother, brethren and sisters, and all thy kindred, must be gathered together in thy house; any of them that leaves thy door brings death on his own head; we are not answerable. Only if harm should befall those who are with thee in the house shall our lives be forfeit. And if thou shouldst betray us, by making known the news thou hast of us, then the oath we have given thee binds us no longer. Be it as you say, Rahab answered; and so she left them to go on their way, and hung the scarlet rope in the window.

The men walked on till they reached the hill country, and waited there till their pursuers came back, that had searched all along the road without finding them. When these were safely in the city again, the spies came down again from the hills, and crossed the Jordan to find Josue the

son of Nun. And when they had told him how it had fared with them, this was the report they gave; The Lord has put all this country at our mercy; every heart in it is faint with fear. 24

3 When the morrow dawned, Josue and the men of Israel moved camp, from Seim to the banks of the Jordan. Here they waited three days, and then the heralds went out through the midst of the camp, and made this proclamation: When you see the priests of Levi's race on the march, carrying the ark of the Lord your God, you yourselves must follow behind them, keeping it in distant view; so you shall know what path to take, a path you have not trodden before. But leave a space of two thousand cubits between the ark and yourselves; not for you the neighbourhood of the ark. And Josue bade the people keep themselves free from defilement; the Lord was preparing to do a miracle next day in their midst. Then he bade the priests take up the ark that bore record of the covenant, and march on; and they, at his bidding, took it up and began leading the way. This day, the Lord said to Josue, I mean to win thee renown for all Israel to see; they shall learn that he who went with Moses goes now with thee. Bid the priests who are bearing the ark wade out a little into the waters of Jordan, and halt there. 8

So Josue said to the Israelites, Come close, and listen to the message the Lord your God sends you. And then, Here is proof that the living presence of the Lord God is among you; proof that he means to dispossess Chanaanite and Hethite, Hevite and Pherezite, Gergesite and Jebusite and Amorrite at your coming. Here is the ark ready to cross the Jordan at your head, that ark which bears record of your covenant with the Lord of all the earth; you must choose out twelve men, one from each tribe of Israel, to witness it.¹ And when the priests set foot in the waters of Jordan, bearing his ark who is Lord of the whole earth, the stream below them will pass on and be lost to sight; the stream above will check its flow, heaped up in a single mass of water. 13

¹ 'To witness it'; these words are not expressed in the original, but may perhaps be inferred from the context.

14 So the people left their encampment to go across Jordan, the priests who carried the ark marching at their head. And when these began wading out, as soon as their feet were under water (it was harvest time, and the Jordan had risen to the full height of its banks), the stream above them halted in its course. Far up, all the way from the city of Adom to the place called Sarthan, these upper waters looked like a swelling mound; and the waters below flowed on into the Desert Sea, that is now called the Dead Sea, till they disappeared altogether.

17 And so the people marched on to the assault of Jericho; the priests, carrying the Lord's ark, stood there with loins girt in the middle of the Jordan on dry ground, while the whole people went past over the dry bed of the stream.

4 And when they had crossed over, the Lord bade Josue choose out twelve men, one from each tribe; each was to pick out a solid stone from the river-bed, where the feet of the priests had stood, and these must be set up to mark the place where they encamped that night. So Josue summoned twelve men, whom he had chosen out to represent the twelve tribes of Israel; Go half-way across Jordan, he told them, to where the ark of the Lord your God stands, and bring me thence on your shoulders one stone each of you, one for each of the tribes of Israel. They are to serve you for a monument; your children, before long, will be asking you, What is the meaning of these stones? And you will be able to answer, When the ark that bears record of the Lord's covenant went across the Jordan, the waters dried up at its coming; that is why these stones have been set up here, to remind Israel of that crossing for all time. The Israelites did as Josue bade them; carried the twelve stones from the river-bed, one for each tribe, as the Lord had commanded, and set them down in the camp. Josue also marked the place, full in the bed of Jordan, where the priests and the ark had halted; here, too, he set up twelve stones, which are there to this day.

10 Meanwhile, such was the divine com-

mand Josue had received through Moses, the priests must stand there in the river-bed till all was over.¹ So the people marched on speedily enough; not till all had reached the other side could the ark of the Lord cross, and the priests take their place at the head of the people. Ruben and Gad and half Manasses must send their warriors in the van of Israel, as Moses bade them; company after company, file after file, these in their turn went past, forty thousand fighting men, into the level plain that lies before the city of Jericho. That day, the Lord would win renown for Josue for all Israel to see; he was to be feared as Moses was feared in life. And now the Lord had a fresh command for him, Bid the priests that are carrying the ark come out of the Jordan. The word was given, and they came up, carrying the ark with them, and no sooner had they set foot on dry ground than the stream filled its bed again, flowing past as before.

On the tenth day of the first month the people left Jordan behind them, and encamped at Galgal, east of the city of Jericho. Here, at Galgal, Josue set up the twelve stones they had taken out of the river-bed. And he said to the Israelites, It will not be long before sons are asking their fathers the question, What is the meaning of these stones? And you will hand on the lesson to them: Israel once crossed over Jordan yonder dry-shod. The Lord your God dried up its waters in full view of Israel, to let them pass over, just as in earlier times he dried up the Red Sea, when it lay in our path. So all the nations of the world were to learn how strong the power of the Lord is, and you too should fear the Lord your God continually.

5 So the news went abroad among the kings of the Amorrites, who dwelt on the west of Jordan, and the Chanaanite kings by the coast of the great sea, that the Lord had dried up the stream of Jordan to let the Israelites go across. And now their hearts failed them, and their spirits were altogether daunted, such terror was theirs at the coming of Israel.

¹ Some think that the orders given in verses 1-3 of this chapter must already have been given to Moses before his death. But it is perhaps more natural to suppose that the reference is to verse 12 just below: the command that the trans-Jordanic tribes should join in the invasion was given in Moses' lifetime (see Num. 32).

2 It was at this time the Lord said to Josue, Have knives made of flint, and restore the rite of circumcision among the sons of Israel. So he did as the Lord bade him, and restored circumcision to Israel at the Hill of the Foreskins. There was need to renew this rite, because the men of the older generation, who were of age to bear arms at the time of the escape from Egypt, had died in the course of their desert wanderings. These had all been circumcised, but the generation which had been born during those forty years in the waste wilderness, remained uncircumcised still. Those rebels, the Lord had sworn it, must never reach the land that was all milk and honey; now they lay dead, and their sons had taken their places. For these Josue must renew the rite, men who had grown up uncircumcised through the neglect that came with days of wandering. So all were circumcised, and they lay encamped there till their wounds healed; This day, the Lord said to Josue, I have reversed the lot that made you slaves in Egypt; and so the place came to be called Galgal, Turning Round, the name it still bears.

10 In Galgal, then, the Israelites remained encamped, and there they celebrated the pasch on the plains of Jericho, beginning at evening on the fourteenth day of the month. And when they ate unleavened bread on the morrow, they were eating corn that was grown on the ground where they stood; their flour was made of that year's harvest. Once they had begun to enjoy their own harvest, the supply of manna ceased, nor did the sons of Israel ever taste that food again; they ate the crops which the land of Chanaan yielded that year.

13 There, in the plain by Jericho, Josue looked up and saw a man who stood with drawn sword in his path. Coming close to him, he asked, Art thou of our camp, or of the enemy's? Nay, said he, it is the captain of the Lord's army that has come to thy side. And with that, Josue cast himself down, face to ground; What message hast thou, my Lord, for thy servant? he

asked. But first he was commanded to take the shoes off his feet, as one that stood on holy ground; so he did as he was bidden.

6 Already Jericho was bolted and barred against the approach of Israel, so that there was no entering or leaving it, and now the Lord promised to make Josue master of it, with its king and all its defenders. Once a day, he said, you will march round the city walls, every man of you that bears arms, for six days together. And on the seventh day do as follows. The priests will be carrying seven trumpets, such as are used at jubilee time, and marching with these in front of the ark that bears witness of my covenant. On this day you will go round the city seven times, to the sound of the trumpets the priests are carrying. And when the trumpets blow a long blast that rises and falls, the whole people, on hearing it, must raise a loud cry; at that cry, the walls of the city will fall down flat, and each man will go in to the assault at the place where he is posted.

So Josue the son of Nun summoned the priests and gave them their orders; how some were to carry the ark of the Lord, and seven others march before it with the trumpets of jubilee; then he bade the people march round the city, fully armed, in front of the ark. When Josue had finished speaking, the seven priests blew their seven trumpets before the ark, and all the fighting men went fully armed in front of it, while the rest of the people followed; and the blast of the trumpets echoed all around. Josue had warned the people not to cry out or utter any sound until the day came when he should bid them cry aloud. So that day the ark of the Lord went round the city once, and was brought back to the camp, where it rested. And when the next day dawned, Josue was astir, and the priests took up the ark, seven of them carrying the seven jubilee trumpets and blowing them before the ark as they went, with the fighting men in the van and the rest of the people behind, marching to the noise of

¹ Reversed the lot that made you slaves in Egypt; literally, 'rolled away the reproach of Egypt'; an obscure phrase which shows that tradition associated the circumcision of the Israelites with this spot. The name Galgal probably designates a circle of stones. ² The Latin version seems to imply that the trumpets were to be carried only on the seventh day; but see verse 8 below. The Hebrew text has 'seven priests will carry seven trumpets'.

14 trumpets; and again they returned back to the camp when they had gone round the city once only.

15 Thus the six days passed, and on the seventh day they rose at dawn and went round the city seven times, as they were bidden. And when the priests were ready to blow their trumpets on the seventh journey, Josue gave word to the whole of Israel, Now you are to shout; the Lord has put the city in your power. This city and all it contains is forfeit to the Lord; none must be spared except the harlot Rahab and those in her house. She it was that 17 harboured the spies we sent out. Beware of touching anything that lies under the ban; that were sin in you, and trouble would come upon the whole camp of Israel through your guilt. All the gold and silver, all that is made of bronze or iron, must be consecrated to the Lord and laid up in his treasure-house.

20 Then the people cried a'oud, and still the trumpets blew, till every ear was deafened by the shouting and the clangour; and all at once the walls fell down flat. Thereupon each man went to the assault where he was posted, and they took the 21 city. All that was in it they slew, sparing neither man nor woman, neither youth nor age; even cattle and sheep and asses were put to the sword. But now Josue said to the two men who had been sent out as spies, Make your way into the house of the harlot yonder, and bring her out, with all that is hers; such was the sworn promise 23 you gave her. So the two men went in, and brought Rahab out with her parents and her kindred and all that belonged to her, giving this family of hers lodging, but not in the camp of Israel. Then they burned the city and all that was in it, except the silver and gold and what was made of bronze or iron; these they laid up as consecrated in the Lord's treasury. But Josue spared the harlot Rahab, with all her father's household and all that was hers; and to this day her posterity finds a home in Israel. So well was she rewarded for hiding away those two spies of his in Jericho.

26 At this time Josue laid the place under a ban; May the Lord's curse, he said, light on the man that restores the city of Jericho and builds it up again. The foundations

will cost him his first-born, and the gates of it his youngest son.

And the Lord stood at Josue's side, 27 till his fame spread abroad all over the land.

7 But now Israel broke its faith by turning the forfeited plunder to their own use. Achan, a man of Juda, descended from Zare through Charmi and Zabdi, took some of the plunder for himself, and God was angry with the people of Israel. From Jericho, Josue sent a party of men over to Hai (which is close by Bethaven, eastwards from Bethel), bidding them survey its territory; and they, when they had finished their task at Hai, gave a confident report: There is no need for the whole people to take part in the attack. Send two or three thousand men to overthrow the city; it were idle to set a whole army toiling over a handful of enemies. So three thousand men went up to the assault and were soon put to rout. The men of Hai killed thirty-six of them, pursued them all the way to Sabarim, and fell upon them as they fled down the slopes.

Small wonder if the people lost heart and their courage ebbed away like water. Josue himself rent his garments, and fell down, face to earth, before the ark of God. There he lay till nightfall, and all the elders of Israel with him, defiling their heads with dust. Ah, Lord God, cried Josue, was it for this thou didst make the passage of Jordan so easy for us, to put us at the mercy of the Amorrites, and compass our ruin? Better had we remained at our old post beyond the Jordan. O Lord my God, that I should see Israel turn their backs before their enemies! Here are tidings will rally the Chanaanites and their neighbours to whelm us, so that our very name will be forgotten among men; and thy name, Lord? That great renown of thine?

But the Lord said to Josue, Rise up; why dost thou lie there, face to ground? Guilt rests on Israel; they have transgressed my covenant, by taking forfeited plunder for their own use; it has been stolen away secretly, and hidden among private goods. How should Israel withstand the enemy? Turn their backs they

must so long as the curse lies on them; until you make an end of the guilty man, 13 I will fight on your side no longer. Rise up, and bid the people cleanse themselves; tell them that to-morrow they must come into my presence undefiled. And give them this message from the Lord God of Israel: Israelites, you are harbouring forbidden spoil among you, and the guilty man must be destroyed before you can stand against your enemies. In the morning you will come before me tribe by tribe; and the tribe on which the lot falls will come before me clan by clan, until one household of that clan, and one man of that household is convicted. When he is convicted of such a crime, he and all that belongs to him must be given to the flames; he has transgressed the Lord's covenant, and brought a curse on Israel. 16 So, when the next day dawned, Josue brought forward the tribes of Israel one by one, and when Juda was chosen, the clans of Juda; and when Zare was chosen, the families of Zare; and when Zabdi was chosen, the household of Zabdi man by man. So at last the choice fell upon Achan, son of Charmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zare, of the tribe of Juda. And now Josue said to Achan, My son, accept the arbitrament of the Lord God of Israel; own thy fault and tell me, without concealment, what thou hast done. And Achan, in answer, told how he had sinned against the Lord God of Israel, told every circumstance of his fault. I saw among the plunder, said he, a fine scarlet cloak, and two hundred pieces of silver, and a bar of gold that weighed fifty sicles; and, coveting the possession of them, I buried them in the ground in the middle of my tent, hiding the money with the rest. 22 So Josue sent couriers to his tent, and there they found all he had hidden, the money with the rest; they brought it back from the tent to Josue and the whole assembly of Israel, and cast it down there in the Lord's presence. So Josue and the Israelites took Achan son of Zare to the valley of Achor, with the money and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and daughters, his oxen, asses and sheep, his tent too with all that was in it. And there Josue said, Thou hast brought trouble on us, and now it is the Lord's turn to bring

trouble on thee. And all the Israelites stoned him to death, and the flames burned all that was his. They raised a great heap of stones over him, which stands there yet, to mark the place where the Lord's anger was appeased; and it is called the Valley of Achor, Trouble, to this day. 26

8 And now the Lord said to Josue, No need for terror and shrinking back. Take thy whole strength of fighting men with thee, and set about the conquest of Hai; king and people, city and territory, I mean to put them all in thy power. City and king must be treated as thou didst treat city and king of Jericho; but here you may take the spoil and the cattle for yourselves. Lay an ambush on the further side of the city, and it is thine. 2

So Josue and all the fighting men set about the conquest of Hai. At nightfall, he sent out thirty thousand, picked men all of them, with these orders: Lie in ambush on the further side of the city, no long distance away, ready for battle. I myself, commanding the rest of the army, will make a direct assault on it; and when they come out to engage us, we will turn our backs in flight, as we did before, so as to draw them further and further away from the city in pursuit of us, routed (they will think) a second time. Our flight, and their pursuit, is the signal for you to rise from your ambush and storm the city; the Lord your God will make you masters of it. Once in possession, you will set fire to it. Be sure that you carry out these orders faithfully. 8

So he sent them on their way, and they reached the place where they were to lie in wait, halting to the west of Hai, between it and Bethel. Josue himself spent that night with the main body of his army, and when day dawned he called the muster-roll; then he went to the attack, he and the elders marching in the van, with their body-guard about them. They climbed the heights opposite the city, and halted there to the north of it, with a valley in between. (Josue had now chosen out five thousand of his men for the ambush west of Hai, towards Bethel, and all the rest of them marched to the north, so that only the rearguard of that great host were near the western part of the city. That night Josue 13

moved away, and took up his station half-way across the valley.)¹

14 The king of Hai, upon seeing this, hastened to the attack while the day was young, marching out with all his forces towards the desert, with no suspicion that
15 there was an ambush in the rear. Josue and the Israelites, in feigned alarm, left their ground and took to flight along the
16 road that leads to the desert. And the enemy, raising a great hue and cry, went in pursuit of them a long distance away
17 from the city. At last there was not a man left either in Hai itself or in Bethel who had not joined in the pursuit of the Israelites; and in sallying out they had left
18 the gates of both towns open. With that, the Lord said to Josue, Lift up the shield on thy arm, pointing towards the city of
19 Hai; it lies in thy power. And when he lifted his shield towards it, the men who lay there in ambush rose up all at once and made for the city, captured it and set it on fire.

20 And now the defenders looked back from their pursuit of Josue, and saw the smoke rising up to heaven. Refuge was none before or behind; at an end, now, the feigned flight and the retreat towards the desert; everywhere the pursuers met with
21 resistance. Josue and the main army had turned back to engage the men of Hai when they saw the city captured and the smoke going up, and now the troops that had taken the city and burnt it came out to meet them, enclosing the enemy in between and cutting him down. Thus, attacking from both sides, they did not let
22 a single man out of all that multitude escape; the king of Hai himself was captured alive and brought to Josue. So died
23 all those who had pursued Israel on the desert road, slain on the field of battle; then the Israelites went back and made an
24 end of the city. In that one day all the citizens of Hai perished, men and women,
25 to the number of twelve thousand; Josue did not lower that arm of his which held up the shield till there were no more left

dwelling at Hai. The Israelites divided up
2 the cattle and the spoil, in pursuance of the command Josue had received; the city
24 itself he left to burn, and become a ruin for ever, and the king he left hanging on
25 a gibbet until evening came and the sun set. At Josue's bidding, they took his body down and laid it at the entrance of the city, covering it with a great heap of stones, which remains there to this day.

Then Josue built an altar to the Lord
10 God of Israel on mount Hebal, in pursuance of the command given to Israel by
11 God's servant Moses, when he wrote down the law; an altar of unpolished stones, that no iron tool had touched. On this he offered the Lord burnt-sacrifice, and slew
12 victims by way of welcome-offering. He also inscribed on stone tablets that copy of the law which Moses wrote down in the presence of the people. And now all the
13 people, with their elders, chieftains and judges, stood up in the presence of the priests that bore the ark, with its record of the Lord's covenant, some on this side,
14 some on that, native Israelites and alien-born alike. In obedience to Moses' command half of them were on the side of mount Hebal, half on the side of mount Garizim. First Josue blessed the people of
15 Israel,² and then he read aloud all the terms of the blessing and the curse, and
16 all else that the book of the law contains. No command Moses gave was passed over,
17 he repeated them all in the presence of Israel there assembled, with their wives and the children and the aliens who dwelt among them.

9 News of this was brought to all the other kings that lived west of Jordan, some in the hill country, some down on the plains, some on the coast by the shores of the open sea, or on the spurs of Lebanon. And all of them, Hethite and Amorrhite, Chanaanite and Pherezite, Hevite and Jebusite, made common cause against Josue
1 and the people of Israel; all were minded to offer a common resistance, except the
3

¹ Some think that verses 12-13 have been incorrectly transmitted to us; it is very difficult to be sure of their meaning, whether in the Hebrew text or in the Latin version, which here differs considerably. As they stand, they seem to imply that the thirty thousand men referred to in verse 3 joined hands, next day, with Josue's own troops, and that their numbers were cut down to a sixth. Whether Josue went into the valley by himself, or at the head of troops, does not appear. The figure 5000 is not mentioned in the Septuagint Greek. ² In the Hebrew text, this verse ends 'that the priests might bless the people of Israel'.

people of Gabaon. These, when they learned how Josue had destroyed Jericho and Hai, devised a policy of their own, and a crafty one. They provided themselves with food as if for a long journey, and this they put into old sacks, and their wine into skins that were tattered and patched, and loaded up their beasts with such things. Their shoes were worn out, and cobbled as old shoes would be, their clothes threadbare, the very bread they took with them for the journey dry and crumbling. In such guise, they made their way into the presence of Josue, who was then in camp at Galgal.

To him, and to the assembly of Israel, they gave out that they had come from far away, to make an alliance. The Israelites were in doubt of them; Neighbours more like, they said, dwelling in this land which is our home; we can have no alliance with you. So they turned to Josue and said, We await thy commands. And when he asked who they were and whence they had come, they answered, My Lord, we have come from a land far away, to do honour to the name of the Lord thy God. How strong a God, we learned from the story of all he did in Egypt, of all that befell the two Amorrite kings beyond Jordan, Sehon king of Hesebon, and Og king of Basan, who reigned once at Astaroth. So the elders and the rest of our fellow-citizens bade us take provisions to last us through our travels, and come to meet you, assuring you of our humble duty and begging for an alliance. Only look at the bread we took with us, hot from the oven at home, when we set out to find you, how dry it is, how it crumbles after being kept so long! The new wine-skins we filled are all torn and leaking; the very clothes we wear, the very shoes on our feet, have worn out in our travels, and all but worn away.

The victuals passed from hand to hand, and the Lord was never asked for guidance. Josue gave them terms of peace, and made an alliance with them, promising that their lives should be spared; the chieftains, too, bound themselves to it by an oath, and it was not till the treaty had been three days in force, that they learned these men were close neighbours, and would share the land with them. The Israelites moved camp, and reached, two days later, the

cities where these men dwelt, Gabaon and Caphira and Beroth and Cariathiarim. Shed blood they might not; had not the chieftains pledged themselves by an oath in the name of the Lord God of Israel? When the common folk assailed them with reproaches, the chieftains could only answer, We have taken an oath in the name of the Lord God of Israel; how can we touch them? Only one way is left; we must keep them alive, so as not to provoke the Lord's anger by forswearing ourselves, but they must live to hew wood and draw water for the needs of our company.

Such was the voice they gave; and thereupon Josue summoned the Gabaonites into his presence. What means this trick you have played on us, he asked, telling us you lived far away, when you are in truth our near neighbours? You shall lie under a ban; it shall ever be men of your race that hew wood and draw water for the house of the God whom I serve. And they answered, My Lord, we had heard of the promise made by the Lord thy God to his servant Moses, that he would give you all these lands for your own, and dispossess the inhabitants. In terror of our lives at your approach, we devised this stratagem. Now we are at thy mercy; do what seems best, do what seems right to thee. So Josue made good his word; he would not let Israel slay them, but there and then he decreed that they should undertake the service of the Lord's altar on behalf of the whole people, in the place of his choice, hewing wood and drawing water as they do to this day.

10 The king of Jerusalem, Adonisedec, was told of what had befallen; how Josue had taken Hai and overthrown it, making an end of city and king, there as at Jericho; how the Gabaonites had gone over to Israel and become their allies. And he was overcome with fear; this Gabaon was a great city, a royal capital, of more importance than Hai, and with brave warriors to defend it. So, from his palace at Jerusalem, Adonisedec sent envoys to Oham king of Hebron, Sharam king of Jerimoth, Japhia king of Lachis, and Dabir king of Eglon; Come and help me crush the Gabaonites, he said; they have made an alliance with Josue and the people of

- 5 Israel. So it was that these five Amorhite kings, from Jerusalem, Hebron, Jerimoth, Lachis and Eglon, joined their forces and encamped before Gabaon, offering battle.
- 6 And a message came from the besieged city to Josue, who was still in his camp at Galgal: We are thy loyal servants, lose no time in coming to our aid. Hasten to our rescue and relief; all the Amorhite kings of the hill country are banded together against us.
- 7 So Josue came up from Galgal with all his fighting men, that were tried warriors;
- 8 Have no fear, the Lord said to him, I am giving thee the mastery of them; none of them will have strength to withstand thy onslaught. So Josue made a night march from Galgal, and fell upon the enemy un-
- 9 aware. And the Lord threw them into confusion at the onslaught of Israel; great havoc Josue made of them there at Gabaon; then, going in pursuit along the road that leads up to Bethoron, he cut them
- 11 down all the way to Azeca and Maceda. As they fled in rout from the Israelites, down the slope from Bethoron, all the way to Azeca, the Lord sent great hail-stones down on them, so that more of them were killed by hail than by the weapons of Israel.
- 12 It was on this day, when the Lord left the Amorhites powerless before Israel's attack, that Josue made that prayer of his to the Lord, crying out in the hearing of the people, Sun, that art setting over Gabaon, moon, that art rising in Aialon
- 13 valley, stand stricken with awe. Sun and moon stood awe-struck, while the people took vengeance on its enemies. (So the words can be found written in the Book of the Upright.) The sun stood in mid-
- 14 heaven, and for a whole day long did not haste to its setting. Never was so long a day before or since, as that day when the Lord listened to a human prayer, and fought openly on the side of Israel.¹ (Then Josue and all the Israelites returned to their camp at Galgal.)²
- 16 Meanwhile, the five kings had fled, and hidden in a cave by the city of Maceda.
- 17 And Josue, when it was reported to him that the five kings were in hiding there,
- 18 bade his companions roll great stones up

to the mouth of the cave, and set a close watch to see that the men imprisoned there did not escape. For yourselves, said he, do not linger here; pursue the enemy, cutting down every straggler you meet; do not let them reach the safety of their city walls, now that the Lord God has put them in your power. At last, when the enemy had suffered disastrous loss, and were all but exterminated, the survivors took refuge within their city ramparts, and the whole Israelite army returned to Maceda, where Josue had encamped, all safe and sound; none dared lift a hand against them as they went. And now Josue bade them clear the entrance of the cave and bring out the five kings from their hiding-place; and his command was obeyed; out they must come, the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jerimoth, Lachis and Eglon, and be brought into his presence. Hereupon he gathered all Israel about him, and bade all the chieftains of his army go and set foot on the necks of these kings. And when they had come forward, and trampled on the necks of the kings as they lay there, he said to them, Who is afraid now? Who shrinks back now? Keep your courage high and play the man; such is the fate the Lord has decreed for all the enemies you are fighting against. Then Josue slew them with his own hand, and set their bodies up on five gibbets, to hang there till evening. At sunset he had them taken down from their gibbets and thrown into the cave which had been their hiding-place; and the great stones that were used to block the entrance may be seen there still.

The same day, Josue took Maceda and put its garrison to the sword; he slew its king, too, and all its citizens; not even a remnant was left alive; Maceda's king must fare like Jericho's. From Maceda he went on with all his forces to attack Lebna: of this, with its king, the Lord gave Israel mastery, so they put all its inhabitants to the sword, sparing none; Lebna's king, too, must go the way of Jericho's. From Lebna he marched in full strength to Lachis, which he invested and attacked; here, too, the Lord gave Israel the victory, so that they captured it next day; here,

¹ It is not clear where Josue's own words end, nor how much of verses 12-14 is a quotation from the book of Jasher, 'the Upright'; cf. II Kg. 1. 18.

² Some think these words, identical with those of verse 43 below, have been inserted here by accident; cf. verse 21.

too, they put every living thing in it to the sword. At the same time Josue defeated Horam, king of Gazer, who had come to the aid of Lachis, and exterminated his whole people with him. From Lachis he marched to the siege of Eglon, and took it in a single day; and here, as at Lachis, he destroyed every living thing. Thence he led the whole of his forces on to attack Hebron; took it, gave it up to destruction; made an end of its king, and its subject towns, and all that dwelt there, leaving none alive; at Hebron, as at Eglon, all must be put to the sword. Then he turned back to Dabir, which he took and sacked; here too he made an end of its king and all its dependencies; none was spared in the general slaughter, and the king of Dabir fared no better than the kings of Hebron and Lebna.

So Josue conquered all the hill-country of the south, and the plains, and the foothills, and overthrew the kings that reigned there; with the Lord God of Israel for his warrant, he left no trace of the folk who dwelt there, but killed every living thing that was to be found between Cades-Barne and Gaza. All the land of Gosen right up to Gabaon, the domain of so many kings, he took and laid waste with a single onslaught, so well did the Lord God of Israel fight in his cause. Then Josue and all the Israelites returned to their camp at Galgal.

11 At the news of all this, a summons went out from Jabin, king of Asor, to the king of Madon, Jobab, and the kings of Semeron and Achsaph, and all the kings of the north country, on the heights, and in the valley south of Ceneroth, in the plains, too, and the territories of Dor by the sea coast. Chanaanites from east and west, Amorrites and Hethites and Phezeites and Jebusites from the hills, Hevites from the land of Maspha, close to the spurs of Hermon, all alike went out to battle with their armies, an array of men countless as is the sand by the sea shore, with horses too and chariots beyond all reckoning. The meeting-place for all these kings in their

march against Israel was at the waters of Merom.

But the Lord said to Josue, Do not be afraid of them; by this time to-morrow they are all doomed to die at Israel's onslaught. Then thou wilt be able to hamstring those horses of theirs, give those chariots to the flames. So Josue with all his army made a sudden march to the waters of Merom, and there fell upon them; and the Lord gave Israel the mastery, so that they defeated the enemy and pursued them all the way to the famous town of Sidon, and the waters of Maserephoth, and eastwards to Masphe. So hard did Josue press them that none were left surviving; and then he did as the Lord had bidden him, hamstringing their horses and setting fire to their chariots. Then he turned back to Asor, which in old days was paramount among all these kingdoms; he put Jabin to the sword, and destroyed every living thing that dwelt there; no trace of them was left, all must be exterminated, and the city itself burned down. He conquered, too, the capitals of all the neighbouring kings, and destroyed them, as Moses, the Lord's servant, had bidden him, except those which stood among the mountains, or on steep hills;¹ Asor itself was the only well-defended city the Israelites burned down. The spoil and the cattle belonging to these cities they divided among themselves, but left no human creature alive. The Lord's bidding to Josue through Moses was carried out in full; no word of what the Lord had enjoined on Moses but Josue obeyed it.

It was Josue that conquered all the hill-country and the land south of it, the Gosen country and the low valleys, and the region west of them, the hill-country of Israel,² too, and the plain before it. These conquests of his extended from the slopes of the Edomite hills right up to Baalgad, on the Lebanon plain under mount Hermon; the kings, everywhere, were captured, and crushed, and slain. Long time must Josue spend campaigning against them; there was no city that surrendered to the Israelites,

¹ It is not clear whether the Israelites refrained from burning these cities, so as to enjoy the benefit of their fortifications, or failed to capture them, owing to the strength of their natural positions. 'The region west of them' should be, according to the Hebrew text, 'the Jordan valley'. ² Probably this means the hills round Samaria, as opposed to that of Juda. The two names are used below, in verse 21, and are used by anticipation, so far as the present history is concerned (the distinction between 'Israel' and 'Juda' belonging to a period after the death of Solomon).

except the Hevite city of Gabaon, all the rest were reduced by force of arms. For indeed the Lord's purpose was that they should be stubborn-hearted, and be defeated by Israel in battle, with no claim to mercy; so that all might be destroyed, in pursuance of the command the Lord gave to Moses.

At this time, too, Josue made his way up into the mountain country, Hebron, Dabir, Anab, and all the mountain country both of Juda and Israel, to make an end of the Enacim and their cities. He left no trace of the breed of Enac in Israelite territory; they survived only at Gaza, Geth and Azotus. Thus, in fulfilment of the Lord's promise to Moses, Josue occupied the whole country, and gave the several tribes enjoyment of their several portions; and the land was at peace.

12 East of Jordan, then, the Israelites defeated two kings and occupied their territory, reaching from the river Arnon up to mount Hermon; all that eastern land that confronts the desert.¹ Sehon, the Amorrite king that reigned at Hesebon, had a domain that stretched from Aroer, on the banks of the Arnon, half-way up its course (that is, half-way along the frontier of Galaad), to the river Jaboc, which is the Ammonite frontier. Its width was from the desert to the eastern coast of Lake Ceneroth, and the eastern coast of the Desert or Salt Sea (where the road leads to Bethsimoth, just north of the spurs of Phasga). And Og, king of Basan, the last of the Raphaim, who dwelt at Astaroth and Edrai, ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecha and Basan in general, right up to the marches of Gessuri and Machati, and up to the middle point of Galaad, where his domains marched with those of Sehon, the king of Hesebon. It was the Lord's servant Moses that led Israel to the conquest of these two kings, and assigned their lands to Ruben, Gad, and half Manasses.

West of Jordan, it was Josue that led Israel to the conquest of all the kings between Baalgad, in the Lebanon plain, and

the hill-country whose upper slopes are part of Edom; and it was Josue who assigned their territory to the tribes of Israel, giving each its own share to enjoy. Kings of the hill-country and the plain and the valley, kings of the foot-hills and of the desert and of the southern land; Hethite and Amorrite, Chanaanite and Perezite, Hevite and Jebusite. The kings of Jericho, and Hai that is next to Bethel, Jerusalem, Hebron, Jerimoth, Lachis, Eglon, Gazer, Dabir, Gader, Herma, Hered, Lebna, Odullam, Maceda, Bethel, Taphua, Opher, Aphec, Saron, Madon, Asor, Semeron, Achsaph, Thenac, Mageddo, Cades, Jachanan by Carmel, Dor and the region about Dor, and the Galgal tribes, and Thersa, thirty-one kings in all.

13 Afterwards, when Josue was old and near his end, the Lord bade him bethink himself of his great age; here were wide tracts of land still waiting to be apportioned. Here was the pale of the Philistines,² with all the Gessurite land, reaching northwards to Accaron from the dark river that flows along the border of Egypt. This was Chanaanite country, in which five princes of the Philistine race had their capitals, at Gaza, Azotus, Ascalon, Geth and Accaron. Here, too in the south, were the Hevites. Here was all the Chanaanite territory, including Maara (that belonged to the Sidonians), reaching up to Apheca and the Amorrite frontier, and the adjoining territory of the Gibletes. East of that came the Lebanon region, from Baalgad, under mount Hermon, right up to the approaches of Emath. So many mountain peoples, from Lebanon down to the waters of Maserephoth; and all these were to be dispossessed at Israel's coming. These lands, in pursuance of the Lord's command, must be reckoned in among the possessions of Israel.

It was time, then, that he should make a full division of the land among the nine tribes, and that half of Manasses which was attached to them.

The other half of Manasses had already had their lands apportioned to them by

¹ As in Deut. 3, the exact meaning of the geographical indications in verses 1-6 is obscure in the Hebrew text, and still more so in the Latin. ² The pale or enclave of heathen inhabitants still left after the conquest. The Latin version confusingly describes it as 'a galilee', by transliteration from the Hebrew; in verse 5, on the contrary, it translates a proper name, the Gibletes, as if it were a common noun, 'the environs'.

Moses east of the Jordan, with Ruben and Gad, northwards from Aroer on the Arnon, half-way along its course; the whole plain between Medaba and Dibon, and all the cities as far as the Ammonite frontier that belonged once to Sehon, the Amorrite king of Hesebon. Galaad, too, and the border country of Gessuri and Machati, and mount Hermon, and the whole of Basan right up to Salecha; this kingdom of Basan had formerly belonged to Og, the last of the Raphaim, who dwelt at Astaroth and Edrai. These two kings Moses defeated and destroyed, but Israel never dispossessed the people of Gessuri and Machati; they dwell there as their neighbours to this day.

(The tribe of Levi had no lands apportioned to them; the Lord God of Israel had bidden them be content with the victims offered to him in sacrifice as their portion.) The tribe of Ruben, with all its several clans, received its portion from Moses. Their territory began at Aroer, on the Arnon, half-way up its course, and took in all the valley that lies before Medaba, and Hesebon, and the villages on the plain round about. They had Dibon, too, and Bamothbaal, and the town called Baalmaon, Jassa, Cedemoth, and Mephaath, Cariathaim, and Sabama, and Sarathasar, where the hills rise out of the Jordan valley; Bethphogor and the spurs of Phasga and Bethjesimoth. Theirs were all the cities in the plain, all the domains that once were Sehon's. (It was Moses that defeated Sehon, as he defeated also the Madianite chiefs that held their lands from him, Hevi, Recem, Sur, Hur and Rebe, and bade the Israelites put all their army to the sword, the prophet Balaam among them.) Such were the towns and villages that passed into the possession of Ruben's descendants, and they had the river Jordan for their boundary.

It was Moses, too, who gave the tribe of Gad their portion, dividing it up among the several clans of it. Jazer belonged to them, and all the cities of Galaad, and half the Ammonite territory, reaching as far as Aroer, near Rabba. It stretched all the way from Hesebon to Ramoth, Masphe and Betonim, from Manaim to the country round Dabir; and on the low ground it contained Betharam, Bethnemra, Socoth

and Saphon, all the rest of what Sehon had ruled from Hesebon; this tribe, too, had Jordan for its boundary, up to where the further, eastern shore of Lake Cenereth begins. Such were the cities and towns allotted to the several clans of Gad as their portion.

And he also allotted lands to the separated clans of Manasses; the whole of Basan northwards from Manaim, all the domain over which Og, king of Basan, had ruled. This included the sixty townships in Basan which are called Jair's villages, and half of Galaad, and the two cities from which Og ruled over Basan, Astaroth and Edrai. All this now belonged to the descendants of Machir, son of Manasses, Machir's clans being thus separated from the rest. Such was the distribution made by Moses himself, on the plains of Moab, east of Jordan, opposite Jericho. He gave no lands to the sons of Levi, who held the Lord's promise that he himself would be their portion.

14 And now it was left to the high priest Eleazar and Josue the son of Nun to divide up Chanaan itself between the clan chieftains of Israel. The division was made by lot, in pursuance of the command the Lord gave through Moses, among the nine and a half tribes that remained. (Two and a half had been allotted their portions by Moses, on the further side of Jordan; the nine and a half did not include the Levites, since these were not to own territory like their brethren, but must be content with cities to live in and pasture for their beasts around them. Meanwhile, the division of Joseph's posterity into two tribes, Ephraim and Manasses, made up the full number.) The Israelites, then, set about the task of dividing up the land, as the Lord through Moses had bidden them.

So it was that the descendants of Juda appeared before Josue in Galgala. And now Caleb, son of Jephone, the Cenezite, spoke thus to him: Thou hast not forgotten the divine promise that was made to God's servant Moses at Cades-Barne, concerning us two. I was then forty years old, and he had sent me from Cades-Barne to view the land; I brought back with me an honest report, and although my fellow-spies tried

to daunt the spirits of the people, I took, none the less, the part of the Lord my God. And Moses promised me that day, Thou, who hast taken the part of the Lord my God, shalt live to have a portion in the very land thou hast traversed, and leave it to thy race in perpetuity. The Lord has made good his promise, and life is still mine. That word was spoken to Moses forty-five years since, when Israel began its wanderings up and down the desert, and now, a man eighty-five years old, I am as vigorous as I was when I went on that errand; in battle or on the march, the strength of old days is still with me. Give me, now, that hill-country which the Lord promised me in thy own hearing; there are Enacim living on it,¹ in strong, walled cities, and I would fain see if I cannot drive them out, with the Lord at my side, and claim his promise. So Josue blessed him, and gave him Hebron for his portion; ever since then, Hebron has belonged to the family of Caleb, son of Jephone, the Cenezite, the man who took the Lord's part. (Hebron, in earlier days, was called Cariath-Arbe, after the great father of the race.)² And once more the land was at peace.

15 Meanwhile the clans descended from Juda had their territory marked out thus. It marched with Edom, with the desert of Sin that stretches out towards the midday sun, at the southernmost point of all. Beginning at the end of the Salt Sea, that is, at its southern bay, the frontier followed the Scorpion Pass till it crossed over to Sina, then climbed up to Cades-Barne, and so reached Ebron. Then it climbed up to Addar, and curved round Carcaa; from which point it crossed over to Asemona, and so reached the brook of Egypt, coming to an end at the open sea. These were to be the limits of the southern frontier; on the east, Juda was bounded by the Salt Sea, right up to the mouth of Jordan. From the extreme bay of the Salt Sea up to Jordan the frontier went north-

wards; then it climbed up to Beth-Hagla, turned north to Beth-Araba, and went up to the Stone of Boen, son of Ruben. From the Valley of Achor it stretched to the borders of Debera, leaving Galgala on the north so as to climb up to Adommim on the south side of the valley; it crossed the water-course that is called the Spring of the Sun, and made its way on to the Spring of Rogel. Then it went up the valley of the Son of Ennom by its southern or Jebusite side, that is by Jerusalem; and thence stretched across to the mountain summit which faces Geennom from the west, and stands at the southern end of the Valley of Raphaim. From that summit it crossed to the well of Nephtoa, and reached as far as the villages on mount Ephron; then it curved round to Baala, which is also called Cariathiarim, the City of the Woods; and from Baala it went westwards as far as mount Seir, northwards to Cheslon along the side of mount Jarim, and so down to Bethsames and across to Thamma. Then northward along the slopes in the direction of Accaron, and round to Sechrona, and across mount Baala, and at last it reached Jebneel, and found its western end at the open sea. Such were the bounds within which the clans of Juda were to dwell.

(Hebron, then called Cariath-Arbe after the father of Enac, which was assigned at the Lord's command to Caleb, son of Jephone, was in the very heart of Juda. Three of the Enacim he rooted out of it, Sesai and Ahiman and Tholmai, of Enac's true breed; then he attacked Dabir, which in old days was called Cariath-Sepher, the city of Writings. He had promised that whoever defeated and took Cariath-Sepher should have the hand of his daughter Axa in marriage; and it was taken by his own younger brother, Othoniel, son of Cenez, to whom he wedded his daughter Axa accordingly. One day he heard her sighing as she rode on her ass in his company, and asked what ailed her. She had been urged by her husband to win him a grant of land from her father. So her answer was, Grant

¹ 'In thy own hearing; there are Enacim living on it'; the Hebrew text is interpreted by some as meaning 'Thou hast heard that there are Enacim living on it'.
² 'After the great father of the race', according to the usual interpretation of the Hebrew text, this should mean ARBE, father of Enac (cf. 15. 13). St Jerome, however, supposes a popular belief that was not only Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (cf. Gen. 35. 27) but also Adam had been buried there, whence it was called 'the City of the Four Men'; and this appears to be the sense intended by the Latin version, 'there among the Enacim the great Adam is placed'. The last eight words of the verse, if they are in their right place here, seem to refer by anticipation to the events narrated in 15. 14 below.

me a favour; the portion thou hast given me is southern land and dry, give me well-watered land too. So he gave her the High Springs and the Low Springs both together.¹)

The clans of Juda, then, had their lands assigned to them; and these are the names of the cities they had. On the south, where Juda marched with Edom, Cabsael, Eder, Jagur, Cina, Dimona, Adada, Cades, Asor, Jethnam, Ziph, Telem, Baloth, New Asor (or Cariath-Hesron, which is the same as Asor), Amam, Sama, Molada, Asergadda, Hassemon, Bethphelet, Hasersual, Bersabes, Baziothia, Baala, Jim, Esem, Ethholad, Cesil, Harma, Siceleg, Medemena, Sensenna, Lebaoth, Selim, Aen, and Remmon, twenty-nine cities in all.²

In the lowlands, Estaol, Sarea, Asena, Zanoë, Aengannim, Taphua, Enaim, Jerimoth, Adullam, Socho, Azeca, Saraim, Adithaim, Gedera and Gederothaim, fourteen in all. West of these, Sanan, Hadassa, Magdalgad, Delean, Masepha, Jecthel, Lachis, Bascath, Eglon, Chebbon, Leheman, Cethlis, Gideroth, Bethdagon, Nama and Maceda, sixteen in all. North of these, Labana, Ether, Asan, Jephtha, Esna, Nesib, Ceila, Achzib and Maresa, nine in all. And below these, Accaron with its townships and villages, the part between Accaron and the sea, and the approaches to the region of Azotus; Azotus with its townships and villages, Gaza with its townships and villages, and so down to the brook of Egypt, with the open sea for frontier.

In the hill-country, Samir, Jether, Sochoth, Danna, Cariath-Scenna (or Dabir), Anab, Istemo, Anim, Gosen, Olon and Gilo, eleven in all. Arab, Ruma, Esaan, Janum, Beththaphua, Apheca, Athmatha, Cariath-Arbe (or Hebron) and Sior, nine in all. Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Jota, Jezrael, Jucadam, Zanoë, Accain, Gabaa and Thamna, ten in all. Halhul, Bessur, Gedor, Mareth, Bethanoth, Elecon, six in all. And two cities besides, Cariath-Baal (or Cariathiarim), the City of the Woods, and Arebba.

And in the desert by the Salt Sea, Betharaba, Meddin, Sachacha, Nebsan, and the City of Salt, and Engaddi, six in all. And with each city went the villages that surrounded it.

But the Jebusites that dwell in Jerusalem the sons of Juda could never exterminate, so there are Jebusites living in Jerusalem side by side with the men of Juda to this day.

16 The territory which was allotted to the descendants of Joseph reached up to Jericho and the waters of Jordan by Jericho on the east, taking in the waste land that climbs up from Jericho to the hill-country of Bethel. From Bethel it went to Luza, and past the confines of Archi to Ataroth; then it sloped down westwards along the borders of Jephleti to the neighbourhood of Lower Bethoron and Gazer, and came out at last to the sea. It was divided between the two tribes that sprang from Joseph, those of Manasses and Ephraim. The clans of Ephraim had a frontier which went along from the east as far as Ataroth-Addar and Upper Bethoron;³ thence it extended to the sea; its northern point was Machmethath, and thence the boundary was drawn eastwards as far as Thanathselo. Then it passed to the east of Janoe, and came down from Janoe to Ataroth and Naaratha, and so down towards Jericho, where it reached the Jordan again. From Taphua it jutted out westwards as far as the Valley of Reeds, and so reached the sea.⁴ Such were the possessions of the Ephraimite clans, whose cities and townships were a separate enclosure in the middle of the territory which belonged to Manasses. The tribe of Ephraim did not exterminate the Chanaanites who lived at Gazer, so that there are Chanaanites living to this day within the confines of Ephraim, but as tributaries.

17 Lands, too, must be allotted to Manasses, Joseph's first-born. The first-born of Manasses was Machir, that was father to Galaad, and he, by feat

¹ This passage is repeated in the Book of Judges (1. 10-15). ² The figure given, twenty-nine, is considerably too small; it may be that some of the names represented in the text as if they were the names of fresh places are really alternatives. ³ The account given in the text is very confused, and reads at first sight as if Ataroth-Addar and Upper Bethoron were at the eastern end of the Ephraimite territory; whereas we know that it extended to the Jordan. ⁴ The Latin version has 'to the Salt Sea', which can only mean the Dead Sea; obviously a geographical impossibility.

- of arms, made Galaad and Basan his possession. But there were six other lines descended from Manasses through Abiezer, Helec, Esriel, Sechem, Hegher, and Semida; all these were heirs male to Manasses, and so to Joseph. But Hopher (who was descended from Manasses through Galaad and Machir) had a son, Salphaad, that died without male issue; there were five daughters, Maala, Noa, Hegla, Melcha, and Thersa. These appeared before the high priest Eleazar, and Josue the son of Nun, and the chieftains, to claim the right the Lord had granted them through Moses, of inheriting side by side with their father's kinsmen. So the Lord's command was obeyed, and they were allowed to inherit; and now, apart from Galaad and Basan, beyond Jordan, ten portions of territory must be allowed to Manasses. His other sons were provided for in Galaad, but five remained, and the five heiresses must have their portion too.
- The frontier of Manasses, from where it marched with Aser, came down to Machmethath, opposite Sichem, and then turned to the right so as to include the neighbourhood of the Springs of Taphua. (Taphua itself, close to the border of Manasses, belonged to Ephraim, but Manasses held the adjoining lands.) Then it went down to the southern side of the stream which flows through the Valley of Reeds, through cities belonging to Ephraim, which are here confused with those of Manasses. Thenceforward Manasses has a true frontier, on the north side of the stream, reaching down to the sea; Ephraim lies to the south, Manasses to the north, both of them bounded by the sea coast; their joint territory marches with Aser on the north, and Issachar on the east. Manasses also had lands in Issachar and in Aser, Bethsan, Jeblaam, Dor, Endor, Thenac and Mageddo, with the villages dependent on them, and a third part of Nopheth; but they could not get the mastery of these cities; the Chanaanites made bold to live on in their own country.
- When the Israelites had grown stronger, they subdued the Chanaanites and forced them to pay tribute, but did not exterminate them.
- When the tribes descended from Joseph

¹ See Num. 27.

complained to Josue that he had allotted to them only a single division of the country, although the Lord's blessing had made them so populous, Josue replied, If there are so many of you, and the hill-country of Ephraim does not suffice you, make your way into the forest-country, and clear room for yourselves there, where the Pherezites and the Raphaim live. We cannot go across to the hill-country, answered the sons of Joseph; there is a valley in between, where Bethsan lies, with its townships, and Jezrael; and on that low ground there are Chanaanites who have chariots made of iron. But Josue still told the sons of Joseph, the men of Ephraim and Manasses, So great, so powerful a people as you are must not be content with one lot. Cross over to the hill-country and fell the trees, to make yourselves room to dwell in; drive out these Chanaanites, for all their iron chariots, for all their great strength, and you will spread your frontiers further yet.

18 And now all the Israelites gathered in Silo, and set up the tabernacle that bore witness of the covenant, there in their own domain. But there were seven tribes of Israel which had not yet had their lands allotted to them; and to these Josue said, What, still hanging back, when the land promised by the Lord God of your fathers waits for you to occupy it? Choose out three men from each tribe, and let me send them to make a circuit of the country; they shall report to me what territory best suits the numbers of this tribe or that. The land must needs be divided up into seven portions, now that Juda is provided for in the south, and the descendants of Joseph further north. Come here to me, and let me cast lots between you in the Lord's presence, when you have plotted the land that is left over: it must be in seven divisions, no allowance made for the Levites, whose portion is the Lord's priestly office, none for Gad, Ruben, and the separate half of Manasses, since the Lord's servant Moses has already assigned them lands east of the Jordan. So the men appointed set out on their journey to make a survey of the land; at the end of it, they were to return with their report to

² Cf. note on Num. 26. 54.

Josue, and there, at Silo, in the Lord's presence, the lots should be cast. To the camp at Silo, then, they returned, when they had made their survey and written down particulars of the sevenfold division in a book; and at Silo lots were cast in the Lord's presence, and the seven tribes had their portions assigned to them.

It was the clans of Benjamin whose lot was drawn first; and the territory that fell to them lay between Juda and Joseph. Their frontier began at the Jordan, and went northwards till it was north of Jericho, then climbed up westwards into the hills, till it reached the desert of Bethaven. It passed south of Luza (now Bethel), and so reached Ataroth-Addar, on the hill south of Lower Bethoron; here it altered its westward course and turned towards the mid-day sun, passing south along the ridge that faces Bethoron and so reaching Cariath-Baal, (or Cariathiarim), which belongs to Juda, This formed the western side of the territory, facing the sea. Then, along its southern edge the frontier began its seaward course,¹ reaching the Spring of Nephtoa; and so it went across to the side of the hill looking down on the Valley of the Sons of Ennom, at the southern end of the Valley of Raphaim. Thence it crossed to Geennom (the Valley of Ennom) on its southern or Jebusite side, and reached the Spring of Rogel. Now it bore northwards, through Ensemes, the Spring of the Sun, to the mounds near the Adommim slope; thence it passed on to Aben-Boen (the stone of Boen, son of Ruben), reaching lower ground there and at last coming down into the Jordan Valley. It went northwards again to Beth-Hagla, and finished at the northern bay of the Salt Sea, south of Jordan, so reaching its eastern limit.

Such was the compass of the territory granted to the clans of Benjamin. The cities it contained were Jericho, Beth-Hagla, Vale of Casis, Betharaba, Samairaim, Bethel, Avim, Aphara, Ophera, the Town of the Ammonites, Ophni, and Gabece, twelve cities in all; also Gabaon, Rama, Beroth, Mesphe, Caphara, Amosa, Recem, Jarephel, Tharela, Sela, Eleph, Jebus (or Jerusalem), Gabaath and Ca-

riath, fourteen cities in all; with their dependent villages. All these belonged to the clans of Benjamin.

19 The next lot which was drawn was that of Simeon; and the lands assigned to them were interspersed among those of Juda; namely Bersabee, Sabece, Molada, Hasersual, Bala, Asem, Eltholad, Bethul, Harma, Siceleg, Bethmarchaboth, Hasersusa, Bethlebaoth and Sarohen, thirteen cities in all; also Ain, Remmon, Athar, and Asan, four cities in all with their dependent villages. All the villages round about these cities, down to Baalath-Beer-Ramath in the south, belonged to the clans of Simeon, being part of the territory allotted to Juda, which was too large for them, so that they must needs share it with Simeon.

The third lot drawn was that of Zabulon; their territory began at Sarid, and went out in the direction of the sea through Merala and Debbaseth to the stream that flows past Jeconam. From Sarid eastward it passed through the confines of Ceseleth-Thabor to Dabereth, climbing up into the hill-country at Japhie; thence it made its way east by Gath-Hepher and Thacasin to Remmon, Amthar, and Noa. It took in Hanathon in the north, and went out as far as the valley of Jephthahel, Cateth, Naalol, Semeron, Jedala, and Bethlehem; thus twelve cities with their dependent villages made up the portion granted to Zabulon; both town and village were theirs.

The fourth was the lot of Issachar; it included Jezrael, Casaloth, Sunem, Hapharaim, Seon, Anaharath, Rabboth, Cesion, Abes, Rameth, Engannim, Enhadda, and Bethpheses, and reached as far as Thabor, Schesima, and Bethsames, so as to make Jordan its boundary; sixteen cities in all, with their dependent villages made up the portion granted to Issachar; both town and village were theirs.

The fifth was the lot of Aser; their territory was round about Halcath, Chali, Beten, Axaph, Elmelech, Amaad and Mesal; it reached along the sea as far as Carmel and Sihor-Labanath, and eastwards it went through Bethdagon to the frontier of Zabulon and the valley of Jephthahel.

¹ This ought to mean westwards, towards the Mediterranean, but it seems quite clear at this point the boundary of Benjamin turned eastwards; and the sea is presumably the Dead Sea, its eastward limit.

Then it went northwards to Bethemec
 28 and Nehiel, with Cabul on the left, to
 Abran, Rohob, Hamon, and Cana, where
 29 it marches with greater Sidon. Thence it
 turned back through Horma towards the
 great fortress of Tyre, reaching as far as
 Hosa, and coming down to the sea again
 30 where it touches Achziba. It also took in
 Amma, Aphec, and Rohob; twenty-two
 31 cities with their dependent villages made
 up the portion granted to Aser; both town
 and village were theirs.

The sixth was the lot of Nephthali; it
 stretched all the way from Heleph to Elon
 in Saananim, Adami, Neceb, Jebnael, and
 Lecum, with Jordan for its boundary.
 34 Then the frontier turned westwards, at
 Azanoth-Thabor, and went out to Hucuca
 to meet the frontier of Zabulon on the
 south; on the west it marched with Aser,
 and on the east with Juda-beyond-Jordan.¹
 35 The fortified cities of Nephthali were
 Assedim, Ser, Emath, Reccath, Cenereth,
 36 Edema, Arama, Asor, Cedec, Edrai, En-
 hasor, Jeron, Magdalel, Horem, Bethanath
 and Bethsames; nineteen cities with their
 dependent villages made up the portion
 39 granted to Nephthali; both town and
 village were theirs.

And the seventh lot was that of Dan;
 41 their territory included Sara and Esthaol,
 Hir-Semes (that is, the City of the Sun),
 42 Selebin, Aialon, Jethela, Elon, Themna,
 44 Acron, Elthece, Gebbethon, Balaath, Jud,
 46 Bane, Barach, Gethremmon, Mejarcon
 and Arecon; its frontiers reached Joppe,
 47 and went no further. But the Danites
 made an expedition against Lesem, and
 captured it; they exterminated the in-
 habitants, and occupied it as a colony of
 their own, calling it Lesem-Dan after the
 48 name of their ancestor. These cities, with
 their dependent villages, made up the por-
 tion granted to the Danite clans.

When he had finished dividing up the
 49 land by lot among the tribes, the Israelites
 gave Josue the son of Nun lands of his own
 50 among the rest, as the Lord had bidden
 them. He asked for the city of Thamnath-
 Saraa, in the hill-country of Ephraim, and
 51 built up its walls, and so dwelt there. Such
 was the division of the land made by the

high priest Eleazar, and Josue the son of
 Nun, and the chief men of Israel's clans
 and tribes, there in Silo, in the Lord's
 presence, at the door of the tabernacle that
 bore witness to his covenant.

20 And now the Lord gave Josue
 this message for the sons of Is-
 rael; You must choose out sanctuary
 towns, as Moses in my name commanded
 you. These will offer refuge to anyone who
 has slain a man by misadventure, and
 escaped from the vengeance of his kins-
 men. Taking flight to one of these cities,
 he will stand before the gates and call upon
 the city elders to declare him innocent;
 whereupon they must admit him, and
 grant him a dwelling-place. When the
 avenger comes in pursuit, demanding
 blood for blood, they will not give up the
 fugitive. He has slain his neighbour un-
 wittingly, and cannot be shewn to have
 borne malice against him beforehand. In
 that city he will live, until he has been put
 on trial for his offence, and again until
 the death of the high priest who then holds
 office.² After that, the man who has shed
 blood may return to his own city and home,
 taking sanctuary no longer.

Their choice fell on Cedec, in the pale
 of the Nephthali hill-country,³ Sichem
 among the hills of Ephraim, and Cariath-
 Arbe (or Hebron) among the hills of Juda.
 Across the Jordan, east of Jericho, they
 agreed on Bosor, on the desert lowlands,
 for Ruben; Ramoth, in Galaad, for Gad;
 and Gaulon, in Basan, for Manasses. Is-
 raelite or alien who had shed blood un-
 wittingly, and would escape from the ven-
 geance of the next of kin, must make his
 way to one of the cities thus set apart, until
 he could stand his trial before the people.

21 Meanwhile the heads of the
 Levite households approached the
 high priest Eleazar, and Josue the son of
 Nun, and the clan chiefs of Israel, all
 gathered there at Silo now that Chanaan
 was won. It was the Lord's command to
 Moses, they said, that we should have
 cities to live in, with lands round them on
 which we could pasture our beasts. And

¹ If the text is sound, Juda-beyond-Jordan must be a district not elsewhere mentioned. ² It is no
 doubt implied that the trial has gone in favour of the accused. ³ 'The pale'; see note on 13. 2. The
 galilee or enclave here mentioned was the country which came to be called 'Galilee' in later times.

so, in pursuance of the Lord's command, cities and lands were granted to them by the sons of Israel.

The lot fell first on the line of Caath. Among these, the family of the high priest Aaron were to receive thirteen cities from Juda, Simeon, and Benjamin; the rest of the Caathites, Levites that were not of the priestly family, ten cities from Ephraim, Dan, and the western half of Manasses. Issachar, Aser, Nephthali, and the eastern half of Manasses, in Basan, were to give the line of Gerson thirteen cities; Ruben, Gad, and Zabulon to give the line of Merari twelve cities. Thus was the command the Lord had given through Moses carried out, and the Israelites handed over to the Levites the cities and lands allotted to them.

These are the names of the cities which Josue handed over in Juda and Simeon to the family of Aaron, whose lot came first among the descendants of Caath. One was Cariath-Arbe, called after the father of Enac; Hebron, that is, in the hill-country of Juda, with lands round it. (He had given the countryside, with the villages in it, to Caleb the son of Jephone as his portion; but Hebron itself, the city of refuge, with the lands close to it, he gave to the family of Aaron.) The others were Lobna, and the lands round Lobna, Jether, Esthemo, Holon, Dabir, Ain, Jeta, and Bethsames, with the lands round them; nine cities out of the two tribes aforesaid. From the lands of Benjamin he handed over Gabaon, Gabae, Anathoth and Almon, four city-enclosures. Thus Aaron's family had thirteen city-enclosures in all; the Levites of Caath's line received from Ephraim, one city of refuge, Sichem, and besides this, Gazer, Cibsaim and Bethoron, four city-enclosures. From Dan, Eltheco, Gabathon, Aialon, and Gethremmon, four city-enclosures. From western Manasses, Thanach and their own town of Gethremmon, two city-enclosures. Thus there were ten city-enclosures to the Caathites of lower rank.

The Levites of Gerson's line received

from eastern Manasses one city of refuge, Gaulon in Basan; and also Bosram; two city-enclosures. From Issachar, Cesion and Dabereh, Jaramoth and Engannim; four city-enclosures. From Aser, Masal, Abdon, Helcath and Rohob; four city-enclosures. From Nephthali, one city of refuge, Cedes in the pale of Nephthali; also Hammoth-Dor and Carthan; three city-enclosures. Thus there were thirteen city-enclosures granted to the Gersonites.

The Merarites' families, all Levites of lower rank, received from Zabulon Jecnam, Cartha, Damna and Naalol; four city-enclosures. From Ruben on the east side of Jordan, there was one city of refuge, Bosor out in the wilderness; and four other city-enclosures were also taken out, Misor, Jaser, Jethson and Mephaath.² From Gad, one city of refuge, Ramoth in Galaad; also Manaim, Hesebon and Jaser, four city-enclosures; thus there were twelve city-enclosures granted to the families of Merari.

Altogether, then, the Levites had forty-eight cities, distributed among the various possessions of Israel, and lands attached to them; each family among them had its own domain.

Thus the Lord God made over to Israel the whole of the territory he had promised to their fathers; they had a home of their own to settle in, secure from attack by any of the nations which surrounded them, since these no longer ventured to offer resistance, but submitted to their rule. No word of the promises which the Lord had made to them remained unfulfilled.

22 It was at this time that Josue summoned the men of Ruben and Gad, and the eastern half of Manasses, and spoke to them thus: You have done as the Lord's servant Moses commanded you, and given me, too, full obedience. All this while you have kept true to the bidding of the Lord your God, and stood by your brethren, waiting for this day. Now the Lord your God has granted to your brethren the security and rest he promised

¹ Both the Hebrew text and the Latin version seem to imply that there were two separate cities called Gethremmon; but this may be due to an oversight in copying. The Septuagint Greek has a different name in this verse, Jebatha (or perhaps Bethesda); a different name again, Baalam, is found in 1 Par. 6, 70.

² The Hebrew text is here uncertain; both the Septuagint Greek and Latin versions give five cities instead of four, if Bosor is included. Probably Jaser has been copied into this verse by mistake, and belongs really to the verse following (under Gad).

them. Return, then, to your own tents, and enjoy the possessions which the Lord's servant Moses allotted to you on the
5 further side of Jordan; yet always keeping carefully in mind, and carrying out in act, the terms of that law which the Lord's servant Moses enjoined upon you. You must still love the Lord your God, and follow the paths he has chosen, obeying his commandments, keeping close to him, and offering him the service of your heart and soul.

6 Then Josue blessed them, and sent
7 them back to their dwelling-place. (With Ruben and Gad went those tribesmen of Manasses to whom Moses had allotted territory in Basan; Josue had given the rest a portion with their brethren west of the Jordan.) And as he sent them back, after
8 giving them his blessing, he said, You will have rich store of wealth to take home with you, silver and gold, bronze and iron, and garments in abundance; in all the spoils taken from the enemy you, too, must have
9 your share. So Ruben and Gad and half Manasses left Silo, left Chanaan behind them, and returned to the home Moses had granted them at the Lord's bidding, in Galaad. And when they reached the Chanaanite bank of Jordan, they built there, near the river, an altar of commanding height.

11 When the rest of the Israelites learned beyond doubt, that the three tribes had built an altar on the banks of Jordan, there in Chanaan itself, in full view of Israel,
12 they all mustered at Silo, ready to make
13 an expedition against them. Meanwhile, Phinees, son of the high priest Eleazar,
14 was sent into Galaad, and with him ten
15 chieftains, one from each tribe; and there, in Galaad, they remonstrated with the men of Ruben, Gad, and Manasses. With this message the general assembly of the Lord's
16 people had entrusted them: What means this impiety? Would you forsake the Lord God of Israel, withdraw from his worship, and raise an unhallowed altar? Have we not suffered enough for our sin in Beelphegor, that cost us so many lives, and has left its mark upon us still? Your revolt against the Lord to-day will bring his vengeance on the whole of Israel to-morrow.
19 If there is some defilement in this land of yours that must be atoned for, cross over

into our land, where the Lord's tabernacle is, and dwell with us; do not forsake the Lord, and your fellowship with us, by building a fresh altar, to rival the altar of the Lord our God. Think how the Lord's vengeance fell on the whole people, when Achan son of Zare transgressed his commands; that was but one man's sin, and alas, how many died for it!

But the three tribes had their answer ready for the chieftains of Israel: The Lord God is our witness, the Almighty Lord God is our witness; let Israel ask proof from him! Let him be our protector no longer, let him smite us with his punishments here and now, if he sees that this altar of ours was built in any spirit of rebellion against him. Let him condemn and punish us, if we have built it with any thought of offering sacrifice or victim or welcome-offering there. This rather was our thought, this was our design; it may be that in time to come your children will turn upon ours and ask them, What have you to do with the God of Israel? Has he not put Jordan there as a barrier between us and you? Men of Ruben and Gad, the Lord will have none of you! Should we allow them such an opportunity of stealing our children away from the worship of the Lord? No, we were better advised than that. We determined to build an altar, that
2 should never know burnt-sacrifice or offering; it was to be a monument of our claims
3 upon you, of our children's claims upon yours. We would safeguard our right of bringing the Lord burnt-sacrifice and victim and welcome-offering; your children should never say to ours, The Lord will have none of you! Let them say it, and our
4 children will reply, And the altar? The altar which our fathers raised, not for burnt-sacrifice or offering, but for a monument of our claim on you? Far be such
5 treachery from our thoughts, as to rebel against the Lord, and forsake the paths he has traced for us, never will we present burnt-sacrifice or offering or victim save at the altar raised to the Lord our God, before his tabernacle!

Such answer they made, the men of
6 Ruben and Gad and half Manasses; whereupon Phinees and the envoys who accompanied him were well content, and accepted their plea willingly enough.

31 Phinees himself, son of the high priest Eleazar, was their spokesman. Now we are sure, he said, that the Lord God dwells among us. By clearing yourselves of this charge, you have freed Israel from the
32 dread of the Lord's vengeance. So they bade farewell to Galaad, to Ruben and to Gad, and went back with their news to the other Israelites in Chanaan. These were well content, and praised God for it; no more was heard of making an expedition against the three tribes and ravaging their
33 possessions. And the name given by the men of Ruben and Gad to the altar they had built was Ed, the Record; Here we have put it on record, they said of it, that the Lord is God.

23 The Lord had granted Israel long years of peace, with all their neighbours subject to them, when Josue,
1 2 now grown to be a very old man, summoned all Israel, with their elders, judges, chieftains and magistrates, and spoke thus to them. I am an old man now, and near
1 3 my end, and you can see for yourselves how the Lord God has fought on your side
1 4 against the nations that surround you; how he has divided up the land between you, from Jordan on the east to the shores of the open sea. Many nations are still
1 5 left; and these, too, the Lord your God will dispossess, making room for you to occupy their lands, in fulfilment of his promise.

1 6 But you must be resolute, and observe jealously all the terms of that law which Moses committed to writing, never swerve
1 7 from them to right or to left. You must not consort with these nations that survive, and learn to swear by the names of their gods, or enslave yourselves to their worship; you must keep true to the Lord your
1 8 God, as you have till now. If you will do that, the Lord God will dispossess great nations, powerful nations, to make room for you; none will be able to withstand
1 9 your onslaught. A thousand enemies will take flight before a single man of your company, so well the Lord will keep his promise to fight on your side. On peril of your lives, then, keep your hearts true to the Lord your God. If you consent to follow closely in the false ways of neighbouring peoples, allying yourselves with

them by marriage and making friends of them, I warn you here and now that the Lord will never dispossess them to make room for you. Evermore they will be at your side, ready to snare and entrap you and catch your feet unawares, eyesores to blind you; and at last he will dispossess you instead, banish you utterly from this fair land he has given you for your home.

The time has come when I must go the way all mortal things go at last; and I would have you cherish this message deep in your hearts. Of all the promises the Lord made you, not one has missed fulfilment; and as he has made good his promises by granting you the prosperity you now enjoy, so he will make good his threats, by dispossessing you and banishing you from this fair land of yours, if you do not keep true to the covenant the Lord your God has made with you. Enslave yourselves to the worship of other gods, and the Lord's vengeance will come upon you swiftly and suddenly, till the fair land he has given you knows you no more.

24 And once more Josue gathered all the tribes of Israel at Sichem, with their elders, judges, chieftains and magistrates. They stood there in the Lord's presence, and he spoke thus to the people; Here is a message from the Lord your God. Long ago, these ancestors of yours, Thare and his sons Abraham and Nachor, had a home beyond the Euphrates, and there worshipped alien gods. It was I that bade your father Abraham leave Mesopotamia, and brought him here, to Chanaan, instead. It was I that gave him heirs to succeed him, Isaac, and Isaac's sons, Jacob and Esau. For Esau, I found a home in the hill-country of Seir, while Jacob and his sons made their way into Egypt. Then I sent Moses and Aaron to smite Egypt down with wonders and prodigies, and so rescued you and your fathers from it. When your fathers reached the Red Sea, they found that the Egyptians had come in pursuit of them with chariots and horses, to the sea's very brink. It was to me, the Lord, that Israel cried out for aid; and I put a curtain of darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea back to overwhelm them. What was done in Egypt was done under your eyes.

8 For a long while you dwelt in the desert. Then I led you forward into the country of the Amorrhites, beyond Jordan; and when these offered battle, I gave you the victory over them, so that you could exterminate them, and take possession of
9 their lands. Balac, too, son of Sephor, the king of Moab, became your enemy, and sent for Balaam, son of Beor, to put you
10 under a curse; but I would not let him have his way; it was still my blessing he pronounced; and so I gave you the victory.
11 You crossed Jordan, and made your way to Jericho. And the men of Jericho withstood you, Amorrhite and Perezite, Chanaanite and Hethite, Gergesite and Hevite and Jebusite, but I gave you the mastery
12 over them. I sent hornets in your path, and drove two kings of the Amorrhites out of their countries, before they could suffer
13 from bow or sword of yours. I have given you lands that others had tilled, cities to dwell in, not of your building, vineyards and oliveyards, not of your planting.
14 And now, will you fear the Lord, giving him full and loyal service, will you banish the gods your fathers obeyed in Egypt, or in Mesopotamia, and serve the Lord only?
15 If the Lord's service mislikes you, choose some other way. Shall it be the gods your fathers worshipped in Mesopotamia, or the gods of the Amorrhites, in whose land you dwell? I and mine will worship the Lord.
16 And with that, the whole people cried in answer, Never will we forsake the Lord, and yield ourselves to alien gods! Never will we forsake the Lord our God, who rescued us and our fathers from slavery in Egypt, who did signal miracles under our very eyes, who protected us on our long
18 journey, so beset by enemies, who dispossessed all these tribes, of native Amorrhite stock, to make room for us here. Serve we the Lord; he is our own
19 God. You? said Josue. You are not fit to serve the Lord; he is a God set apart, fiercely jealous in his love, not one to overlook such sinful rebellions as yours; if you

should forsake him in time to come, and worship other gods, he would repent of all his goodness to you, and you would be involved in misery and ruin. That shall
21 never be, cried the people; the Lord, we will serve the Lord! I call you to witness,
22 said Josue, that you have chosen the Lord's service; and they answered, We are thy witnesses. Why then, said he, banish all
23 alien gods from your company, and turn your hearts to the Lord God of Israel. And the people told Josue, We will worship the
24 Lord our God, and obey his commandments. So Josue, that day, made a covenant with them, there in Sicheim, and set
25 before them the laws and decrees they were to follow; and he wrote down in the
26 book which contained the divine law, all that had passed. He took a great stone, too, and set it up under the oak that stood
27 there in the Lord's precincts; This stone, he said to the people, shall bear witness that it has heard all these warnings the Lord has given you; so that you will never
28 be able to deny it, and cheat the Lord your God of his due. And with that he sent them home to the lands assigned to them.

After this, the Lord's servant Josue
29 died, a hundred and ten years old, and they buried him within his own domain at Thamnath-Sare, in the hill-country of Ephraim, on the northern side of mount Gaas. And Israel remained true to the worship of the Lord as long as Josue lived, and during the life-time of men already
30 growing old who long survived him; men who had witnessed the great things the Lord had done for Israel.

And now the bones of Joseph, which the
31 Israelites had brought with them from Egypt, were buried at Sicheim, in the piece of land Jacob bought for a hundred lambs from Hemor, that was father to Sicheim; a piece of land that belonged to Joseph's descendants.

And when Aaron's son Eleazar died, he
32 too was buried in the hill-country of Ephraim, where his son Phineas had received a grant of land at Gabaath.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Now that Josue was dead, the sons of Israel asked counsel of the Lord, to know who should be their champion against the Chanaanites, and bear the brunt of the attack. And the Lord's bidding was, Juda shall be your champion; I have marked it down for his conquest. Upon this, the men of Juda said to their brethren, the Simeonites, Come and help us win these lands of ours, and we, in our turn, will help to win your lands. So the men of Simeon marched at Juda's side, and when they went to the attack, the Lord gave them mastery over Chanaanite and Pherezite at Bezeac, where they overcame an army of ten thousand men. They encountered the king, Adonibezec, there in his capital; and when Chanaanite and Pherezite were routed, and Adonibezec fled, they pursued and caught him, and mutilated him, cutting off his thumbs and his great toes. There were seventy kings, Adonibezec said, that used to eat the crumbs left under my table, mutilated hand and foot, every one. God has served me as I served others. And they took him to Jerusalem, where he died. This city of Jerusalem was attacked and taken by the sons of Juda, who put the inhabitants to the sword, and burnt it all down.

They went down, too, and routed Chanaan on hill, desert and plain. They even attacked the Chanaanites who lived at Hebron (which in old days was called Cariath Arbe), defeating Sesai, Ahiman, and Tholmai; then they marched against Dabir, that was once called Cariath-Sepher, the City of Writings. (Caleb had promised that whoever defeated and took Cariath-Sepher should have the hand of his daughter Axa in marriage; and it was taken by his own younger brother, Othoniel son of Cenez, to whom he wedded his daughter Axa accordingly. One day he heard her sighing as she rode on her ass in his company, and asked what ailed her. She had been urged by her husband to win

him a grant of land from her father. So her answer was, Grant me yet one present; the portion thou hast given me is parched land; give me well-watered land too. So he gave her the High Springs and the Low Springs both together.¹) When the men of Juda made their expedition from the city of Palm-trees, to conquer the waste land that was to be theirs south of Arad, they were accompanied by the Cinites, into whose clan Moses had married; and these shared the land with them.² Together, Juda and Simeon defeated and destroyed the Chanaanites in Sephaath; which city was afterwards called Horma; that is, Forfeited. Gaza, too, and Ascalon, and Accaron, with the regions around them fell into Juda's power; and still the Lord was on their side; so that they occupied all the hill-country, although they could not overcome the plain-dwellers, that had scythed chariots in plenty. So Caleb had his portion, as Moses promised that he should; the city of Hebron, where he defeated the three sons of Enac. As for Jerusalem, Benjamin could never exterminate the Jebusites that lived there, and they share it with the sons of Benjamin to this day.

Meanwhile the men of Joseph made an expedition against Bethel, where the Lord gave them good speed. They were laying siege to the city (which in former times was called Luza) when they found a man escaping from it, and promised him his life if he would shew them how to enter it; this he did, and they put the inhabitants to the sword, except this one man and his family. And he, after this escape, made his way into the Hethite country, where he built a city that is still called Luza. In Manasses, Bethsan, Thanac, Dor, Jeblaam and Mageddo, with the villages around them, were never cleared of their inhabitants; the Chanaanites made bold to live on there. When the Israelites had grown stronger, they subdued them and forced them to pay tribute, but did not

¹ See Josue 15. 14-19.

² 'With them'; or, according to other authorities. 'with the Amalecites'.

29 exterminate them. Ephraim, too, spared
 the Chanaanites in Gazer, and shared it
 30 with them; nor did Zabulon exterminate
 the inhabitants of Cetron and Naalol; the
 Chanaanites lived on among them as trib-
 31 butaries. In Aser, Accho, Sidon, Ahalab,
 Achazib, Helba, Aphec and Rohob were
 32 spared; the Chanaanite inhabitants of
 33 those parts lived on there. Nephthali
 shared Bethsames and Bethanath with the
 old Chanaanite inhabitants, who paid
 34 tribute to them. And as for the men of
 Dan, the Amorrhites kept them cooped up
 in the hills, and would not let them find any
 35 footing in the level plains; they still made
 bold to live on in mount Hares (the Mount
 of Pottery) and Aialon and Salebim, until
 at last the rising power of Joseph forced
 them to become tributaries. The territory
 of these Amorrhites once reached as far as
 the Scorpion Pass, and Petra, and beyond
 them still.

2 And now the Lord's angel¹ removed
 from Galgal to the place that is called
 Lamentation. And his message was, I have
 taken you away from Egypt, and brought
 you to this land in fulfilment of the prom-
 2 ise I made to your fathers, an oath irre-
 vocable. But you, too, had your part to
 play; you were to make no terms with the
 men who dwelt in it, you were to overthrow
 every altar of theirs. How is it that you
 3 have disobeyed my command? With good
 reason I have spared them utter destruction,
 so that there may be enemies at your
 side, and gods of the enemy, ready to
 4 compass your downfall.² And all the sons
 of Israel wept aloud at the angel's message;
 that is why the place was called Lamenta-
 5 tion. In this place of tears they offered the
 Lord sacrifice.
 6 Josue, then, had sent the Israelites
 home, to enjoy the lands assigned to them.
 7 While he lived, and indeed long after,
 while those others lived who were old
 enough to remember the signal mercies
 shown to them, Israel remained true to the
 8 Lord. But Josue the son of Nun died, after
 a hundred and ten years spent in the Lord's
 9 service, and was buried within his own

domain at Thamnath-Sare, in the hill-
 country of Ephraim, on the north side of
 mount Gaas. And when all the men of his
 generation had become a part of their
 people, a new generation arose, to whom
 the Lord's power was still untried, his
 dealings with Israel still unknown. And
 now the sons of Israel defied the Lord to
 his face, and began to worship the gods of
 the country-side. Not for them the Lord
 God of their fathers, who had rescued
 them from Egypt; they must have new
 gods to worship, gods of the nations that
 dwelt around them; they must challenge
 the Lord's anger by paying court to Baal
 and Astaroth instead.

Thus angered, the Lord left Israel at the
 mercy of invaders who plundered them,
 betrayed them to those enemies of theirs
 who lived round about. No longer could
 they make head against their adversaries;
 march where they would, the Lord still
 fought against them, true to his threat,
 true to the oath he had taken, and it fared
 ill indeed with them. Sometimes he would
 send them chieftains of their own, to
 rescue them from the invader's power, but
 even to these they would not listen; still
 1 they would play the wanton, and worship
 alien gods; so quick were they to forsake
 their father's ways, and disobey the Lord's
 known will. First a chieftain would arise,
 1 and the Lord, in his days, would relent;
 would listen to the plaint of a people in
 distress, and save them from the threat of
 destruction; then, once he was dead, the
 2 sons would prove worse than their fathers
 before them; would pay court to alien
 gods, and enslave themselves to alien
 worship; still they would not leave their
 false imaginings, the rebellious path they
 trod. So that the Lord complained in high
 3 displeasure, This people of mine have
 annulled the covenant I made with their
 fathers, and refuse me obedience; and I,
 4 in return, will spare the nations which
 Josue left unconquered at his death, to
 make proof of Israel still; will they re-
 member and follow the divine commands
 like their fathers, or not?

At the time, then, the Lord spared all

¹ The word used in the Hebrew text might equally well be translated 'messenger'.
² It is not clear whether the meaning is that the sparing of the heathen is to be a punishment now inflicted on Israel, or that it was from the first designed as a test of Israel's loyalty. Perhaps the latter interpretation is the more probable.

these nations, instead of overthrowing them all at once, and Josue never had the mastery of them.¹

3 Spared they must be, so that a new generation of Israelites, who had not fought against Chanaan, might learn a soldierly tradition, and skill in the use of arms; the five princes of the Philistines, the Chanaanites in general, the men of Sidon, and the Hevites of mount Lebanon, between Baal-hermon hill and the path that leads to Emath. Spared they must be, so as to have a test of Israel's loyalty; would the Israelites obey the commands which the Lord had given to their fathers through Moses, or not?

Thus the men of Israel lived surrounded by Chanaanite and Hethite, by Amorrhite and Pherezite, by Hevite and Jebusite, mated with their daughters, and gave Israelite wives to their sons, and so came to worship their gods. They defied the Lord's will, forsook him, their own God, and paid court instead to the gods of the countryside, and to Astaroth; and the Lord, in high displeasure against Israel, left them at the mercy of Chusan-Rasathaim, king of the Mesopotamian land, who for eight years became their master. Then they cried out to the Lord, and he sent a champion to their rescue, Othniel son of Cenez, the younger brother of Caleb. On him the Lord's spirit fell, and he became the ruler of Israel; he fought, and the Lord gave him victory over the Syrian king Chusan-Rasathaim, whose power he crushed. So, for forty years, the land was at peace, till Othniel son of Cenez died.

Then, once again, Israel defied the Lord's will, and he, thus defied, gave them a rival in Eglon king of Moab, that had Ammon and Amelec fighting at his side. This Eglon made an expedition against the Israelites in which he defeated them, and took possession of the city of Palm-trees. And for eighteen years the king of Moab was master of Israel.

And now they cried out to the Lord, and

he sent them a fresh champion, a Benjamite called Aod, son of Gera. He was left-handed, and when the Israelites sent him to pay King Eglon their tribute, he wore at his right side, under his cloak, a hilted dagger, two-edged, nine inches long.² Gift in hand he came before Eglon, who sat there gross and pampered of body. So, letting his companions go on before him, when the tribute had been paid, he himself went back all the way from the carved rocks of Galgal, and told the king he had a secret to make known to him. Eglon bade him keep his counsel, and sent all the courtiers out; alone he sat in his summer parlour, when Aod found him. I have a message for thee from the Lord, said Aod, and, as Eglon rose from his seat, the dagger hidden at Aod's right side was plunged into his belly. Such was the force of the blow, that hilt followed blade into the wound, stuck deep in the fat; and thereupon the bowels discharged their load. Good care Aod took to secure lock and bolt behind him; then he made his escape by a postern door.

When the king's servants came and found locked doors they thought he was easing himself, like enough, there in his summer retreat. But at last, ashamed of waiting, they brought a key to open it, and there was their master stretched on the ground dead. In the confusion, Aod escaped; he made his way back to the Carved Rocks, and thence to Seirath. There, on the slopes of Ephraim, he blew his horn, and the men of Israel came down from the hills with Aod at their head crying out, Follow me, the Lord has granted us victory over the Moabite invader. Down they went at his heels, and seized the ford across Jordan that leads to Moab. Not a man did they allow to cross, but slew, that day, some ten thousand Moabite warriors, cut off from all hope of escape. Thus Israel brought Moab to the dust, and for eighty years the land was at peace.

Aod was followed by Samgar, the son of Anath; he it was that slew six hundred

¹ In verses 22-23 the words 'still' and 'at the time' are not expressed in the original; they are here introduced to explain the somewhat confused order of the narrative. Verse 22 apparently refers to a time late in the period of the Judges, when God decrees that the Gentiles shall survive indefinitely, partly as a punishment and partly as a test. Verse 23, like verse 6 above, recalls us to an earlier time, that of Josue's death, when they are spared only as a test. Verse 23 really belongs to chapter 3. ² The Hebrew text probably implies that the dagger was a cubit, that is, eighteen inches long. It is not clear what the Latin version means by saying that this weapon had a hilt in the middle of it; nor whether we are meant to understand that it was the weapon itself or the hilt that was 'a span' long.

Philistines with a ploughshare;¹ he, too, was a champion of Israel.

4 When Aod was dead, Israel would defy the Lord yet again; and the Lord put them at the mercy of Jabin, the Chanaanite king who ruled in Asor. The chieftain that commanded his army for him was called Sisara, and lived at Haroseth, in the pale of the Gentiles. Small wonder if the Israelites cried out to the Lord against this king that had nine hundred scythed chariots, and for twenty years had grievously oppressed them.

4 At this time Israel was ruled by a prophetess called Debbora, the wife of Lapidoth, that dwelt in the hill-country of Ephraim, between Rama and Bethel, by that palm-tree which long bore her name; here the people of Israel had recourse to her for the settlement of all their disputes.

6 And now she summoned Barac, son of Abinoem, from Cedes in Nephthali, and gave him a message from the Lord God of Israel: Go and muster an army on mount Thabor, of ten thousand warriors from Nephthali and Zabulon. Then I will lure Sisara, the chieftain of Jabin's army, out into the valley of Cison to meet thee, with his chariots and all his forces, and give thee the mastery over them.

8 If thou wilt go with me, I will go, Barac said, but not without thee. Go with thee I will, she answered; and yet this part of thine is to win thee no renown. A woman's hand is to vanquish Sisara. Then she set out with Barac on the journey to Cedes, where he, with her aid, rallied Zabulon and Nephthali, and took the field with ten thousand fighting men. (It was near Cedes that Haber the Cinite dwelt; he had separated from his fellow-Cinites, that sprang from Hobab, Moses' kin by marriage, and lay encamped now at the foot of the valley called Sennim.)

12 Sisara, then, hearing that Barac, son of Abinoem, had occupied mount Thabor, mustered his nine hundred chariots and all his men at the valley of Cison. Bestir thyself, Debbora said to Barac; now it is that the Lord means to put Sisara in thy power; thou hast the Lord himself for thy leader. So Barac with his ten thousand men swept down from mount Thabor, and when they

came to close quarters, the Lord threw Sisara's chariots and all his force into confusion at their onslaught. Sisara himself dismounted and fled away on foot; and Barac pursued the routed chariots and troops all the way to Haroseth, till the enemy were slaughtered to the last man.

Sisara, in his flight, made for the tent of Jahel, wife of Haber the Cinite, whose tribe was then at peace with king Jabin of Asor. And Jahel, going out to meet Sisara, bade him Turn in, my lord, turn in here in safety. So he came into the tent, where she covered him up with a cloak; and when he asked for a drop of water, to relieve his great thirst, she opened a bottle of milk and gave him some to drink, then covered him up again. And now Sisara bade her stand there at the tent door; if she were asked by passers-by whether any man was there within, she was to answer, Never a soul. But Jahel, Haber's wife, taking one of the tent-pegs and a mallet, too, with her, crept quietly in, put the peg close to his forehead and struck with the mallet, driving it right through his brain into the ground beneath. So he passed from the numbness of sleep into the numbness of death.

It was Barac who came up in pursuit of Sisara; and Jahel went out to meet him. Come in, was her greeting, and I will shew thee the man thou art looking for; and he went in to find Sisara lying there dead, with the peg through his temple. So the Lord, that day, crushed the pride of the Chanaanite king Jabin before the sons of Israel; and their strength ever increased, till they beat him down and at last made an end of him.

5 Joyfully sang Debbora that day, and Barac the son of Abinoem with her, and this was her song. Here are Israelites that freely put their lives in peril; bless we the Lord! A word to you, kings; princes, this is for your hearing; the Lord is my theme, it is of the Lord God of Israel that I sing. Lord, when thou didst come forth from mount Seir, and pass on thy way over Edom, how the earth shook, how fast the rain fell from skies wrapped in cloud! How the hills, how Sinai itself melted away as the Lord came, the Lord God of Israel!

¹ The word used in the Hebrew text means an ox-goad.

6 In the time of Samgar son of Anath, in
the time of Jahel, all the roads lay unfre-
quented; those that used them once must
7 now travel by bridle-paths. Gone was the
warrior breed, lost to the country-side,
until Debhora came, Debhora, that played
8 a mother's part in Israel. Strange warfare
this, of God's own choosing, when he him-
self must overthrow the enemy's ramparts;
among the sons of Israel, not one in forty
thousand carried shield or spear.

9 My heart goes out to you, chieftains of
Israel; it is for you, who freely put your
10 lives in peril, to bless the Lord; for you to
speak, you that hold the judge's office, and
have white asses to ride when you go on
11 your travels. There, where the chariots
broke, there, where the enemy's host was
drowned, let the story of the Lord's mer-
cies be told, the favour he shewed to the
warriors of Israel. Down to the city gates
they went, the people of the Lord, and won
the mastery.

12 Up, up, bestir thyself, Debhora; bestir
thyself, and chant the battle-hymn! Rouse
thee, Barac, son of Abinoem, thy prey
awaits thee! It was but the remnant of a
13 people that won the day, but the Lord
himself fought among their warriors. All
the remnant of Ephraim had Amalec to
14 detain them;¹ against Amalec's tribes
Benjamin, too, was matched. But chief-
tains came from Manasses, marshallers of
the host from Zabulon; the leaders of
15 Issachar, too, were at Debhora's side, and
followed Barac into danger, as he rushed
headlong down from the steep. But what
of Ruben? Here there was division of coun-
sel among brave hearts. What, wouldst
thou sit there between fold and fold, and
listen to the shepherds piping to their
flocks? Alas, for hearts so brave, and
17 counsels so divided! Galaad took his ease
on the further bank of Jordan, and Dan
was busy with his merchant ventures;
Aser, too, lingered by the sea-shore, safe
18 in his harbour-towns. Meanwhile, Zabu-

lon and Nephthali were putting their lives
in peril, there on the uplands of Merome.

So the kings came down to battle, the
19 kings of Chanaan, there at Taanach by the
waters of Mageddo, but spoil had they
none. Heaven itself was their adversary;
20 the stars in their ordered course did battle
against Sisara. Cison river bore away the
21 corpses of them, river of the Cadumim,
Cison river; trample on them, Debhora,
warriors so valiant till now! The horses'
hoofs lost their footing, so swiftly they
fled, thundering down the slopes with the
22 flower of the enemy's host behind them.

Curse the land of Meroz, the angel of
23 the Lord says, a curse on all that dwell in
it! Here were men that would not rally
in the Lord's cause, would not come to aid
his champions in their peril. But Jahel,
24 wife of Haber the Cinite, blessed may she
be above all women; a blessing on the tent
she dwells in! One came by and asked her
25 for water; but no, she would give him
milk; why should be brought out for him
in such a cup as kings use. A nail is in her
26 left hand, a carpenter's mallet in her right;
now to smite Sisara, now to find the place
for a mortal blow! See with what strength
she pierces his forehead through! There
he lies at her feet, helpless in death, rolls
27 there at her feet lifeless, a thing of pity to
see! Long may his mother look down from
28 that parlour window of hers, crying out on
the chariot that never returns, the sound
of horses' hoofs that still does not come.

Long may some princess try to comfort
29 her, with wiser counsel than the rest: Even
30 now, like enough, he is dividing up the
spoil, of the captive women choosing out
the fairest; Sisara shall have embroidered
garments for his share; see the pile of neck-
laces that lies there, so intricate in design!

So perish all thy enemies, Lord; and
31 may all those who love thee shine out
glorious as the sun's rising!²

And so for forty years the land was at
32 peace.

¹ The Hebrew text here is generally interpreted as meaning, 'There was a root (i.e. a remnant) out of Ephraim against Amalec', or possibly 'in Amalec'. The Latin version has 'He destroyed the men out of Ephraim against Amalec', perhaps in the sense that God had used up all the strength of this tribe against Amalec. Although nothing has been said about it in the previous chapter, we may perhaps conjecture that at the same moment when Jabin was fighting against Israel in the north, the Amalecites from the south had overrun Juda, and the adjoining tribes, Ephraim and Benjamin, were trying to stem the invasion, so that they were unable to give any help against Jabin. (There was a 'mount of Amalec' in the territory of Ephraim, cf. 12. 15 below; but it is not likely that this can be referred to.) ² Throughout this poem, the meaning of the Hebrew text is frequently obscure, and is very variously interpreted. The Latin version, which is here followed, differs from it considerably.

6 After this, the sons of Israel defied the Lord again, and for seven years he left them at the mercy of the Madianites, who crushed them down unsparingly; so that they were fain to take refuge in caverns and shafts and mountain fastnesses. The men of Israel would sow their lands, and then Madian and Amalec and the tribes east of them would invade the country; encamping there, they destroyed all the growing crops right up to Gaza, till there was no food left in the land of Israel for ox or sheep or ass. Carrying their tents and driving their cattle before them, they came in and spread over the country-side, hordes of men everywhere and trains of camels, like a swarm of locusts, destroying all that lay in their path. Thus Madian brought the Israelites into great need, and they cried out to the Lord for redress. But he, through a prophet, sent them this message from the Lord God of Israel: I recalled you from Egypt, rescued you from your prison there, defended you, not only against the Egyptians, but against all the hostile nations that were dispossessed of their lands to make room for you. And I told you, I am the Lord your God; you must pay no reverence to the gods of the Amorrites, in whose land you dwell; but my command went unheeded.

11 And now an angel of the Lord came and waited by the oak-tree at Ephra, which then belonged to Joas, of the family of Abiezer. His son Gedeon had gone out to the wine-press, so as to thresh his wheat there unobserved by the Madianites, and suddenly the Lord's angel appeared to him, and said, The Lord be with thee, courageous heart! Ah, Sir, replied Gedeon, but tell me this; if the Lord is with us, how is it that such ill fortune has overtaken us? Not for us, now, those miracles of his that were on our fathers' lips, when they told us how he rescued them from Egypt. The Lord has forsaken us now, and lets the Madianites have their will with us. Then the Lord looked at him, and said, Thou hast strength; go and set Israel free from the power of Madian.¹ Such is the mission I have for thee. What, Lord! said

he, I deliver Israel? Why, my clan is the poorest in all Manasses, and in all my father's house none counts for so little as I. I will be at thy side, the Lord told him, and thou shalt smite Madian down as though but one man stood in thy path.

Hereupon Gedeon answered, As thou lovest me, give me some proof this is thy word that comes to me. And first, do not leave this spot till I come back here with a sacrifice to offer thee. I will await thy coming, he said. So Gedeon went in and cooked a goat, took a bushel of flour and made unleavened bread, put the meat in a basket and the broth from the meat into a pot, and brought them all out, there beneath the oak, to make his offering. Take the meat and the loaves, the angel of the Lord said, and lay them down on yonder rock, and pour out the broth over them. So he obeyed, and with that the angel of the Lord held out the staff he carried, and touched meat and unleavened bread with the tip of it; whereupon fire blazed out from the rock, and all was consumed. And he looked, and the angel of the Lord was there no longer. Then Gedeon knew that this was an angel of the Lord, and he cried out, An ill day for me, O Lord my God; I have seen the Lord's angel face to face. But the Lord's word came to him, Be at peace, and have no fear; thou shalt not die. So Gedeon built an altar there and called it the Peace of the Lord; it stands there to this day.

This, then, was Gedeon's home, in Ephra, that belongs to the clan of Abiezer. And that night the Lord said to him, Take with thee two bulls, the one that belongs to thy father, and another of seven years old, and overthrow Baal's altar that stands on thy father's land, cutting down the sacred wood around it.² Then, on the top of this rock on which thou didst lay thy sacrifice to me, build an altar to the Lord thy God; and there offer the second bull in burnt sacrifice, over a fire made from the wood thou hast cut down. So Gedeon did as the Lord bade him, with ten servants of his father's to help him, at dead of night; he would not do it by day for fear of his kindred and his fellow-citizens. And when

¹ Here, as in other passages, God is represented as speaking directly through his Angel, instead of merely entrusting him with a message. ² Some think the text here is corrupt or deficient; as it stands, we must suppose that the two bulls (or perhaps, in the Hebrew text, bullocks) were used to drag away the stones in demolishing the altar.

these citizens awoke next day, there was Baal's altar destroyed, and the wood about it cut down, and a second altar built, with the dead bull lying on it. Who had done it?

They made enquiry, and were told that it was Gedeon son of Joas. Whereupon they would have Joas bring out his son to pay the death-penalty for overthrowing Baal's altar, and cutting down his sacred wood; but his answer was, What, does Baal need champions such as you to vindicate him? Nay, let the man who is his adversary be struck dead before to-morrow's light, if he is indeed a god; let him take his own vengeance on the man who destroyed his altar.¹ And from this saying of Joas, that Baal ought to punish the destroyer of his own altar, Gedeon from that day onwards was called Jerobaal, Let Baal defend his own cause.

When next Madian and Amalec and the peoples of the east crossed the Jordan together, and encamped in the plain of Jezrael, the Spirit of the Lord wrapped Gedeon round. One blast of his horn rallied Abiezer's clan behind him; then he sent messengers out all through Manasses, and Manasses, too, were of his company; then other messengers to Aser, Zabulon and Nephthali, and these came out to meet him. And Gedeon asked for a sign from God: If thou meanest to fulfil thy promise, and make use of me to deliver Israel, let me have proof of it. This fleece shall lie on the threshing-floor; fall the dew on the fleece only, and let the ground be dry, I shall know that thy promise holds good; I am to be the means of Israel's deliverance. And so it was; when he awoke next morning, he wrung it out, and filled a tankard with the dew. But he pleaded once again, Do not be angry with me if I put thee to one more test, still with the fleece for my proof. This time, let the fleece remain dry, while the rest of the ground is wet with dew. And that night, God granted his prayer; dew lay all over the ground about it, and the fleece alone was dry.

7 Jerobaal, then, (or Gedeon) rose at break of day and led his army to the spring called the Spring of Harad. The

camp of Madian lay there in the valley, with a high hill to the south of it. This is a great army thou hast with thee, the Lord told Gedeon. I must not grant victory over Madian to an army like this, or the Israelites would boast that they had no need of me; that their own strength had brought them deliverance. Make it known publicly, for all to hear, that any man who shrinks back or is afraid is free to go home. So twenty-two thousand of his men, from the hill-country of Galaad, went back home, and led him with only ten thousand. But the Lord said to Gedeon, Thy army is still too great. Take them down the water-side, and I will test them there. I will tell thee which of them are to march in thy company, and which are to return home instead. And when they reached the water, the Lord's command to Gedeon was, Separate those who lap the water like dogs, and those who go down on their knees to drink. There were only three hundred that took up water in their hands and lapped it, all the rest knelt as they drank; but the Lord said to Gedeon, These three hundred men who lapped the water shall win you deliverance; I will put the Madianites in their power. Send all the rest of thy companions home. So he would have food left, and a trumpet for each man; then he sent the others back to their own dwelling-places, and with three hundred men prepared to give battle.

The camp of Madian lay there in the valley below him, and that night the Lord said to him, Bestir thyself, and go down into their camp; I have left them at thy mercy. If thou art afraid to go alone, thy servant Phara shall go with thee. Listen to what they are saying, and it will give thee courage, bid thee go down more confidently to the attack. So Gedeon and his servant Phara made their way down to a part of the camp where sentries were on guard. There were Madian and Amalec, and all the tribes of the east, scattered through the valley, like a swarm of locusts; countless as the sea sand, their camels lay beside them. As Gedeon approached, one of the men was telling his neighbour of a dream that had come to him, and this was

¹ The Hebrew text is commonly understood as meaning, 'If anyone pleads in favour of Baal, let him be put to death before tomorrow's light'; cf. Job 13. 8. But the interpretation here given, which is that of the Latin version, seems to fit the context far better.

the way of it: It looked, in my dream, as if a barley griddle-cake went rolling along and tumbled into the Midianite camp, where it struck the first tent it reached and overturned it, so that it lay flat on the ground. Why, said the other, what should this be but the sword of that Israelite, Gedeon the son of Joas? The Lord means to put Midian and all Midian's host into his power.

15 Gedeon fell on his knees when he heard what the dream was, and how it was interpreted. Back he went to the camp of Israel, and cried out, Bestir yourselves, the Lord has left the Midianite camp at our mercy. Then he divided his men into three companies, and bade each man carry a trumpet, and an empty jar, and in the jar, 16 a lighted torch. Mark what I do, and do the same, he told them; when once I have reached the edge of the camp, follow, all 17 of you, my example. I shall hold up my trumpet and blow a blast, and you too must blow a blast, on different sides of the camp; then you will cry aloud, For the 18 Lord and for Gedeon! So Gedeon and his three hundred men reached the edge of the camp, just as the midnight watch began, when the newly posted guards were wide awake. Every trumpet blew, and every jar was shattered against its neighbour; and on three sides of the camp, after the crashing of the jars, men stood there with torches in their left hands, and ringing trumpets in their right; and now the cry came, Your swords, now! For the Lord and for Gedeon!

21 Thus posted on different sides of the enemy's camp, they threw all into confusion; and the Midianites fled, crying 22 aloud for terror, while the three hundred men still pressed on, and still the trumpets blew. And all through the camp the Lord spread destruction, friend turning his sword against friend; till at last in their flight they reached as far as Bethsetta, and the river-bank at Abelmehula in Tebbath. Here the Israelites from Nephthali and Aser and the whole of Manasses gave chase; Gedeon sent messengers, too, all 24 through the hill-country of Ephraim, bidding them come down and confront Midian, seizing the water-courses that go

down to Bethbera and the Jordan; so Ephraim raised the hue and cry, and intercepted both the water-courses and Jordan itself as far as Bethbera. And they caught two Midianite chiefs, Oreb and Zeb, whom they put to death, Oreb at the Rock of Oreb and Zeb at Zeb's Wine-press; then they went on with the pursuit of Midian. They were carrying the heads of Oreb and Zeb with them when they met Gedeon on the further side of Jordan.

8 What means it, they asked, that thou didst not summon us to thy aid when thou wert setting out to do battle with Midian? And they were loud in their complaints, these men of Ephraim, almost ready to come to blows with him. Nay, answered he, what has my task been in comparison with yours? Abiezer's whole vintage cannot match the gleanings Ephraim has gathered up. See how the Lord would have Oreb and Zeb fall into your hands, not mine; what is my achievement beside yours? With such words he calmed the restless spirits that assailed him.

Gedeon had now reached and crossed the Jordan, with his three hundred followers. They were too weary to keep up with the fugitives, so he had recourse to the people of Socoth. I beseech you, he said, to provide food for these companions of mine, who are faint with hunger; we must needs overtake the Midianite kings, Zebec and Salmana. Why, answered the chieftains of Socoth, you would think he came to us carrying the severed hands of Zebec and Salmana with him,¹ to hear the way he talks of providing food for this army of his. So be it, said Gedeon; when the Lord has given me the mastery of Zebec and Salmana, I will come back and flay you with every thorn and brier that grows in the desert. Then he went on to Phanuel, and made the same request there, and received there the same answer as at Socoth. And he had a threat for these too: When I come back, safe and a conqueror, I will throw this tower of yours to the ground.

Zebec and Salmana had halted their men for a rest; only fifteen thousand of

¹ This seems to be the sense of the Latin. Some think that in the Hebrew text the 'hands' of the two chiefs are simply their persons.

them were left, out of all those hordes from the east; the rest had perished, a hundred and twenty thousand fighting men. Gedeon came up along the track used by the wandering tribes east of Nobe and Jegbaa; he caught them off their guard, when they were not expecting an attack, and fell upon the camp; whereupon the whole army was thrown into confusion, and Zebee and Salmana were overtaken by Gedeon in their flight. And now, coming back from his campaigning before the sun was up, he captured a young man that came from Socoth, and asked him the names of all the chief men and elders in the place; of these he made a list, seventy-seven of them in all. And when he reached Socoth, he told them, Here are Zebee and Salmana, the kings whose severed hands you would have had me bring you, before you provided food to faint and weary men. So he had the chief men of Socoth brought out, and thorns and briers brought in from the desert to flay them with, and went a-threshing with the men of Socoth. Then he threw the tower of Phanuel to the ground, and killed all who dwelt in it.

After this, he asked Zebee and Salmana about the men they had killed on mount Thabor;¹ What was the look of them? he said. None other, they answered, than thy own; not one of them but might have had such a royal father as thyself. Why, said he, these were my own brothers, sons of my own mother. As the Lord is a living God, if you had spared these, I would grant you your lives. Then he said to his eldest son, Jether. Up with thee, and put them to the sword; but Jether would not draw on them; he was a boy still, and had no heart for it. So Zebee and Salmana said, Up, and deal the blow thyself; a man has but the strength that matches his age. So Gedeon rose up and slew them both. And for spoil, he carried off the embossed trappings that kings' camels wear about their necks.

And now all the Israelites would have Gedeon, the man who delivered them from Madian, become their ruler, and his descendants after him. Neither I, he said, nor any son of mine shall bear rule over you; the Lord shall be your ruler.

This is all the reward I ask for, that you should give me all the ear-rings you have taken as spoil. (Among the desert tribes, it was the custom to wear ear-rings.) They consented willingly enough, spreading a cloak out on the ground and throwing all their spoil of ear-rings down on it; and these ear-rings they gave him, all of gold, weighed seventeen hundred sicles. (There was much besides; collars and necklaces, and purple robes such as the kings of Madian wore, and the gold trappings of their camels.) Gedeon made of this a golden mantle;² which he set up in the city of Ephra; and faithless Israel fell to worshipping it, to the ruin of Gedeon and his race. As for the Madianites, they were bowed to the dust before Israel, and could raise their heads no longer; for a full generation, while Gedeon was there to protect it, the land was at peace.

So this Jerobaal, son of Joas, went back to his home and lived on there. By his many wives, he had seventy sons, all begotten of his own body, and in Sichem there was a concubine of his, that bore him a son, Abimelech. So Gedeon the son of Joas died, content in late old age, and was buried in the tomb of his father Joas, in Ephra, that belongs to the clan of Abiezer. It was only after the death of Gedeon that the Israelites went back to their old ways, and played the wanton with gods of the country-side. They had a covenant now with Baal, that he should be their god, and thought no more of the Lord, their own God, that had rescued them from the power of the enemies who lived round about them. And it was little gratitude they shewed to the race of Gedeon, surnamed Jerobaal, that had fought so well for Israel.

9 This Abimelech, son of Jerobaal, now betook himself to Sichem, and there conspired with his mother's brethren, and the whole clan from which his mother was descended. They were to send the word round in Sichem, Which is best, to have seventy masters over you, all Jerobaal's sons, or one? He was, after all, their own flesh and blood.

¹ This circumstance has not been mentioned in our narrative. ² The word here used is that which describes part of the high priest's vesture in Ex. 28. Some think it means a garment in this passage too; others, that it was a gold effigy, or the gold sheath surrounding an effigy of wood.

3 So his mother's brethren, by raising these whisperers among the citizens of Sichern, won Abimelech their good-will; they remembered that he was their own kin, and gave him seventy silver pieces, from the temple treasure of Baal-berith. With these, he hired a bodyguard of penniless rogues; then went back to his father's house at Ephra and his own brothers, the sons of Jerobaal. He murdered these at one blow,¹ all seventy of them except Joatham, the youngest, who hid away and escaped. And with that all the citizens of Sichern and all those who dwelt at Mello met together, and there, by the oak at Sichern, they made Abimelech their king.

7 When this came to Joatham's ears, he went and stood at the top of mount Garizim, and raised his voice there in a loud cry. Listen to me, he said, men of Sichern, as you would have God himself listen to you. There was a time when the trees went about to anoint a king who should rule over them, and said to the olive-tree, Come and be our king. What, said the olive, would you have me forgo this rich influence of mine, for the service of God and man, to win promotion among the trees? So they asked the fig-tree to be their ruler, but the fig-tree answered, What, should I cease to yield this pleasant fruit of mine, and win promotion among the trees instead? Then the trees would have the vine reign over them, but the vine said, What, would you have me cease to yield wine, wine that both God and man delight in, to be the foremost of the trees? So at last all the trees went to the bramble, and would have the bramble reign over them. And the bramble said, If you have chosen me for your king in all honesty, why then, come and rest in my shadow. If your hearts are false, then burn bramble, and set light to all the cedars of Lebanon!

16 And you, have you kept faith and honour in making Abimelech your king? Have you dealt kindly with Jerobaal and his race, shewn gratitude for the good service he did you? Here was a man that fought in your cause, that put his life in peril, to

deliver you from the power of Madian. And now you have risen in arms against my father's house, you have murdered at one blow seventy men that were his sons, and you have made Abimelech, the son of his serving-wench, king of all Sichern; one that is your own kin. Was this honourably done? Have you kept faith with the race of Jerobaal? Why then, I wish you joy of your king, and Abimelech of his subjects. But if it was done amiss, then burn Abimelech, and set light to Sichern and Mello; burn Sichern and Mello, and set light to Abimelech! And with that Joatham fled, and took refuge in Bara, where he could dwell safe from his brother Abimelech's vengeance.

So, for three years, Abimelech was king in Israel; but now the Lord stirred up ill will between Abimelech and the men of Sichern, who came to hold him in abhorrence; the foul deed done when the seventy sons of Jerobaal were slain, the guilt of the blood so spilt, was held now against Abimelech, their brother, and against the chief men of Sichern, that had been in league with him. So they laid an ambush to catch him at the head of the mountain-pass, and spent their time, while they awaited his coming, in open robbery, plundering all that went by; but Abimelech had warning of it. It was now that Gaal son of Obed appeared, and led his clansmen into Sichern. All that dwelt in Sichern were elated at his coming; out they went into the country-side, to strip the vineyards and tread the grapes. Amid the chanting of choirs, they went into the temple of their god to feast and drink deep, and curse the name of Abimelech. What, cried Gaal son of Obed, should Sichern, being the city she is, obey such a man as Abimelech? Shall this son of Jerobaal send his servant Zebul to rule over men that come down from Hamor, the father of Sichern? And must we all be his slaves? Ah, if I had but command of a people like this, I would soon clear Abimelech out of my path.

Hereupon, Abimelech was bidden muster a great force, and come with all speed. Gaal's words had come to the ears of

¹ Literally, 'over one stone', which may imply a kind of judicial or even sacrificial proceeding. But the emphasis is clearly laid upon the wholesale nature of the massacre, and some think that the expression 'over one stone' is only proverbial.

Zebul, who was in command of the city, and in high displeasure he sent Abimelech a secret message: Here is Gaal, son of Obed, come to Sichem with his clan, and means to wrest the city from thee. March out under cover of night with all the following thou hast, and lie hidden in the country round about; then, when tomorrow's sun rises, fall upon the city, and when he and his men come out to meet thee, engage them as best thou canst. So Abimelech set out on a night march with all his forces, and posted men in ambush about Sichem in four several places.

Gaal, son of Obed, had gone out to take up his stand before the entrance of the city, when suddenly Abimelech and his men rose from their ambush. And when he caught sight of them, Gaal said to Zebul, Why, what is this throng of folk coming down from the hill-top? It is the shadows on the mountain-side, said he, thou art mistaking for human forms. But Gaal repeated, There is a throng of men coming down from the uplands, and another body is moving down the road that leads to the oak-tree. And at that Zebul said, Now we shall see what becomes of that boasting of thine, Shall we obey such a man as Abimelech? See, here are the men thou didst hold in such contempt; go out and fight with them. So Gaal must needs take the field against Abimelech, with all the citizens of Sichem to watch him; whereupon Abimelech routed him, and drove him back into the city, and not a few of his clansmen fell before they could reach the city gate. So Abimelech encamped at Ruma, while Zebul drove Gaal and his clan out of the city, saying he would harbour them no more.

Next day, the citizens themselves went out on a foray; when this news reached Abimelech, he led his men to the attack. He had divided them into three companies, hiding them in ambush in the country round about; and finding that the men of Sichem were at a distance from the city, he moved swiftly against them. He, with his own company, surrounded and attacked the city, while the other two companies fell on the enemy as they straggled

across the plain. All that day Abimelech assaulted the city; and when he took it he slaughtered the inhabitants and destroyed it utterly, and strewed salt over the ground to put a ban on it.

When this news reached the men who dwelt in Sichem Watch-tower, they took refuge in the temple of their god, whom they called Berith because they had made a covenant with him there. It gave its name to the ground on which it stood, which was strongly fortified. And Abimelech, when he was told that all the inhabitants of Sichem Watch-tower were so cooped up together, led his whole force to mount Selmon. Here, with an axe, he cut down a branch from a tree and threw it across his shoulder, bidding all that were with him straightway do the like. So, eagerly enough, they followed their leader's example, and when they reached the stronghold they surrounded it and set fire to it. Thus smoke and fire brought death to a thousand souls, all the men and women that dwelt in Sichem Watch-tower.

From there, Abimelech went on to the town of Thebes, and made an assault on it. There was a high tower in the middle of the city, in which men and women alike had taken refuge, all the chief magistrates of the city among them. Its doors were stoutly barred, and there were battlements on its roof behind which the defenders stood. Abimelech came up and assailed it vigorously, and was standing there close by the door trying to set fire to it, when a woman threw down from the roof part of a mill-stone, which struck him on the head and pierced to the brain. Quickly he called out to his armour-bearer; Draw thy sword, he said, and make an end of me; it must not be said that Abimelech died by a woman's hand. So the armour-bearer obeyed, and made an end of him; and, once he was dead, all the Israelites who marched with him went back to their homes. Thus God punished Abimelech for the wrong he did to his father's name by slaughtering those seventy brethren of his, and punished the men of Sichem, too, for their misdeeds; and the curse of Joatham, son of Jerobaal, came upon them all.

¹ In the original simply 'went out', but we are probably meant to refer back to verse 25. Unless, indeed, they went out to get in the vintage.

10 The next champion of Israel after Abimelech was the son of his uncle Phua,¹ a man of Issachar named Thola. He lived at Samir in the hill-country of Ephraim, and at Samir he died and was buried, after ruling Israel for twenty-three years. He was followed by Jair, a man of Galaad, who ruled Israel for twenty-two years. He had thirty sons, each of whom rode in state on an ass's colt of his own, and ruled a township of his own; these townships in Galaad are still called Havoth Jair, Jair's Villages. And when Jair died, he was buried at a place called Camon.

And now the Israelites matched their old sins with new, defying the Lord and worshipping idols of Baal and Astaroth, gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Ammon and Philistia, forsaking the Lord and no longer paying him reverence. And the Lord, in his anger, left them at the mercy of Philistine and Ammonite, who for eighteen years wore them down and grievously harassed them. Nor was it only the old land of the Amorrhites beyond Jordan, in Galaad, that suffered; these Ammonites crossed the Jordan and laid waste Juda, Benjamin and Ephraim, so that Israel was in sore distress. Thereupon they cried out to the Lord, and confessed that they had sinned against him, in worshipping the gods of the country-side; but the Lord would not listen to them. So it was, he said, when Egyptian and Amorrhite, Ammonite and Philistine, Sidonian, Amalecite and Chanaanite harassed you. You cried out to me, and I delivered you from the power of all these, and still you forsook me, still you paid reverence to alien gods; I will no longer be your deliverer. Go and ask help from the gods of your own choosing; it is they who ought to befriend you in your hour of need. We have sinned, the men of Israel answered, punish us as thou wilt, only bring us deliverance now; and with that they banished the idols of every alien god from their dominions, and went back to the service of the Lord; till at last he took pity on their distress.

The Ammonites had raised their war-cry, and were encamped now in Galaad, with the forces Israel had mustered encamped opposite them at Maspha. And

the word went round among the chiefs of Galaad, Let but a champion come forward to lead us against the Ammonites, and all Galaad will make him its ruler.

11 There was a Galaadite at this time called Jephthe, who was brave and a skilful warrior; his mother was a harlot, his father bore the name of Galaad. Galaad had other sons by his lawful wife; and these, when they came of age, thrust Jephthe out of doors, telling him he was born out of wedlock, and could not inherit. So he sought refuge from their ill-will in the country of Tob, where he gathered about him a company of penniless robbers, that followed him as their chieftain. These were the days when Israel was being attacked by the Ammonites; and when they found themselves hard pressed, some of the elders of Galaad went to the country of Tob to bring Jephthe to their aid; Come and be our leader, they said, fighting as our champion against the sons of Ammon. Why, said he, are you not the very men that have used me ill, and thrust me out of my father's house? You must be hard driven by your need, that you should come to me now.

So the elders of Galaad told him what was the meaning of their errand; if he would go with them and fight against the Ammonites, he should become ruler of all that dwelt in Galaad. And you have come here, answered Jephthe, meaning in all honesty to make me your ruler, if I fight against Ammon for you and the Lord grants me victory? The Lord, said they, is listening to us as we speak, let him be the arbiter between us; let him be the witness of our pledged word. So Jephthe accompanied the elders, and the whole people acclaimed him as their leader; there at Maspha in the Lord's presence, he came to terms with them.² And next, he sent messengers to ask the king of Ammon, in his name, What interfering ways are these, that thou comest here to plunder my land? His answer was, Why, when the Israelites removed from Egypt, they robbed me of the land that was once mine, the and that is bounded by Arnon, Jaboc and Jordan; give it back to me now, and all shall be well between us.

By the same messengers, Jephthe sent

¹ The Hebrew text is more usually understood as containing two proper names, 'the son of Phua the son of Dodo'. ² 'Came to terms with them'; literally, 'said his say'.

5 back word to the king of Ammon: Jephthe thus answers thee. Neither Moab nor Ammon did Israel rob of any lands that
6 belonged to them. When they left Egypt, and had crossed the desert that reaches down to the Red Sea, the Israelites found
7 themselves in Cades. Here they sent out envoys to ask the king of Edom for passage through his land, but he would not listen to them; and also to the king of Moab, but he too refused. So they halted on their
8 journey at Cades, and then passed round Edom and Moab, keeping to the east of them and encamping on the further side of Arnon, which was its frontier, so as not
9 to trespass on Moabite territory. And now they must needs send envoys to Sehon, the Amorrite king that ruled in Hesebon, and ask leave to pass through his land on their
10 way to the Jordan. He too refused their request, and would not let them cross his frontier; he mustered a great army and met them at Jasa to bar their passage.

11 Over this king, over this army, the Lord granted Israel victory; and it was through that victory that they occupied the lands which the Amorrites had occupied before them, the whole territory that is bounded by Arnon and Jaboc, by the desert and
12 Jordan. It was the Amorrites the God of Israel overthrew, in battle against his chosen people; it is Amorrite land thou art now claiming for thy own.

13 For thee, all the lands thy god Chamos has won for himself; the conquests of the Lord who is our God become ours by right. What, dost thou rate thyself higher than Balac son of Sephor, the king of Moab? Prove, if thou canst, that Balac came to an issue with our people, or fought
14 against them, although for three hundred years they occupied Hesebon and Aroer with all their townships, and all the cities this side of Jordan. And all these long years you have not lifted a hand to claim them. No, I am not doing thee a wrong, it is I that have a complaint against thee, for levying war against me unjustly. May the Lord defend the right this day between Israel's claim and Ammon's.

But to the king of Ammon the word of

Jephthe's messengers brought no content. And now the spirit of the Lord was with
15 Jephthe wherever he went, as he journeyed through Galaad and Manasses, and came to Maspha of Galaad, and marched thence against the Ammonites. And this was a
16 vow of his, that he made to the Lord, If thou wilt grant me victory over Ammon, what living creature first leaves my doors,
17 to greet my safe returning, shall be offered up in burnt-sacrifice.¹

Thus Jephthe offered battle to the sons
18 of Ammon, and the Lord gave him the mastery over them, so that he drove them
19 out of twenty cities, from Aroer to Mennith, and as far as Abel, out among the vineyards. A great victory was this, that brought Ammon down to the dust.

Then Jephthe went back to his house at Maspha. He had no children except one daughter, and she it was who came out, with music and dance, to welcome him. And at the sight he tore his garments;
20 Alas, daughter, he said, thou hast undone me, and art thyself undone; the vow that hast once left my lips I must needs fulfil. Why, father, she answered, if thou hast
21 uttered a vow to the Lord, carry out thy promise; I am well content, now that thou hast won redress, and victory over thy enemies. But, father, grant me this one
22 request. Let me go away and spend two months with my fellow-maidens, out among the hills, bewailing my ill fortune, that I must die unwed. So he bade her
23 begone for two months; and she went out among the hills with the maids that were her friends and fellows, to weep a maiden's tears. And when the two months were
24 over, she came back to her father; and he fulfilled his promise, and she died unwed. That is why the custom grew up in Israel which has been kept ever afterwards, that
25 for four days in every year the maidens of Israel should gather, and make lament for the daughter of Jephthe the Galaadite.

12 But now Ephraim raised the banners of civil war, crossing the river and marching northwards. The complaint they made to Jephthe was, Why didst thou

¹ It is possible to interpret the Hebrew text as implying that Jephthe meant to sacrifice a beast; but in any case (as the sequel discloses) he must have included human as well as animal life in his vow. Some think he made the vow by a special inspiration; but it is perhaps the better opinion that it was a vow sinful in itself, but prompted (as an act of supreme devotion) by an erroneous conscience.

not summon us to thy aid when thou didst go to war with the Ammonites? We mean to take vengeance by burning thy house down about thy cars. Why, said he, this was a bitter quarrel I and my people had with the sons of Ammon, and I did call upon you for aid, but you would do nothing; so I must needs put my life in peril, and march against the Ammonites. And now the Lord has given me victory over them; what is there in all this to make you levy war on me? So he mustered all his Galaadites, and fought against the men of Ephraim, and the Galaadites defeated them. They had taunted the men of Galaad with being fugitives from Ephraim, living in territory that belonged to Ephraim and Manasses. So now these men of Galaad seized the fords of Jordan, by which the Ephraimites must needs pass on their way home; and when any of Ephraim's men came up asking for passage, they would ask him, Art thou from Ephraim? Not I, would be his answer. Then they would bid him say the word Scibboleth, which means an ear of corn; and he would answer, Sibboleth, pronouncing the word amiss. So then, without more ado, they would take him down to Jordan ford and slay him; there were forty-two thousand men of Ephraim who then perished.

Jephte died when he had ruled Israel six years, and was buried in his own Galaadite city. After him, Israel was ruled by Abesan of Bethlehem; thirty daughters left his house to wed, and his thirty sons brought thirty brides into it. For seven years he ruled Israel, and died and was buried at Bethlehem. He was followed by Ahialon the Zabulonite, who ruled Israel ten years, and died and was buried in the country of Zabulon; and he was followed by Abdon son of Illel, a Pharathonite. Abdon had forty sons and thirty grandsons that rode upon an ass's colt each of them; and when he had ruled Israel for eight years, he too died, and they buried him at Pharathon that belongs to Ephraim, on the hill called Amalec.

13 Then, once again, the sons of Israel defied the Lord, and for forty years he left them at the mercy of the

Philistines. There was a certain tribesman of Dan called Manue, who lived at Saraa, and had a wife that bore him no children. To her the Lord's angel appeared, and said, Poor barren one, poor childless one, thou art to conceive, and bear a son. See to it that no wine or strong drink, no unclean food passes thy lips, for this son whom thou art to conceive and bear is to be a Nazirite from his birth; even when he is a child, no razor must come near his head. And he shall strike the first blow to deliver Israel from the power of the Philistines. So when she met her husband she told him, I have been speaking with a messenger from God, who might have been an angel, such awe his look inspired in me. Who he was, his home, his name, he would not tell, but the message he gave me was that I should conceive, and have a son. And I must abstain from wine and all strong drink, and from all unclean food, because this son of mine was to be a Nazirite from his childhood up, bound to the Lord by his vow from the day of his birth to the day of his death.

Thereupon Manue entreated the Lord to send his messenger again, and tell them how this child, once born, should be nurtured. And the Lord granted his prayer; once more the angel of God appeared to his wife, as she sat resting in a field. Her husband was not with her, and she, upon sight of the angel, ran off to fetch him; He has come back, she told him, the man I saw a few days since. So he rose and followed her, and asked the angel whether it was he that had brought the message to his wife; Yes, he said, it was I. Tell me, then, said Manue, when thy promise is fulfilled, what life is the boy to lead, what things are they he must shun? But the angel of the Lord answered, Enough that thy wife should observe the warnings I gave her, eating nothing that grows in the vineyard, drinking no wine or strong drink, abstaining from all unclean food; these commands of mine she must carry out faithfully. And now Manue said to the angel of the Lord, Pray do me one favour; allow us to cook a kid for thy eating. Detain me if thou wilt, said the angel, but of thy food I must

¹ The Septuagint Greek implies that the boy, when born, is to observe the same rules as have been enjoined on his mother; but the Hebrew text makes the angel simply repeat that Manue's wife is to follow the prescriptions he has already laid down. The Latin may be taken in either way indifferently.

not eat; offer burnt-sacrifice, if thou wilt, to the Lord. And still Manue did not recognize that it was the Lord's angel; 1
 17 What is thy name? he asked. If thy words come true, we would fain give thee some 18
 token of gratitude. My name? said he. Do not ask my name; it is a high mystery. 19
 So Manue brought the kid, and a bread-offering with it, and laid it on the rock, presenting it before the Lord; and mystery indeed there was, before the eyes of 20
 21 Manue and his wife; as flames went up to heaven from the altar, the angel of the Lord went up too, there amid the flames. 22
 At the sight, Manue and his wife fell down face to earth. Now that he had disappeared from their view, Manue knew him for what he was, and said to his wife, This is certain death; we have seen the Lord. Nay, answered his wife, if the Lord meant us harm, he would not have accepted our sacrifice and our bread-offering; he would not have shewn us this marvellous sight, nor told us what is to befall. And so she bore a son, and called him Samson. As the lad grew, the Lord's blessing was on him. 25
 It was at the Encampment of Dan, between Saraa and Esthaol, that the spirit of the Lord first visited him.

14 Samson paid a visit to Thamnatha, and there was a woman 2
 there, a Philistine, that took his eye; and when he went home he told his father and mother, I have seen a Philistine woman in Thamnatha I would fain have you choose 3
 out for my bride. What, said his parents, canst thou find no bride amongst the women of thy own tribe, nay, of all Israel, that thou must wed the daughter of some uncircumcised Philistine? She must be thy choice for me, Samson told his father; 4
 I like her well. How could they know that this was the Lord's will; that this was to be the occasion of a quarrel between Samson and the Philistines, who then held Israel under their dominion? So, with his father and mother, Samson went to Thamnatha again. And now they had reached the vineyards belonging to the town, when, of a sudden, he met a young lion, that roared 6
 upon him savagely. Thereupon the spirit

of the Lord came down upon Samson, and although he had no weapon, he tore it to pieces as easily as if it had been a kid. He told his father and mother nothing of it, but hastened on to have speech with the woman he loved. 7

Some days afterwards, he came there again to make her his wife. He turned aside on his way to find the lion's carcass; and what should he find in its mouth but a swarm of bees, and a comb of honey? So he carried off the comb, and fell to eating it as he went along; gave some, too, to his father and mother to eat, but still did not tell them that the honey came from a lion's body. And now that Samson's father had reached the home of his daughter-in-law, he gave a feast in Samson's honour; for still the young men would be at their feasting; and thirty of these had been appointed by their fellow-citizens, when he came, to be his companions for the wedding. To these, Samson proposed that he should ask them a riddle; if they could answer it within seven days, while the feasting lasted, he would give each of them a linen shirt and a new garment; if they could not, each of them should do the same by him. Tell us the riddle, they said; let us hear it. And he said, Out of the eater 14
 came food, and out of strength, sweetness. The third day came, and still they had not found the answer. And at last, on the eve 15
 of the seventh day, they went to Samson's wife; Use all thy arts, they said, with thy husband, and make him tell thee what the riddle means; or we will burn thy father's house down, and thyself with it; didst thou bid us to the wedding only to strip us bare? Already, when she was alone with 16
 Samson, she was ever weeping and bemoaning herself, Thou art weary of me, thou dost not love me any longer; thou hast asked these neighbours of mine a riddle, and thou wilt not tell me the answer. Nay, said he, why should I tell thee? Have I not kept it secret from my own father and mother? Such were the plaints she had made all through the week of the banquet; and now, this seventh day, she plied him hard, and at last he told her. At once she betrayed it to her fellow-towns-

¹ The Latin version is probably meant to read 'presenting it before the Lord, who does marvels; meanwhile Manue and his wife looked on'. But it is possibly meant to be rendered as above, which would be more in keeping with the sense given by the Hebrew text.

18 folk, and they, before the sun of the seventh day had set, asked Samson, What is sweeter than honey, what is stronger than a lion? You have been yoking my heifer, said he, to your plough, or my riddle would
19 be unanswered still. Then the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ascalon and there slew thirty men, whose clothes he stripped off and gave to the answerers of his riddle. So, in high displeasure, he went back to his father's
20 house, and his wife mated with one of these friends of his, that had been his guests at the wedding.

15 Some time had passed, and they were cutting the wheat already, when Samson went to visit his wife, bringing a kid from his herd as a present to her. But now her father would not let him pass into her inner room, as his wont had been;
2 Why, he said, I thought past all doubt thou hadst grown weary of her, so I gave her in marriage to one of thy friends. But there is a younger sister of hers, and a fairer still;
3 she shall be thy wife instead. From this day onward, Samson answered, the Philistines are to blame, not I, if I do them
4 despite. Away he went, and caught three hundred foxes; roped them, tail to tail, with fire-brands between, and so turned them loose, with the fire-brands alight. Soon they were among the crops of the Philistines, which caught fire, stooks and standing corn alike, and set fire in their
5 turn to olive-yard and vineyard. When the Philistines enquired about the author of this, they were told how Samson's wife had been taken from him and given to one of his friends, and this was his revenge on his father-in-law. Whereupon they made their way to Thamnatha, and burned both
7 the woman and her father alive. Well, said Samson, you have had your way, but I will make you suffer for it before I have done
8 with you; and with that he made such a massacre that all sat huddled in fear of him.¹

¹ 'All sat huddled in fear of him'; literally, in the Latin version, 'In stupefaction, they put their calves over their thighs', which is perhaps meant to suggest the dejected attitude of a man clasping his knee. The meaning of the phrase in the Hebrew text, 'he smote them calf over thigh' is no doubt that of wholesale destruction.

² In the Hebrew text, the song reads 'One heap, two heaps, all with the jaw-bone of an ass! With the jaw-bone of an ass I have slain a thousand men'; the word for an ass being indistinguishable from the word for a heap in Hebrew. The Latin version, apparently confused by the similarities, reads literally, 'With the jaw-bone of an ass, with the mandible of a colt of she-asses, I have destroyed them (perhaps in the sense of 'heaped them up'); I have slain a thousand men.'
³ The Latin version says that the Lord 'opened a molar tooth in the jaw of the ass', but it is more likely that there was a cleft in the ground called by this name—or rather, according to the Hebrew text, 'the mortar-like) Hollow of the Jaw-bone'.

Then he left them, and went to live in a cave on the Rock of Etam. And now the Philistines invaded Juda, encamping, with little order, about the place afterwards called Lechi, the Jaw-bone; and when the men of Juda asked on what errand they came, they said they had come to make Samson prisoner, and take vengeance on him for all the ill he had done them. So three thousand men of Juda went to the cave on the Rock of Etam; What are these wild doings of thine? they asked Samson. Dost thou not know that the Philistines have the upper hand of us? Nay, said he, I did but serve them as they served me first. Our purpose, they said, is to hand thee over bound to the Philistines. Swear to me then, answered Samson, that you will not kill me yourselves. Kill thee? said they. No, we will not kill thee; we will hand thee over as a prisoner. So bound he was, with two new ropes, and carried away from the Rock of Etam.

Lord was the Philistines' cry of triumph that went up to meet him at Lechi; but suddenly the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and his bonds parted and snapped like scorched tow. No weapon had he, but he found a bone lying there, an ass's jaw-bone; took that instead, and killed a thousand men with it. With the bone of an ass, he cried, I have made bones of them; with the bone of an ass a thousand men lie slain.² This song sung, he threw the jaw-bone away; and the name he gave to the place was Ramath-Lechi, the Brandishing of the Jaw-bone. But now he was thirsty, and made his complaint to the Lord, Here is a servant of thine, whom thou hast used to win a great victory, a great deliverance, and dying of thirst! Wilt thou leave me, after all, at the mercy of men uncircumcised? And at that, the Lord made the hollow cleft which is called the Tooth of the Jaw-bone, and water came out of it;³ so he drank, and his spirits revived, and his strength returned to him. The place

has been called the Praying Well of Lechi ever since.

For twenty years after that, while the Philistine troubles lasted, Samson was ruler of Israel.

16 At another time he went to Gaza, and would pass the night with a harlot he had seen there. The news came to the ears of the Philistines that Samson was in the town, and they cut him off from escape by posting guards at the city gate; no need to do anything while night lasted, they could kill him next morning on his way out. Samson slept on till midnight; then he rose up to go. Finding the gates locked, he took them up, bar, gate-posts and all, put them on his shoulder, and carried them to the top of the hill which looks down towards Hebron.

His next love was a woman called Dalila, who lived in the valley of Sorec. To her the chiefs of the Philistines had recourse; Use all thy arts, they said, and find out from him what it is that makes him so strong; how we can get the better of him, make him a prisoner and have him at our mercy. Do this for us, and each of us will give thee eleven hundred pieces of silver. So Dalila asked Samson, Tell me, what makes thee so strong? What bonds should a man use to bind thee, if he would have thee at his mercy? Bind me with seven strands of gut, still fresh and undried, Samson told her, and I shall be no stronger than other men. Such a cord the Philistine chiefs brought her, and she bound Samson with it; meanwhile they lay concealed in her house, waiting in an inner room to see what came of it. Samson, she cried, the Philistines! Whereupon he broke through his bonds, as if they had been made of the refuse of tow, and scorched besides. And about that strength of his, none was the wiser.

It was but a jest, then, said Dalila; thou wert tricking me? Tell me the truth this time; what bonds can bind thee? New ropes, he answered, that have never yet been used; bind me with those, and never a man so weak as I. So once more Dalila bound him, once more she cried, Samson, the Philistines! And the men hidden in the

inner room saw him break his bonds like a thread. What, cried Dalila, still mocking me, still at thy lying? Tell me what the right bonds are. Why, answered Samson, if thou shouldst weave seven of the hairs on my head into that web of thine, and tie them to the peg of the loom, and make it fast in the ground, then I should be weak enough. This, too, Dalila did; but when she awoke him by crying Samson, the Philistines! he rose to his feet carrying away peg and web and all.

Come, said Dalila, thou dost pretend to love me; wilt thou not let me share thy thoughts? Three times thou hast put me off with lies, instead of telling me the secret of thy great strength. Thus did she torment him, plying him with questions day after day, and giving him no peace, till at last she crushed his spirit altogether, and made life a burden to him; and at last he told her the truth. I am a Nazirite, he said; that is to say, I am consecrated to God from birth, and this hair of mine has never felt the touch of steel. If my hair were cut, my strength would leave me; I should lose it all, and become like other men. She could tell, now, that he was keeping nothing back from her, and she sent a message to the Philistine chiefs, Come to my house this once more; he has told me everything. So they came, and brought with them the money they had promised her. And now she made him lie down to sleep at her knees, with his head in her lap, and called her manservant in.¹ And she cut off the seven locks of Samson's hair, resolved now to cast him off and spurn his love.² All at once his strength left him; and when she awoke him with her cry, Samson, the Philistines! it was in vain that he sought to escape by shaking off his bonds as of old. The Lord was at his side no longer, and the Philistines held him fast. First they blinded him, and then carried him off bound to Gaza, where they made him work as a prisoner at the mill.

But now the hair began to grow again on the shorn head. After a while, the chiefs of the Philistines met to offer their god Dagon high sacrifice, and to hold a banquet. What an enemy, they said, was

¹ 'Her manservant'; literally, in the Latin text, 'a barber'; but it was Dalila herself who cut the hair, and the man would only be needed to bring her the razor. ² The Hebrew text has, 'And she began to afflict him', perhaps meaning 'she thus became the author of all his subsequent ill-fortune'.

24 this Samson! And our god has given us the mastery of him. Thereupon the common folk took up the same cry of praise; Our god has given us the mastery, they said, over this enemy of ours, that so
25 ruined our lands, that slew so many. And in their mirth, as they drank together after the banquet was eaten, they had Samson brought in to provide sport for them. Provide sport for them he did, set free for a while from his prison, standing between two pillars, where they had made place for
26 him. Then he said to the boy who was leading him about, Now guide my hands to the two pillars that support the building; I would lean my weight on them and rest a little.

27 The building was thronged with men and women both; all the chiefs of the Philistines were there, and from the roof, with its balcony, some three thousand men and women looked on while Samson provided them with sport. And now he called the Lord to his aid; Lord God, he said, bethink thyself of me, and give me back, for this once, the strength I had of old. One stroke of vengeance, my God, on the enemies who have robbed me of both my
28 eyes! And with that, he caught the two pillars the building rested on, one in his right hand and one in his left, crying out, Now, Samson, die with the Philistines! And he shook the pillars with such force that the whole building fell and crushed the chiefs of the Philistines, crushed all the throng that was there about him. Great toll Samson took of them in his life-time, but greater as he died.

31 And all his brethren and kindred went down to carry off his body, which they buried in the tomb of his father Manue, between Saraa and Esthaol. His rule over Israel had lasted twenty years.

17 Now turn we to a man called Michas, who lived at this same
2 time in the hill-country of Ephraim. His mother had lost eleven hundred silver pieces, which she had set aside; and when,

in his presence, she pronounced a curse on the thief, he told her, I have the money, I took it for myself.¹ No curse, then, said she, but a blessing from the Lord on this son of mine. And she told him, as he gave
3 it back to her, I solemnly dedicate this sum of money to the Lord, promising him that my son shall have it from me, to make himself a graven image, with a sheath of cast metal. So now after all it is thine. Then she took out two hundred of the
4 pieces so restored, and gave them to a silversmith, to be melted down into the sheath of a carved image; and there the image stood, in the house of Michas.² He
5 set apart a shrine for the worship of God,³ furnished it with vestments and household deities and installed one of his sons as the priest of it. (This was in the old days of
6 Israel before the monarchy, when men lived by the best light they had.)

But the lad was to have a rival, a young
7 man from Bethlehem-Juda, ranking as one of Juda's clan, but himself a Levite, come from other parts. And now he would leave
8 Bethlehem and go on his travels to find a home that suited him. His journey took him to the hill-country of Ephraim, and there, for a while, he lodged at Michas' house. When he was asked whence he
9 came, and told them he was a Levite from Bethlehem-Juda, looking for a home that suited him, Why, said Michas, live here
10 with me, and I will honour thee like a father and a priest. Ten silver pieces thou shalt have each year, and a fresh suit of clothes, and thy livelihood. To this he agreed, and
11 dwelt there with him, as well cared for as if he had been one of his sons; and Michas,
12 when he installed the young man as priest in his household, flattered himself that
13 God's blessing would be with him, now that he had a priest by him of the Levite family.

18 These were days when no king yet ruled in Israel. And the men of Dan were still trying to find a home to live in; the portion allotted to them among the

¹ That the money had been stolen, is not made clear in the Latin version. ² The literal sense of this verse is that two images were made, one carved and one cast in metal. But if there was a carved image, with a detachable metal casing, we can more readily understand why the whole is treated as one thing in this verse, as two things in 18. 17 below. ³ The Hebrew text might also be rendered 'a shrine of gods'; it seems clear that Michas combined the worship of the true God with that of idols (cf. 18. 24 below); a fact for which the next verse in some sort apologises. The word used for 'vestments' in the Hebrew text is of somewhat doubtful significance; cf. note on 8. 27.

2 other tribes had not yet fallen into their
3 hands. So, from their quarters at Saraa and
4 Esthaol, they sent out five champions of
5 theirs to make a careful survey of the land.
6 Setting out with these orders, they reached
7 the hill-country of Ephraim, and there
8 found a lodging at Michas' house. Here,
9 among strangers, they recognized the tones
10 of the young Levite's voice; Why, they
11 said, who persuaded thee to come into
12 these parts? What errand brought thee
13 here? So he told them what Michas had
14 promised to do for him, and what payment
15 was made him for living there as priest of
16 the shrine. They asked him, too, to consult
17 the Lord, and tell them whether their
18 journey should prosper, and its end be
19 achieved; Go on undismayed, said he, the
20 Lord looks favourably on your journey,
21 and its errand.

22 So these men went on their way, and
23 when they reached Lais, they found a city
24 where men dwelt free from all alarms. This
25 was the way of the Sidonian folk, to live
26 tranquilly and at ease; no civil power re-
27 strained them, and they had great wealth.
28 Lais, too, was at a distance from Sidon,
29 and remote from all the world. So, when
30 they came home, and their fellow-tribes-
31 men at Saraa and Esthaol asked them how
32 they had sped, they answered, Up, friends,
33 to the attack! We have found lands both
34 rich and fertile; we must not miss our
35 opportunity by dallying here. March in
36 and take possession; the task is light. We
37 can fall on them unawares, and the Lord will
38 make us masters of their territory, broad
39 lands, with no lack of anything earth yields.

40 So six hundred men of Dan, from Saraa
41 and Esthaol, marched out fully armed,
42 and made their first halt at Cariathiarim,
43 in Juda, on the spot which has been called
44 the Camp of Dan ever since, just west of
45 Cariathiarim. Thence they made their way
46 into the hill-country of Ephraim; and
47 when they reached the house of Michas,
48 the five men who had been sent on the
49 mission to Lais said to their fellow-
50 tribesmen, Do you know what we found
51 in that house? A sacred mantle, and
52 household deities, and a carved image with
53 a sheath of metal. Look well to it what
54 course you will take. So they turned aside
55 a little to visit the lodging of the young
56 Levite that was priest in Michas' house-

57 hold, and gave him friendly greeting. Six
58 hundred armed men stood at the door,
59 while those who had made their way into
60 the young man's lodging set about carrying
61 off carved image, and mantle, and house-
62 hold deities, and metal sheath all together;
63 and all the while the priest was in the door-
64 way, with six hundred fighting men close
65 by. As they brought out these treasures
66 one after another, the priest asked them
67 what they would be at, but they bade him
68 keep his lips tight shut, and come with
69 them. We will honour thee, they said, as
70 father and priest. Wouldst thou rather be
71 priest to one man's household than to a
72 whole tribe, a whole clan of Israel? For
73 the Levite, it was pleasant hearing enough;
74 he took up mantle and household deities
75 and image, and went off in their company.

76 So on they went, with children and
77 pack animals and stores travelling in front,
78 and were a long way from Michas' house
79 when they heard his men coming up be-
80 hind them with a great hue and cry, calling
81 on them to halt. At that, they looked
82 round and asked Michas what ailed him,
83 what all the shouting meant. You have
84 robbed me, he answered, robbed me of the
85 gods I made for myself, of my own priest,
86 of all that I had, and you ask what ails me!
87 It were well, the children of Dan said, that
88 we should hear no more of thy complaints.
89 There might be some hot-heads among us
90 who would turn back to meet thee, and thou
91 and thine would rue it! With that, they
92 went on their way, and Michas, who saw
93 they were too strong for him, must betake
94 himself home.

95 Taking the priest, then, with them, and
96 the rest of their plunder aforesaid, the six
97 hundred men reached Lais. There they
98 found all the citizens living at ease, free
99 from alarms, and they put them to the
100 sword, burning down their city. There was
101 none to bring aid; they were far from
102 Sidon, and with all the rest of the world
103 fellowship and commerce they had none.
104 It was in Rohob their city lay, and the men
105 of Dan rebuilt it to make their home in it,
106 calling it Dan, after their ancestor that was
107 Israel's son, and Lais no longer. And there
108 they set up the image; the tribe of Dan had
109 its own priests down to the day when it
110 went into exile, descended from Moses'
111 son Gersam, and his son Jonathan. All the

time God's house was at Silo, there in Dan stood Michas' image. So it was in the old days, before a king ruled in Israel.

19 There was another Levite, living in the hill-country of Ephraim, that took a woman from Bethlehem-Juda for his mate; but she played him false, and went back to her father's house at Bethlehem, and stayed there four months. Then her lord went after her, with one of his servants and two asses, to end the quarrel with soft words and win her back again; and as for her, she made him welcome in her father's house. Her father, too, was glad at the news, and rejoiced to see him; he was entertained as a friend, and lodged for three days with his father-in-law, eating and drinking at ease in his company. On the fourth day, he would have set out early; but his father-in-law would still detain him; A mouthful of bread, to stay thy appetite, and then take the road. As they sat down together to eat and drink, the father would have him wait till the morrow, and spend the day in good cheer; in vain he rose up to go, his father-in-law would take no denial; he must spend the night there. Even when the fifth day dawned, and the Levite was for setting out, the other would have him take a little food while the day was young, to refresh him for his journey. So they sat at table together; and now the young man must take the girl with him, and summon his servant, and begone. Why, said his father-in-law, there is little day-light left now; evening draws on. Better wait one more day, and spend it in good cheer, and take thy way home to-morrow. But this time his son-in-law would not listen to him; there and then he set out on his journey.

So the asses were saddled, and man and woman made their way to Jebus (which is the same as Jerusalem); but even as they approached Jebus, night-fall was not far off. Master, the servant said, let us turn aside and find a lodging in this city of the Jebusites. What, said his master, betake yourselves to an alien town, that is no part of Israel? No, I am for pressing on to Gabaa, to find a night's lodging there, or perhaps to Rama. So they passed by Jebus and held on their way; but the sun had set

before they reached Gabaa, which is a town belonging to Benjamin. To it they turned aside, hoping to lodge there, but, once within, they could only sit down to rest in the main street of the town; no one would give them shelter. At last an old man came by, returning late from working on his farm; he lived in Gabaa, but he, too, came from the hills of Ephraim; he was not a Benjamite like his neighbours. And when he looked round and saw a traveller sitting there in the open street, he asked, Whence comest thou? And whither bound? So the other told him how they were returning to their home on the slopes of the Ephraim, after a visit to Bethlehem-Juda; the House of the Lord¹ was their next halting-place. But no one will give us shelter here, said he, although we have straw with us and fodder for our beasts, food enough for myself and the woman thou seest, and the servant who is with me; it is only of lodging that we stand in need. Have no fear, the old man said, I will provide all thy wants; thou canst not pass the night here in the open street. So he took them home, and fed their beasts for them; and now the travellers must wash their feet, and sit at table with him.

There, then, they sat, refreshing themselves after their journey, when suddenly wanton townsfolk beset the old man's house and fell to beating on the door, crying aloud to the owner of the house that he must bring out his guest, to satisfy their evil pleasure. So the old man went out and reasoned with them: Nay, brethren, why would you do such wrong to one who is my guest? Put away these reckless thoughts of yours. I have a daughter that is a maid, and this man too has a woman with him; let me bring these out, for your lust to feed on their shame, and let us hear no more of this unnatural purpose. But still they would not be satisfied; so at last the Levite brought out his own concubine, and gave her up to their pleasure. All night long they treated her with outrage, and in the morning let her go. And now, as the shadows lifted, she came back to the door of the house where her lord was lodging, and there fell down; so that when he opened the door next day, ready to go forward on his journey, he found his con-

¹ That is, Silo (cf. 20. 18), or possibly Bethel.

cubine there in the gate-way, with her hands spread out wide on the threshold. He thought she slept; Rise up, he said, we must be on our way; then, when no answer came, he knew that she was dead. He put her body on one of the asses, and made his way home.

His home once reached, he took a sword, and cut up her body, bones and all, into twelve pieces, which he sent round, this way and that, all through the land of Israel. None that saw it but cried aloud, Such a deed was never done in Israel, from the day when our fathers left Egypt to this! Let every man speak his mind; resolve we in common what we mean to do.

20 So the whole of Israel, all that dwelt between Dan and Bersabee, and the men of Galaad too, assembled with a common purpose before the Lord at Maspha; no chief, no clan but took part in this general muster of the Lord's people. Four hundred thousand foot, the sons of Benjamin heard, had been sent to Maspha by their fellow-Israelites. And now the I evite, the dead woman's husband, was asked how such a wrong came to be done, and told them how he had gone with his wife to lodge at Gabaa, in Benjamin; how the townfolk beset the house where he was spending the night, ready to make an attempt on his life, and how their mad lust had indeed brought about his wife's death. So I carried off the body, he told them, and cut it in pieces, which I sent round to every quarter of your dominions, to bear witness of such a wrongful and shameful deed as was never yet done in Israel. Men of Israel, you are met in council; see to it where your duty lies. And all that stood by answered with one voice, Never will we return to our dwelling-places, our homes shall see us no more, until we have inflicted a common punishment on Gabaa. We must set apart ten Israelites in every hundred, a hundred in every thousand, a thousand in every ten thousand, to supply the army with food; then we will go to the attack against Gabaa in Benjamin, and exact retribution for the wrong done.

So, with one mind and one intent, all Israel made common cause against this

city. An embassy was sent to the Benjaminites to reproach them with harbouring the guilt of a foul crime, bidding them hand over the wanton folk at Gabaa that had been the authors of it, so that their death might rid Israel of a disgrace. But the sons of Benjamin would take no orders from their fellow-Israelites; all the cities which belonged to their domain sent men to Gabaa's rescue, defying the whole commonwealth of Israel. Benjamin then counted twenty-five thousand warriors, apart from the citizens of Gabaa; and these could provide seven hundred champions of their own, men who could fight as well with the left hand as with the right, and could sling a stone without missing their aim by a hair's breadth.

But Israel, without Benjamin, had four hundred thousand warriors under arms, and these now mustered at Silo,¹ where they asked divine counsel to know who should lead them into battle against Benjamin; Juda, the Lord told them, is to be your leader. So next day without more ado, they encamped close to Gabaa, and offered Benjamin battle, making an assault on the city. Hereupon the men of Benjamin made a sally, and slew, that day, twenty-two thousand Israelites. Even then, the Israelites did not alter their plan of attack, such confidence had they in their numbers and their valour. But first they went up to the Lord's sanctuary and offered, all the long day, their tearful supplications; were they to fight on against their brethren of Benjamin? Go out to meet them, the Lord said, and offer battle. This second day, when Israel marched against them, the Benjaminites made a fresh sally from the gates of Gabaa, with such a murderous onslaught that eighteen thousand warriors were left dead on the field. And now all Israel went into God's house and sat there in tears; they kept a fast till night-fall, and brought him burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offerings, consulting him about the plight they were in. At this time, the ark of God rested there, and there, too, was Phinees, son to Eleazar that was son of Aaron, in charge of God's house. And now when they asked the Lord whether they should take the field once

¹ 'At Silo'; literally, 'at the house of God, that is, Silo'. But the same word is rendered simply 'house of God' by the Latin version in verse 26, and 'Bethel' in verse 31.

more against their brethren of Benjamin, the answer was, Go to the attack; I mean to give you the mastery of them to-morrow.

29 This time, the Israelites hid men in ambush
30 round the city of Gabaa, and when, once again, they made a frontal attack,
31 such as they had made twice before, the men of Benjamin sallied out more boldly than ever, ready to pursue their adversaries to any distance. Just as on the two earlier days, they began cutting the Israelites down as they ran, some on the road to Bethel, some on the road to Gabaa itself,
32 and about thirty of them fell. A fresh rout it seemed, but in truth the men of Israel did but feign flight, so as to lure their pursuers down these roads, far away from the city. Meanwhile the main body of Israelites had withdrawn from the ground they held, and taken up their stand at a place called Baal-Thamar, but leaving bodies of men in ambush round the city;¹ and these now began to disclose themselves
34 one by one, and march on the city from the west. The defenders of the city had been lured out of it by the ten thousand Israelites who came to the attack; so that no wrong things went ill with the army of Benjamin; they were surrounded on all sides unawares. So it was that the Lord struck down Benjamin at the onslaught of the Israelites, who slew that day twenty-five thousand one hundred fighting men, all of them trained to war.

36 This, then, was the way of it.² On ran the men of Benjamin, finding the conflict so uneven, and still the Israelites gave ground to them, so that they should fall into the trap which had been set for them round the city. Now, on a sudden, while the men of Benjamin thus exposed their rear to attack, the men in ambush rose from their hiding-places, made their way into the city, and put everyone they found
38 there to the sword. A signal had been agreed upon between them and the rest of the Israelites; when they had taken the city, they were to make a great fire, whose smoke rolling upwards would announce
39 the capture. And this sight now met the

eyes of the Israelites who had been entrusted with the fighting. They were being fiercely pressed by the Benjamites, who thought them routed and had already slain some thirty of them; but now they saw a column of smoke rising up from the city. The Benjamites, too, looked back and saw it; saw that their city had been taken, and the flames of it were mounting up to heaven. So now the men who had been feigning flight faced about, and offered fiercer resistance; while the Benjamites, when they saw what was befalling them, turned their backs and made for the road that leads out into the desert. But, go where they would, the men who were matched against them were at their heels; and by now the men who had been burning down the city came out to meet them as well. Thus the enemy attacked them from both sides, cutting them down without respite; all over the country-side east of Gabaa men were falling, and lying where they fell.

Eighteen thousand men, all their picked warriors, were killed there and then; the rest of Benjamin, after witnessing their defeat, escaped into the desert, and made for the rock that is called Remmon. Even in that flight, straggling and scattered, five thousand met their death; and another two thousand were killed by the pursuers as they tried to go further afield. Thus twenty-five thousand sons of Benjamin perished, some here, some there, all of them warriors trained to battle. The whole number of Benjamites that made good their escape into the desert was no more than six hundred men; and these spent four whole months on the rock of Remmon. Meanwhile the Israelites went back and put all that was left in the city, man and beast, to the sword; and busy flames devoured every city and township in the lands of Benjamin.

21 This, too, was part of the oath which the Israelites took at Maspha, that none of them would wed his daughter to a man of Benjamin's race. And

¹ The narrative here is not clear, but it seems likely the Israelites practised a feigned withdrawal, like Abimelech in 9. 43.

² These words have been inserted to warn the reader that verses 36-40 are a more detailed account of what has already been described in verses 29-35. The Latin translator, not understanding this, here represents the Benjamites as running away, conscious of defeat; but it is clear from the context that the rout of the Benjamites does not begin till verse 41.

now they betook themselves to God's house in Silo, and sat there all day in his presence, weeping and making loud lament; Lord God of Israel, they cried, what curse is this that has fallen on thy people, that a whole tribe of us should disappear? And when day dawned they built an altar, upon which they presented burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offerings. And now the thought came to them, Was there any clan among all the tribes of Israel that did not go out to fight in the Lord's army? At Maspha, they had bound themselves by a solemn oath that anyone who failed them should be exterminated. But when, in remorse over their Benjamite brethren, they fell to lamenting over the loss of a whole tribe to Israel, and asking where wives could be found for the race to which they had all sworn they would wed no daughter of theirs, the thought came afresh, Were there any of Israel's tribesmen who did not answer the Lord's summons to Maspha? Then they remembered that the men of Jabes-Galaad had sent no aid; nor were any of them to be found now, among the muster at Silo.

So ten thousand fighting men were sent out with orders to put the citizens of Jabes-Galaad to the sword. Wives and children were to perish with the rest; but while they slew all the men-folk, and all the women who had had commerce with man, they must be careful to spare the unwedded maids. Four hundred was the toll of unwedded maids they took at Jabes-Galaad, and when these had been brought across the river to the encampment at Silo, they sent to the Benjamites at the rock of Remmon under safe-conduct,¹ bidding them

come and take their wives there and then, daughters of Jabes-Galaad.

But where could any more be found, to suffice them? Still the whole of Israel was full of remorse, grieving over a tribe lost to Israel; still the elders were at a loss what to do for the rest of the Benjamites; Here are all their women-folk slain, they said, and Israel must not lose a tribe, if care or thought of ours can prevent it. Yet how should we find brides for them, pledged as we are by oath and ban not to give our daughters to Benjamin? At last they bethought themselves of a feast that is held every year in the Lord's honour near Silo, at a place north of Bethel, south of Lebona, and east of the road from Bethel to Sichern. Go and hide in these vineyards, they told the Benjamites, and before long you will see the maids of Silo come out to perform their customary dances. Then spring out upon them from the vineyards on a sudden, each of you carrying off a wife for himself, and so return to the lands of Benjamin. When their fathers and brethren come to make angry complaints of you, we will say, Forgive them; they did not claim to carry the maids off by right of conquest. You provoked them to this by refusing your consent.²

So the men of Benjamin did as they were bidden, each of them carrying off a wife for himself when the maids came out dancing; and when they were back in their own domain they built new cities to dwell in. And each son of Israel went back to the dwelling-place of his own clan, his own family. This was in the days before any king ruled in Israel, when men lived by the best light they had.

¹ The Hebrew text probably means, not 'under safe-conduct', but 'proposing terms of peace'.

² The Latin version here differs widely from the Hebrew text, which is perhaps corrupt.

THE BOOK OF RUTH

IN the old days, when Israel was ruled by judges, there was a man of Bethlehem-Juda that took his wife and his two sons to live in the Moabite country, to escape from a famine. There, in Moab, these Ephrathites from Bethlehem-Juda continued to dwell, Elimelech, and his wife Noemi, and his two sons Mahalon and Chelion; there Elimelech died, and Noemi was left a widow. But still she would be with her sons, who had now married wives of Moabite race, one called Orpha and the other Ruth. So ten years passed, and then Mahalon and Chelion both died. And now, both widowed and childless, she bade farewell to Moab and set out, with her two daughters-in-law, on the journey home; the Lord had been merciful to his people, she was told, and there was food to be had once more.

Thus Noemi left her dwelling-place; and when she set foot on the road that led to the domain of Juda, she turned to her companions, and bade either go back to her own mother's house; May the Lord shew kindness to you, she said, as you have shewn kindness to the memory of the dead, and to me; may you live at ease with new husbands. And with that she gave them a parting kiss. But no, they wept aloud, and declared they would go on in her company, to the home of her own people. Come with me, my daughters? she answered. Nay, you must go back. I have no more sons in my womb to wed you; go back, daughters, and leave me; I am an old woman, past the age for marrying. Though I should conceive this very night, and bear sons, it would be weary waiting for you till they should be grown to manhood; you would be old women too, long before your wedding day. Enough of this, daughters; it is your hard lot that makes it weigh heavy on me, this burden the Lord has given me to bear. At this, they wept louder than ever; but Orpha kissed her mother-in-law and went back; Ruth would not leave her side. Here is thy sister-in-law gone back, Noemi said, back to her own people and

the gods they worship; do thou, too, go with her. Nay, said Ruth, do not press me to go back and leave thee. I mean to go where thou goest, and dwell where thou dwellest; thy people shall be my people, thy God my God; whatever earth closes over thee when thou diest shall be my place of death and burial. Due meed of punishment the Lord give me, and more than due, if aught but death part thee and me.

When she found Ruth so resolved to bear her company, Noemi would cross her no longer, nor bid her return home; together they went on, and at last reached Bethlehem. They had scarce entered the city gate before the tale went round, and all the gossips were saying, Why, it is Noemi. Call me no longer, she said, by that name of delight; call me Mara, the unhappy one. Has not an almighty hand filled my cup with bitterness? Rich in blessings I left my home, and the Lord has brought me back destitute. So humbled by the Lord's hand, visited by the Almighty with such calamity, and will you call me Noemi still?

Thus it was that Noemi returned from the land of her adoption, with her daughter-in-law Ruth, that was Moabite born. They were just beginning to cut the barley in the fields, when she came back to her home at Bethlehem.

2 Elimelech had a kinsman called Booz, a man of great influence and wealth. And now Ruth, the Moabite, asked leave of her mother-in-law to go out and glean after the reapers, by some rich man's favour. Go then, daughter, said she; and it so chanced that the field in which Ruth went to glean after the reapers belonged to no other than Booz, Elimelech's kinsman. After a while, he himself came out from Bethlehem, and when he had greeted the reapers, The Lord be with you, and they had wished him God's blessing in return, he asked the man in charge of them, a servant of his own, whose daughter this maid might be? It is Ruth, said he, the Moabite, that came here

from Moab with Noemi; she asked leave to glean after the reapers, and here she has been, ever since morning, without once going home to rest.

Listen, my daughter, Booz said to Ruth; do not look for any other field to glean in; stay here and keep my maidens company, following ever where they reap. My servants have orders not to interfere with thee; if thou art thirsty, go to the buckets yonder and share the water they drink. At this, Ruth bowed low, face to ground; How have I deserved any favour of thine? she asked. Why wouldst thou take notice of an alien woman such as I am? I have had word, he answered, of thy goodness to thy mother-in-law since thy husband's death; how thou didst leave kindred and country, to dwell among strangers. May the Lord reward thee for what thou hast done; may the Lord God of Israel, in whose shelter thou hast learned to trust, make thee full return for it! Then she said, This is great kindness in thee, my lord, so to comfort and encourage me, thy poor servant that cannot compare with these handmaids of thine.

He bade her come back when it was time for a meal, to eat bread there and dip her crust in the vinegar. So there she sat with the reapers, and still at her side the heap of parched corn grew, till she had eaten her fill, and had more to carry away.¹ By the time she had risen up to go on with her gleaning, Booz had given orders to his servants that they were to put no hindrance in her way, though she were to go reaping in their company; and of set purpose they were to drop some of the handfuls they gathered, and leave them there for her to glean, never shaming her by a rebuke. So it was that when she had worked till evening, and took her rod to beat out what she had gathered, she found it was a whole eph, that is a bushel.

Such were the earnings she brought back with her to the city, and shewed to her mother-in-law; offering her besides some of the food that was left over when she had finished her meal. Why, said Noemi, where hast thou been gleaning to-day? Where didst thou find so much work to do? Blessed be the man that has so befriended

thee! And Ruth told her whose field it was she had worked in, It was a man called Booz, she said. May the Lord bless him, answered Noemi; here is a man that is generous to his own, living as well as dead. And she told Ruth that Booz was their near kinsman. This too, said Ruth, was his bidding, that I should keep close to his men till all the reaping is done. That is best, daughter, said her mother-in-law, that thou shouldst go out to glean with those maidens of his; in some other field they might say thee nay. And with the maid-servants of Booz she still kept company, till barley and wheat were both carried.

3 Now that she had come back home, her mother-in-law said to her, Daughter, I mean to win thee an easy life, and bring thee happiness. This Booz, whose maidens were thy companions in harvest-time, Booz, our kinsman, will be at the threshing-floor to-night, winnowing his barley. Wash thee, and anoint thee, and put on thy best array, and so go down to the threshing-floor. He will not have finished eating and drinking; do not let him see thee, but wait till he goes to bed, and mark where it is that he is sleeping. Then come close, and turn back the end of his mantle where it covers his feet, and lie down there. After that, it is for him to counsel thee.

So Ruth promised to do all her bidding; down to the threshing-floor she went, and carried out all her mother-in-law's plan. She waited till Booz came, his heart cheered with food and drink, to take his rest by a pile of sheaves that lay there; then she crept near, turned back the end of his mantle, and lay down. At midnight, Booz was startled from his sleep, and looked about him in bewilderment to find a woman lying there at his feet. Who art thou? he asked. It is Ruth, she said, Ruth, thy handmaid, that bids thee cast thy mantle over her, as one that is near of kin. The Lord bless thee, daughter, he answered; now, more than ever, thou hast shewn the goodness of thy heart; to have no eyes for younger men, rich or poor! Be comforted, thou shalt have all thou wilt of me; all the city knows thee for a bride worth the winning. True enough, we are

¹ It is made clear in the Hebrew text, though not in the Latin version, that Booz gave Ruth more than her share of the parched corn allotted to the reapers.

near of kin, but thou hast another kinsman nearer yet. Wait till night is past; at day-break, if he will claim thee by right of kinship, well and good; if not, as the Lord is a living God, thou shalt be mine without more ado. Sleep, then, till day comes.

- 14 So there, at his feet, she slept till the night passed; and he rose while it was still too early for men to recognize one another. He warned her not to let anyone know that she had been there; then he said, Spread out the fold of that mantle thou wearest, and hold it with either hand. So she held it spread out, and he measured out two bushels of barley for her to carry. When she reached the city with her load, she found Noemi eager to know how she had fared; and she told the story of how Booz had treated her. Look, she said, he has given me two bushels of barley; he protested that he must not send me home to my mother-in-law empty-handed. Wait, then, daughter, said Noemi, till we see what will come of it. Here is a man that will not rest till he has made good his promise.

- 4 So Booz went up to the city gate, and sat waiting there. When the man he was looking for passed by, the kinsman of whom he had spoken, he called him by name, bidding him stay his journey and sit there for a little; and so he did. Then Booz chose out ten of the city elders, and would have these, too, sit beside him. When they were seated, he told the rival claimant, Here is Noemi, that lately came back out of Moab, offering to sell part of the land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. Of this, I thought it well to give thee notice, and challenge thee before the neighbours who are sitting by, and these, the elders of my people. Hast thou a mind to play a kinsman's part, and claim it for thy own? Then thou must buy it, and so enter into possession. If not, tell me, so that I may know what to do; thy right comes first, and mine second; there is no other kinsman. Yes, said he, I will buy it. Why then, said Booz, if thou dost buy the land from Noemi, thou must needs take with it a dead man's widow, Ruth the Moabitess, to perpetuate the name of the kinsman whose lands thou dost enjoy.
- 6 Nay, then, said the other, I forgo my right

of kinship; I would not disinherit the heirs of my own body. I yield thee my rights, willing enough to forgo them.

It was the custom of Israel in old times that if one kinsman yielded his right to another, he must untie his shoe and hand it over to this kinsman of his, or else the gift was not valid; thus did the Israelites put the grant on record.¹ So now Booz said to the rival claimant, Untie thy shoe; and as soon as he had done so, made appeal to the elders and to all that were present. You are witnesses, he said, this day, that I have reclaimed all the possessions of Elimelech, Chelion and Mahalon by purchase from Noemi: and moreover, that I have taken Mahalon's widow, Ruth the Moabitess, to wife. I mean to hand on the dead man's property to heirs of his own, so that his name may never be lost to his family, his kindred and his people. Of all this, you are witnesses. So the elders made answer, and all that were present made answer, We bear witness of it. Take thy bride home, and may the Lord make her as fruitful as Rachel and Lia, that gave a posterity to Israel. May Ephrata know her worth, and Bethlehem tell her praises: may thy house be famous as the house of Phares, that Thamar bore to Juda, through the sons the Lord will give thee by this wife of thine.

So Booz claimed Ruth, and wedded and bedded her, and the Lord made her conceive and give birth to a son. Blessed be the Lord, all the women said to Noemi, for not leaving thy family without an heir, to perpetuate its name in Israel. Here is one that shall bring comfort to thy heart, and support to thy old age; such a mother is his, such a daughter-in-law is thine, whose love is worth more to thee than seven sons of thy own. And so Noemi took the child to her bosom, and still it must be she that nursed him, she that carried him, till the neighbours, congratulating her, said It is Noemi that has a son. And they called him Obed.

This Obed had a son called Jesse, that was father to David. Thus, then, runs the pedigree of Phares; Phares was the father of Ebron, Ebron of Aram, Aram of Aminadab, Aminadab of Nahasson, Nahasson of Salmon, Salmon of Booz, Booz of Obed, Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.

¹ Cf. Deut. 25. 7-10.

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS

SOMETIMES CALLED THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

THERE was a man once called Elcana, that lived at Ramathaim-Sophim, in the hill-country of Ephraim; he was an Ephraimite born, descended from Suph through Jeroham, Eliu and Thohu. He had two wives, one called Anna, the other Phenenna, and this Phenenna had borne him sons, whereas Anna was childless. Never a feast-day would he keep in his own city; he must be at Silo, worshipping the Lord of hosts, and offering him sacrifice; there dwelt the Lord's priests, Ophni and Phinees, the two sons of Heli. When the time came for Elcana's sacrifice, Phenenna must have many portions, for a son here, a daughter there, and he was sad at heart as he gave Anna her single portion, for Anna he loved dearly. Why had the Lord denied her motherhood? And still she must endure bitter persecution from her rival, that did not scruple to make her childlessness a matter of reproach; year after year, when they went up to the Lord's temple for the feast, it was ever the same. In tears she sat, with no heart for eating, while her husband Elcana tried to comfort her. Anna, he said, what need to weep, what need to deny thyself food? What sorrow weighs on thy heart? Is it not worth the love of ten sons, the love I bear thee?

Once, on such a visit to Silo, when eating and drinking was done, Anna rose up from her place and went to the temple door, where the priest Heli was sitting. Sad at heart, she prayed to the Lord with many tears, and made a vow: Lord of hosts, if thou wilt take good heed of this sorrow I bear, if thou wilt keep this handmaid of thine ever in remembrance, and grant her a son, then he shall be my gift to the Lord all his life long, a Nazirite unshorn. Such was the prayer she went on repeating, there in the Lord's presence; and Heli saw her lips moving as she did so; her lips pronounced the secret petition, but

with no sound. Heli thought her besotted with wine; Come, he said, wilt thou always be at thy cups? Give thy stomach a rest from the wine that so bemuses thee. Nay, my lord, said Anna, thou seest an unhappy woman, unburdening her heart in the Lord's presence; there was no wine or strong drink here. Do not think of thy handmaid as a light woman; only sorrow and bitter anguish have wrung speech from me all this while. Go then, answered Heli, and peace go with thee; may the Lord grant the prayer thou hast made. I am thy handmaid, she said; thy favour is all I ask. Then she went back, and took food, sad-faced no longer; and next morning, when they had paid their devotions in the Lord's presence, they went back home to Ramatha.

And the Lord bethought him of Anna, when next Elcana took her to his bed; so, in due time, she conceived and bore him a son. The name she gave him was Samuel, in token that he was a gift she had won from the Lord.¹ When her husband Elcana went to offer the Lord due sacrifice, and pay his vow, taking all his household with him, Anna stayed at home. She would not go, she told her husband, until the boy was weaned; then she would herself bring him into the Lord's presence, and leave him there for ever. Do as thou wilt, Elcana said; wait here till he is weaned, and may the Lord bring his own will to accomplishment.

So she waited at home, and nursed her child till he was weaned. And now that he needed her no longer, she took him with her to the Lord's house in Silo, still so young. Three bulls, and a bushel of flour, and a skin of wine, were the offerings she made. When they brought the boy to Heli, to offer a bull-calf for him, Anna cried out, Listen, my lord! As thou art a living man, my lord, this is the same woman that stood here in thy presence, praying so eagerly!

¹ The name Samuel probably means 'name of God'.

27 And my prayer was for a son, the boy whom thou seest. I prayed to the Lord,
 28 and the Lord granted my request; and now, in my turn, I make a grant of him to the Lord, a grant that shall be long as his life. Then they offered the Lord worship, and Anna made this prayer which follows.

2 My heart thrills with joy in the Lord; pride in the God I worship lifts high my head; now can I flout my
 2 enemies, happy in thy gift of redress! Who so holy as the Lord? None, there is none else; there is no stronghold can compare
 3 with our God. Boast no more, boast no more; those lips must talk in another strain; the Lord is God all-knowing, and
 4 overrules the devices of men. See how he breaks the great warrior's bow, girds the
 5 feeble with strength; how the rich, for very need, must work as hirelings, while the hungry eat to their heart's content! See
 6 how at last the barren womb bears many, and the fruitful mother is left to languish!
 6 Lord of death and life, he brings men to the grave and back from the grave; Lord
 7 of poverty and of wealth, he alone humbles, alone exalts, raising up the poor man out
 8 of the dust, the beggar from his dung-hill, to sit among princes and reach the honours of a throne. It is the Lord that poised the
 9 round world on its foundations, and holds them in his keeping; safely his friends journey, dumb sit his enemies in the dark-
 10 ness; there is no protection for man in man's strength. The Lord will strike terror into his adversaries; hark, how his thunders roll above them in heaven! The Lord will sit in judgement on the remotest
 11 people of earth, the Lord will grant dominion and a sceptre of majesty to the king he has anointed. And so Elcana went back to his home at Ramatha, while Samuel remained to minister, at the bidding of the priest Heli, in the Lord's presence.

12 This Heli had two sons that were men of little worth, recked nothing of the Lord's
 13 honour or the duty of his priests to the people. When a man was sacrificing some victim, the priest's servant used to come up, with a three-pronged fork in his hand,
 14 while the meat was still cooking; and this he thrust into pot or pan, great or small, carrying off all that came up with it for the priest's eating; not an Israelite came to

Silo but went away so treated. The priest's
 1 servant, too, would come up before the fat was offered, and bid the worshipper give him some meat to cook for the priest; he would take it raw, not stewed already. In
 2 vain the worshipper protested, It is the custom for the fat to be burned at once; that done, thou shalt take meat to thy
 3 heart's content. No, give it me now, the servant would answer, or I will take it by force. This was heinous sin the young men
 4 committed under the Lord's eye; must they turn away men's hearts from honouring him with sacrifice?

Meanwhile, Samuel had begun to
 5 minister in the Lord's presence, girded, though still a boy, with the linen mantle. Every year, his mother made him a little
 6 tunic, and brought it with her when she came up with her husband on feast-days for the yearly sacrifice. And Heli gave a
 7 blessing to Elcana and his wife, May the Lord grant thee children by this woman, in return for what thou hast lent him!
 8 When they had gone home, the Lord shewed mercy to Anna, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters.
 9 And evermore, boy though he was, Samuel rose higher in the Lord's favour.

Heli was now a man of great age, but tales reached him of the exactions his sons made from the Israelites; how they mated, too, with the women that kept watch at the tabernacle door. What wickedness is this
 2 of yours, he said to them, that brings me the complaints of a whole people! Amend your ways; it is ill hearing, that you should lead the Lord's people into transgression.
 3 If man does wrong to man, God's justice may yet be satisfied; if man sins against the Lord, who shall plead his cause for him? But they paid no heed to their father's warning; the Lord was resolved to make an end of them. And Samuel's boyhood
 4 went on; still as he grew he advanced in favour both with God and with men.

And now a messenger from the Lord came to Heli, and this was the Lord's warning to him: It was to men of thy clan that I revealed myself openly, when they still dwelt in Egypt as Pharaoh's servants; and I chose Levi among all the tribes of Israel to hold the priestly office, mounting up to my altar and burning incense before me, and wearing the sacred mantle in my

presence; to this clan of thine I gave a part
 9 in every sacrifice Israel should offer. And
 now you spurn the due ordering of sacrifice
 and oblation in my sanctuary; the sons of
 Heli must have a privilege higher than my
 own; yours must be the first taste of every
 sacrifice my people Israel bring to me!
 10 Listen, then, to the Lord's decree. My
 purpose was that thou and thy clan should
 be my ministers for ever; but now never
 speak of that (the Lord says); honour is for
 those that honour me, for those that make
 11 light of me, only contempt. Behold, a
 time is coming when I mean to cripple
 thee, cripple that clan of thine; no kinsman
 12 of thine shall reach old age. Thou shalt see
 a rival in my sanctuary, and Israel all prosper-
 ity; but in thy kindred no old man shall
 13 be left living.¹ My altar shall still have
 descendants of thine to minister at it; but
 it shall be a sight to make thy eyes fail and
 thy heart faint, when so many of thy race
 die in their early manhood.² And for a
 14 token of this, thy two sons, Ophni and
 Phinees, are destined to fall, both of them,
 15 in a single day. Afterwards, I will find
 myself a priest that shall be a faithful inter-
 preter of my mind and will; I will endow
 him, too, with a faithful posterity, to enjoy
 16 the favour of the king I have anointed.³ To
 him thy descendants, if any such are left,
 will come cringing for a silver piece and a
 crust of bread; Only the common portion
 of a priest, they will say; only a mouthful
 of bread, and I am content!⁴

3 In those days, when Samuel was
 ministering to the Lord under Heli's
 care, a message from the Lord was a rare
 treasure; he would not openly reveal him-
 self. One night, Heli lay down to rest
 2 where he was wont to lie, his eyes dim now
 with age and sightless, and Samuel was
 3 asleep, there in the divine presence, where
 God's ark was, with the sacred lamp still
 4 burning. And the Lord's call came to
 Samuel. I am coming, he answered; then
 5 ran to find Heli, and said, I am here at thy
 summons. Nay, said he, I never sum-

moned thee; go back and lie down again.
 So back he went, and fell asleep. Then the
 6 Lord called Samuel again, and again he
 rose up and went to Heli, to answer his
 summons. But still no summons had been
 given, and he must go back to sleep again.
 7 Till then, Samuel was a stranger to the
 divine voice; the Lord had not made any
 revelation to him. But when a third time
 8 the persistent call came, and Samuel went
 to Heli, still ready at his command, Heli
 9 recognized at last whose voice it was the
 boy had heard. Go back to sleep, he told
 Samuel; and if the voice comes again, do
 thou answer, Speak on, Lord; thy servant
 is listening. And Samuel went back to his
 bed and fell asleep.

And the Lord came to his side, and stood
 there waiting. Then, as before, he called
 him twice by name; and Samuel answered,
 Speak on, Lord, thy servant is listening.
 And this was the Lord's message to
 11 Samuel: Here is doom I mean to bring on
 Israel that shall ring in the ears of all that
 hear of it. For Heli it shall bring fulfilment
 12 of all the threats I have uttered against his
 clan; from first to last, they shall be accom-
 plished. Warning enough I gave him,
 13 I would pass eternal sentence on that clan
 of his, for his sons' wickedness that went
 ever unchecked; and now I have taken an
 14 oath against all his line, sacrifice nor offer-
 ing shall ever atone for their sin.

Samuel slept on till morning, when it
 15 was time for him to open the doors of the
 Lord's house; and fear withheld him from
 telling Heli of his vision. Then he heard
 16 the voice of Heli calling, Samuel, my son
 Samuel! I am ready at thy command, said
 he. And Heli asked him, What message is
 17 it the Lord has sent thee? May the Lord
 give thee thy due of punishment, and more
 than thy due, if thou hidest from me any
 word of the message that was given thee.
 Thereupon Samuel told him all that was
 18 said, keeping nothing back from him. It is
 the Lord, answered he, that has spoken;
 let him do his will.

Samuel grew up, still enjoying the 19

¹ The Latin version here is an attempt to render a Hebrew text which offers no plain meaning, and is probably corrupt. ² This prophecy perhaps refers to the massacre of the priests by Doeg (chapter 22).

³ For the literal fulfilment of this prophecy, see III Kg. 2. 27. ⁴ The sense of the Latin version is obscure; it would most naturally be understood as meaning that Heli's descendant would come asking to be prayed for, and offering a silver piece and a crust of bread by way of a bribe, to secure his readmission to the priesthood. But the Hebrew text evidently means that he will come asking for money and bread, not offering it.

Lord's favour, and no word he spoke went
 20 unfulfilled, so that he became known all
 over Israel, from Dan to Bersabee, as the
 21 Lord's true prophet. After this revelation
 made to Samuel in Silo, the Lord continued
 to reveal himself there, as he had promised;
 and when Samuel spoke, all Israel listened.

4 The Philistines, at this time, had
 mustered their forces for battle, and the
 Israelites went out to meet them in arms,
 encamping at the Rock of Deliverance;
 the Philistines were encamped
 2 at Aphec.¹ So now the Philistines
 marshalled their forces, and when battle
 was joined, they put the Israelites to rout;
 four thousand men were killed in that fight,
 3 scattered through the countryside. So the
 army fell back upon its encampment; and
 now the elders of Israel were at a loss; why
 had the Lord so left them at the mercy of
 the Philistines? They would send to Silo
 for the ark that bore record of the Lord's
 covenant; surely he would come into their
 midst, and save them from the power of
 their enemies.

4 The ark of the Lord of hosts, who sits
 enthroned above the Cherubim! They
 brought it there all the way from Silo; and
 with the ark came the two sons of Heli,
 5 Ophni and Phinees. Loud was the cry all
 Israel raised when the ark reached their
 camp, so loud that the earth rang again;
 6 and the Philistines, hearing it, wondered
 what could have set the Hebrew camp in
 such an uproar. When they were told that
 the ark of the Lord had been brought
 there, they were in a great taking of fear;
 God himself, they said, has come into the
 8 camp! And they groaned aloud; An ill day
 for us! Such confidence has never been
 theirs till now; an ill day! What defence
 have we against such heavenly powers as
 these? These are the powers that brought
 great plagues on Egypt, out yonder in the
 9 desert. Philistines, you must summon up
 your courage, and play the man, or these
 Hebrew slaves are like to be your masters.
 10 Courage, then; to arms! And they fought
 so well that Israel was utterly defeated,
 every man making for his own home in
 flight; here was a great disaster, in which
 thirty thousand of Israel's warriors fell.

The ark of God, too, was taken by the
 11 enemy, and Heli's sons, Ophni and
 Phinees, were killed.

There was a man of Benjamin that ran
 12 from the field, and reached Silo that same
 day, with torn garments, and dust scattered
 on his head. At the time when he
 13 reached it, Heli was sitting there waiting
 for news, on a seat by the wayside; his
 heart misgave him for the safety of God's
 ark. When the tidings so brought were
 made known publicly, the whole city fell
 to lamenting. The noise of it came to Heli's
 14 ears, and he asked what this tumult should
 mean. With all speed the messenger came
 up and told his news. (Heli was then
 15 ninety-eight years old; his eyes were dim
 with age now, and sightless.) I come with
 16 news of the battle, he said; this very day
 I have run back from the army. And the
 news, my son, asked Heli; what is the
 news? Israel has been routed by the
 17 Philistines, the messenger answered, and
 there is great havoc wrought among the
 people; and thy two sons, Ophni and
 Phinees, are dead; and the ark of God was
 taken. And Heli, when he heard mention
 18 made of God's ark, fell backwards from
 his seat, there in the door-way, and broke
 his neck, and died; so old a man was he,
 so spent with age. For forty years he had
 ruled Israel.

His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinees,
 19 was then in her pregnancy, and near
 her time; she too heard that the ark of
 God had been taken, that her father-in-law
 was dead and her husband besides, whereupon
 her pangs bowed her down suddenly, and
 she gave birth. She was at the point of
 20 death when the women about her said,
 Take heart, thou hast borne a son; but she
 gave no answer, and took no heed. Only
 21 she gave her son the name of Ichabod,
 thinking how the divine presence had left
 Israel, now the ark was taken; thinking,
 too, of her father-in-law and her husband;
 but it was the loss of God's ark that made
 22 her say, The splendour has passed away
 from Israel.

5 Meanwhile the Philistines had
 carried off the ark of God, taking it from
 the Rock of Deliverance to Azotus; and
 2 when it reached Azotus it was carried into

¹ See 7. 12.

the temple of Dagon and set down there in front of Dagon's statue. Next morning, the men of Azotus woke to find Dagon lying face downwards in front of the ark; and although they put the statue back in its place, the second day shewed a worse sight still; Dagon was face downwards in front of the ark, and there in the doorway lay his head and both hands, severed from the trunk, that lay where it fell. That is why to this day the priests and the worshippers of Dagon never set foot on the threshold when they enter his temple in Azotus.

And now the Lord sent a heavy plague on the men of Azotus and its neighbourhood, to their undoing, a plague of swellings in the groin. All through their townships, all over the country-side, the infection spread; the mice, too, swarmed everywhere; in the city, the dead lay piled in heaps. The men of Azotus, finding themselves so plague-ridden, would not keep the ark of Israel's God among them any longer, to bring disaster upon themselves and their god Dagon; so they summoned a gathering of all the Philistine chiefs, and put the question what should be done with the ark. It must be carried about, the men of Geth told them, from place to place; and carry it about they did, but wherever it went, from city to city, the power of the Lord made itself felt in a grievous mortality; on high and low it fell everywhere, rotting away their inward parts, and the men of Geth could devise no better relief than to sit on seats of leather.

So now they sent the ark of God on to Accaron; but no sooner had it reached them than the men of Accaron began crying out, They have brought the ark of Israel's God here, for our ruin, our common ruin! And they summoned all the Philistine chiefs, who determined that the ark must be sent back whence it came, before it brought death on themselves and their people. No city was free from the fear of death, and God's heavy visitation; even those who survived had shameful sores to tend, and everywhere cries of anguish went up to heaven.¹

¹ The details of this visitation are obscure; the Hebrew text appears to be deficient, and it is difficult, in places, to attach any sense to the Septuagint Greek. An outbreak of hæmorrhoids has usually been supposed, but this would explain neither the mortality; and it seems better to understand the passage as referring, at least in part, to bubonic plague. The ancients are believed to have associated mice (or possibly rats) with the outbreak of pestilence.

Thus, for seven months, the ark of the Lord remained in the country of the Philistines; and at the end of them the Philistines summoned their priests and diviners. What are we to do with the ark of the Lord? they said. How best can we send it back whence it came? And their answer was, Why, if you mean to send the ark of Israel's God home again, you must not send it back without a gift. An offering must be made in amends for the fault you have committed; and if, after that, you recover from your sickness, you will trace his hand in the calamities that now afflict you. What offering, then, must we make for our fault? they asked; and this was the answer given: You must make five little mounds of gold, and five golden mice, one for each of the Philistine provinces; it was the same divine punishment that afflicted all the provinces, all the chiefs alike. When they are ready, these emblems of your shame, these figures of the mice that have ravaged your land, make amends with them to the God of Israel, and ask relief for yourselves, and your gods, and your lands. What avails it, to harden your hearts against repentance? So Pharaoh and Egypt with him hardened their hearts, and would not let his people go till they had felt all his plagues, but in the end they went. A waggon, newly made, you must have in readiness, drawn by two heifers in milk such as never yet bore the yoke, and the calves of these must be left behind. Lift the ark of the Lord on to this waggon, and put in a casket, at the side of it, the golden offerings you would make in amends for your fault; then let it go on its way, and see what befalls. If it goes up towards Bethsames and its own land, then be sure this grievous plague of ours came from the Lord; if not, we shall know it was an evil chance, and no visitation of his.

This advice they followed, yoked to the waggon two heifers that were in milk, and left their calves stalled at home; put the ark of God on the waggon, and the casket with the five golden mice and golden mounds beside it. And the heifers went straight along the road that leads to

- Bethsames, and kept ever the same course, without swerving to right or left; lowing for their calves, but going on still; with the Philistine chiefs following them all the way
- 13 to Bethsames. The Bethsamites were out in the valley, reaping their wheat, when they looked round and saw the ark coming,
- 14 and they were glad men at the sight. It reached the land of Josue the Bethsamite, and there came to a stand, close by where a great stone was. So they broke up the waggon for fire-wood, and laid the heifers on it as a burnt-sacrifice to the Lord.
- 15 Levites set down the ark of God, and with it the casket that contained the golden emblems, on the great stone, while the men of Bethsames, that day, brought the Lord burnt-sacrifice and offered him victims.
- 16 So the five chiefs of the Philistines returned, reaching Accaron that same day.
- 17 The golden mounts which the Philistines gave to the Lord in amends for their fault came from the five cities of Azotus, Gaza,
- 18 Ascalon, Geth and Accaron; and there were golden mice to match the whole number of cities, walled or unwalled, in the five Philistine provinces, (right up to Abel the Great, where they put down the ark of the Lord, that had been till that day in the lands of Josue the Bethsamite).¹
- 19 And the Lord smote some of the Bethsamites themselves, for prying into the ark of the Lord. (And he smote seventy men out of the people, and fifty thousand of the common folk.²) Over this visitation the Lord had brought on them there was great
- 20 grief among the people; Who can stand his ground, the Bethsamites asked, before a God so holy as this? To whom can we pass
- 21 it on? And they sent messengers to the men of Cariathiarim, telling them that the Philistines had brought back the Lord's ark, and bidding them come and take it into their charge.

7 So they came as they were bidden, the men of Cariathiarim, and brought back the ark with them, housing it with a

certain Abinadab in Gabaa;³ and they set apart his son Eleazar to keep watch over the Lord's ark. Long time the ark remained in Cariathiarim; twenty years so passed, and now the whole race of Israel sought rest from its troubles in following the Lord. Why then, Samuel told the Israelites, if your hearts are honestly set on coming back to the Lord, you must rid yourselves of all alien gods; no Baal for you, no Astaroth; your hearts must wait in readiness on the Lord and serve him only: then he will deliver you from the Philistine's power. So Israel cast Baal and Astaroth aside, to serve none but the Lord. Then Samuel would have all Israel meet at Masphath, so that he might beg the Lord's mercy for them there; and at Masphath they assembled, and drew water which they poured out before the Lord, and fasted that day, and made confession there to the Lord of their sin. And Samuel sat in judgement over Israel at Masphath.

This assembly at Masphath came to the ears of the Philistines, and their chiefs came out to offer Israel battle. Whereupon the Israelites, in great dread of them, bade Samuel pray to the Lord their God yet, if they were to be rescued from the power of the Philistines. So Samuel chose out a lamb still unweaned, and offered it whole to the Lord in burnt-sacrifice, crying out to the Lord for Israel, and obtaining an answer to his prayer. It was at the very moment when Samuel was offering sacrifice that the Philistines went to the attack; and the Lord volleyed his thunders against the Philistines that day, crashing loud above them, so that they were overcome with terror, and fell before Israel's onslaught; from Masphath all the way to the slopes of Bethchar the Israelites pursued them, cutting them down. Thereupon Samuel chose out a stone and set it up between Masphath and Sen, calling the place, The Rock of Deliverance, in token that the Lord was still their protector. So cowed were the spirits of the Philistines.

¹ It seems likely that the text at the end of this chapter has become corrupt. The words in brackets, which represent the Latin version, do not yield any good sense; the most plausible restoration of the Hebrew text would run, 'The Great Stone bears witness of it, the stone on which they laid down the Lord's ark; it (the stone) stands yet on the land of Josue the Bethsamite'. Possibly the names of all the cities which sent the golden mice (not only five, as the priests had suggested in verse 5) were inscribed on the stone in question.

² Once more the words in brackets probably represent a corrupt text, which we have no means of restoring. According to the Septuagint Greek it was a single household, that of a certain Jechonias, that was punished, and punished for not sharing in the rejoicings of the other Bethsamites on this occasion.

³ 'In Gabaa'; the Hebrew text may also be translated 'on the hill'.

that they never crossed the frontiers of Israel again; the Lord kept the Philistines in check as long as Samuel lived. They must give back, too, all the cities they had wrested from Israel, right up to Accaron and Geth; thus the Israelites freed their territory from the Philistines' power, and enjoyed peace with their neighbours.

To Samuel men came for judgement all his life long; year by year he would go round from Bethel to Galgala, from Galgala to Masphath, holding assize in each of these cities, and so returning to his home at Ramatha; there, too, he sat in judgement, and there he raised an altar to the Lord.

8 In his old age, Samuel appointed his sons to perform the judge's office in Israel; the elder was called Joel, and the younger Abia, and they held assize at Bersabee. But these sons of his did not follow in his footsteps; greed bent them to take bribes, and to pervert justice. So all the elders of Israel met Samuel at Ramatha; Thou hast grown old, they said to him, and thy sons do not follow in thy footsteps. Give us a king, such as other nations have, to sit in judgement over us. It was little to Samuel's mind, this demand for a king to be their judge; but when he betook himself to the Lord in prayer, the Lord said to him, Grant the people all they ask of thee. It is my rule over them they are casting off, not thine. It has ever been the same, since the day when I rescued them from Egypt; me they will ever be forsaking, to worship other gods; and now it is thy turn. Grant their request, but put thy protest on record; tell them what rights their king will claim, when they have a king to rule over them.

In answer, then, to their request for a king, Samuel told the people all the Lord had said to him. When you have a king to reign over you, he will claim the rights of a king. He will take away your sons from you, to drive his chariots; he will need horsemen, and outriders for his teams; regiments, too, with commanders and captains to marshal them, ploughmen and

reapers, armourers and wheelwrights. It is your daughters that will make his perfumes, and cook for him, and bake for him. All the best of your lands and vineyards and olive-yards he will take away, and entrust to his own bailiffs; and he will tithe the revenues of such crop and vintage as is left you, to pay his own courtiers and his own retinue. He will take away servants and handmaids of yours, all the lustiest of the young men, all the asses that work for you, to work for him instead; of your herds, too, he will take tithe. You will be his slaves; and when you cry out for redress against the king you have chosen for yourselves, the Lord will not listen to you; you asked for a king.

But Samuel could not gain the ear of the people; That will not serve, they cried out; a king, we must have a king! We must be like other nations, with a king to decide our quarrels, to lead us and be our champion in battle. So he listened to all this outcry of theirs, and brought it to the Lord's hearing. Give them their will, the Lord answered; appoint a king to rule over them. And Samuel bade the Israelites disperse, and go back to their homes.

9 There was a Benjamite in those days called Cis, descended through Abiel, Seror and Bechorath from Aphia, strong and vigorous, as a man of Benjamin should be;¹ and he had a son named Saul, a fine figure of a man, none finer in Israel; he was a head and shoulders taller than any of his fellow-countrymen. There were some asses belonging to Cis that had gone astray; and he bade Saul go out on his travels, taking one of the servants with him, and look for them. All through the hill-country of Ephraim they went, and all through Salisa, without finding them; through Salim, and still no trace of them; through the country of Benjamin itself, and still no news heard of them. When they reached the Suph country, Saul turned to his companion; Come, said he, let us go home; my father will have ceased to care about the asses, and be anxious over us instead. But he answered, There is a

¹ 'Strong and vigorous, as a man of Benjamin should be'; literally, 'son of a man of Jemini, strong and vigorous'. The Latin version treats the words 'son of a man of Jemini' as if they were part of the genealogy; but a descent so traced from a nameless ancestor is both unparalleled and improbable. The Hebrew text may bear the sense 'a man of great wealth', rather than 'strong and vigorous'.

servant of God dwelling in this city, a man greatly honoured; no prophecy of his but manifestly comes true. Let us make our way there, and ask if he can give us news about this errand of ours. And if we make our way there, answered Saul, what then? What offering can we make to this servant of God? No bread left in our wallets, not even a basket of food to offer! We have no present to make. I have a quarter of a shekel by me here, the other answered; some return to make for God's guidance on our errand. (In those days, the Israelites used to speak of going to consult the seer, meaning by the seer what we now call a prophet.) And at that Saul agreed that his plan was best; Come, said he, let us be on our way.

So they made for the city where God's servant dwelt; and as they were climbing up the hill that led to it they met some maidens who were coming out to draw water, and asked whether the seer was to be found there. He is, they answered, and not far forward on the road. Hasten after him; a public sacrifice on the sacred hill has brought him here to-day, look for him as soon as you enter the city, before he goes up to take part in the feast. The people must await his coming before they can eat; he blesses the victim first, and then the guests will sit down. Up with you at once; this is the time when you will find him. So up they went into the city, and as they entered it, there was Samuel coming out towards them, on his way to the sacred hill.

The day before Saul's coming, the Lord warned Samuel privately, At this time of day to-morrow I am sending a man of Benjamin on an errand to thee. He it is thou must anoint to be the king of my people Israel; he is to deliver them from the power of the Philistines. Their plights have not gone unheard, nor unheeded. And now, when Saul first met his eyes, the Lord told Samuel, This is the man of whom I spoke to thee; this is to be the ruler of my people.

There, then, in the gateway Saul came up to Samuel, and said, Pray shew me where it is that the seer lives. I am the seer thou speakest of, was his answer; go up before me to the hill-top, where you shall eat at my side. To-morrow I will send thee

on thy way, and tell thee all thou wouldst know. As for the asses that were lost three days since, put thy mind at ease, they have been found already. And here is all the best that Israel has to give, waiting for whom? For thee, and for thy father's kin. For me, answered Saul, a man of Benjamin, the smallest of Israel's tribes, sprung from a clan that is named last among the clans of Benjamin? What means this greeting thou hast given me?

But now Samuel took Saul and his companion with him, and led them into the dining-hall, where he gave them the highest place among the company that was bidden there, some thirty men; and told the cook, Bring out the portion I gave thee, with orders to keep it by thee separate from the rest. So the cook bore in a shoulder, and put it before Saul; Here, Samuel told him, is the provision we made for thee; sit down to it and eat thy fill; it was put aside for thee on purpose, when I invited my company. Saul, then, was Samuel's guest that day; together they went down from the hill into the city, and together they held converse on the house-top. There, on the house-top, Saul lay down and slept; waking early, at the first coming of the light, Samuel called out to him, Rise up, it is time I sent thee on thy way. Rise up he did, and together he and Samuel went out; and when they reached the edge of the city on their downward journey, Samuel said, Bid thy servant pass on before us, and do thou wait here a little; I have a message to give thee from the Lord.

10 And now Samuel took out his phial of oil, and poured it out over Saul's head; then he kissed him, and said, Hereby the Lord anoints thee to be the leader of his chosen people; thine it shall be to deliver them from the enemies that hedge them round. Wouldst thou have proof that this unction comes from the Lord? Listen, then; When thou leavest me to-day, and hast gone southward as far as Rachel's tomb, on the frontiers of Benjamin, thou wilt meet two men bringing thee news that the lost asses thou art looking for have been found; that thy father has forgotten them in his anxiety, and only asks how he is to find his son.

3 Then, passing further on thy way, thou wilt reach the oak of Thabor, and fall in with three men on pilgrimage to Bethel; one with three goats, one with three loaves of bread, one with a flagon of wine; from these thou wilt have greeting, and two of their loaves for a gift. So at last thou wilt come to the Hill of God, where the Philistines have set a garrison; and here, upon entering the city, thou wilt meet a company of prophets coming down from the sacred height.¹ With harp and tambour, flute and zither at their head, they will be uttering words of prophecy; and with that the spirit of the Lord will fall upon thee, making thee prophesy with the rest, and turning thee into a new man. When all these signs have been granted, go about the work that lies before thee; the Lord is at thy side. At need, betake thyself to Galgal, where I will come to meet thee, to present there thy burnt-sacrifice and thy welcome-offering; wait for me seven days, till I come and give thee thy orders.²

9 So parted Saul from Samuel, and as he went on his way, the Lord gave him a new heart. All the signs he looked for were fulfilled that day, and when at last he came to the Hill, there was a company of prophets on its way towards him; whereupon the spirit of the Lord fell on him, and he prophesied with the rest. None that had known him hitherto but marvelled, upon seeing him prophesy in the company of the others, what had befallen the son of Cis; Is Saul, too, they asked, among the prophets? Why, said one to another, who can tell the parentage of any of them?³ (This was how the saying grew up, Is Saul, too, among the prophets?) His trance over, Saul went on, back to the hill-country. There was an uncle of his, that asked where they had been, and was not content with their story of consulting Samuel about the strayed asses. Tell me, said he, what message did the prophet give thee? Why, answered Saul, he told me the asses were found. But of the kingship promised him he said no word.

And now Samuel bade the whole people gather in the divine presence at Maspha, and this message he gave them from the Lord God of Israel: It was I that rescued you from Egypt, I that protected you from the clutches of these and of all your oppressors. And now you have cast away your God, your only shield against so many misfortunes and afflictions; A king, you say, appoint a king to reign over us! Come then, present yourselves before the Lord, tribe by tribe, clan by clan. Then Samuel brought forward all the tribes of Israel by name, and the lot fell on Benjamin; brought forward all the families of Benjamin by name, and the lot fell on Matri's; and in the end he reached Saul, the son of Cis. When they looked for him, he was nowhere to be found; was he on his way to Maspha? They asked, the Lord, and the answer came that Saul was there, hiding in his tent. Whereupon they ran to fetch him, and before long he stood in their midst, a head and shoulders taller than any of them. The Lord's chosen! cried Samuel. Look at him, and see if he has his like in Israel! And all the people shouted, Long live the king!

And now Samuel proclaimed to the people what the king's rights were; wrote it down, too, in a book, which he laid up in the Lord's presence; then he bade them disperse to their homes. Saul went back to Gabaa, and with him went some of the fighting men, whom God so inspired. There were others, graceless folk, who asked contemptuously whether such a man as this could bring them victory; and no gift would they offer him. But Saul made as if he could not hear their mutterings.

11 It was a month later that Naas the Ammonite offered battle, and laid siege to Jabes-Galaad; whereupon the men of Jabes would have made a treaty with him, and become his subjects. But his terms were, that he should put out the right eye of each citizen, to the shame of all Israel. So the elders of Jabes asked for

¹ 'The Hill of God' should perhaps be a proper name, 'Gabaa of God': it was at Gabaa Saul lived. So in verse to below. ² This seems to have been a general direction for times of emergency (cf. 13. 8), not a command to be observed on the present occasion. ³ 'Who can tell the parentage of any of them?'; literally, 'Who is the father of them?' The phrase is very obscure; the rendering given above assumes that the prophets were notoriously men of low birth, and that the question either expresses surprise (on account of Cis' wealth, 9. 1), or implies that the proceeding is natural (in view of Saul's obscurity, 9. 21).

a truce of seven days, while they sent messengers out to every part of Israel; if none
 4 came forward to help them, they would open the gates to him.

5 When these messengers came to Gabaa, where Saul lived, and told the people their errand, the whole city made loud lament. And just then Saul came in from the country, driving his team of oxen; What ails the people, he asked, that they should weep? And he was told of the message
 6 from Jabes. When he heard it, the spirit of the Lord fell upon him, and his heart
 7 burned with rage; there and then he took both the oxen, and cut them into small pieces, which he sent round by messenger to every part of Israel; The man who does
 8 not rally, said he, to the cause of Saul and Samuel, will have his oxen treated like these. And the Lord put the whole people in such dread of him, that they answered
 8 his summons to a man; when he called the roll at Bezech, Israel had sent three hundred thousand, and there were thirty thousand besides from Juda.

9 Back went the messengers, carrying word to Jabes-Galaad that relief would come next day, with the heat of the sun. So the men of Jabes, overjoyed at the news
 10 the messengers brought, told Naas that they would open the gates on the morrow, and he should have them at his mercy.
 11 That next day, at the morning watch, Saul divided his army into three, and made his way into the heart of the Ammonite camp at the time of the morning watch. All morning, till the sun gained its heat, he smote the Ammonites down; and those who survived were so scattered that never a pair escaped together.

12 After this, the people cried out to Samuel, Where are the men who protested they would not have Saul for their king?
 13 Bring them out, and let us slay them. But Saul answered, Nay, the Lord has given Israel a great victory; there shall be no
 14 slaughter this day. And now Samuel called on the people to come with him to Galgala, and renew the covenant of the kingship there; so all went to Galgala, and there, at Galgala, took Saul for their king
 15 in the Lord's presence, which they honoured with welcome-offerings. A glad man was Saul that day, and not a heart in Israel but rejoiced with him.

12 But Samuel protested before the whole assembly of Israel: I have granted all you asked, and given you a king, who marches, now, at your head. I am an old man, and grey-haired, and you have sons of mine among you, and I am ready to answer for all my behaviour among you ever since my youth. Tell me, here in the presence of the Lord, and of the king he has anointed, have I robbed any man of ox or ass? Have I wronged anyone, oppressed anyone? Have I allowed anyone to bribe me? I will make restitution, not counting the cost. Never, they answered; never wert thou guilty of wrong or oppression; never didst thou take anything for thy own. The Lord is my witness, said he, and the king he has anointed is my witness as you stand before me this day, that you can find no charge to bring against me. The Lord is thy witness, they said.

Then he said to the people, It was the Lord that gave you Moses and Aaron, and rescued your fathers from Egypt; stand there now, in his presence, while I confront you with all the mercy the Lord has shewn to you and to your fathers, from the time when Jacob removed to Egypt. When your fathers pleaded with the Lord, he sent Moses and Aaron to rescue them from Egypt, and gave them a home in the place where you stand. But they forgot the Lord their God, till he put them at the mercy of Sisara, captain of Hazor's army, and the Philistines, and the king of Moab, who waged war against them; then they cried out to the Lord, We have sinned! We have forsaken the Lord, enslaved ourselves here to Baal, there to Astaroth! Deliver us now from the power of our enemies, and we will serve thee still. So
 11 the Lord sent Jerobaal, and Badan, and Jephth, and Samuel, to deliver you from the power of the enemies that surrounded you, and you lived safe in your homes.

Then, when you saw Naas king of the Ammonites levying war on you, nothing would serve but that I should appoint a king to command you; as if the Lord your God were not reigning among you as your king! Here, then, at your pleasure is the king you asked for, the king you longed for; be content, the Lord has given you a king. But on this condition, that you are
 11 to fear the Lord your God, and worship

him, and listen to him, instead of defying his commands; both you and the king who governs you are to follow the guidance of the Lord your God. If you rebel against him, if you defy his commands, the hand of the Lord will fall heavily on you and your race.¹ In token of it, here where you stand, you shall see the Lord do a wondrous thing before your eyes. It is harvest-time for the wheat already; but when I call upon the Lord's name, he will send thunder and rain, to give you visible proof of the great wrong you have done by defying him and asking for a king.

With that, Samuel cried out to the Lord, and the Lord sent down both thunder and rain that day, till the whole people was smitten with a great fear of the Lord and of Samuel. The whole people cried out with one voice, Pray to the Lord thy God for us thy servants, that our lives may be spared! We had sinned enough already, and now we have done him further wrong, by asking for a king to rule us. Do not be afraid, Samuel told them; you see how great is the wrong you have done; but now follow close where the Lord leads you, and serve him with all your hearts. Do not desert him for false gods which will play you false, granting neither aid nor deliverance. For his own renown, the Lord will not forsake his own people, and his people he has sworn you shall be. Pray for you? Never may I offend the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and pointing you to the good paths, the right paths. Fear the Lord, and serve him loyally with all your hearts; you have seen what marvelous deeds he can do in your midst, and if you cling to wicked ways, you shall be swept away, you and your king.

13 Saul was (so many)² years old when he began to reign, and he had reigned for two years over Israel when he picked an army of three thousand men. Of these, two thousand were under his own command, around Machmas and the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand under Jonathan at Gabaa in Benjamin.

The rest of the people he sent back to their homes. But now Jonathan overpowered the Philistine garrison at Gabaa, and news of it was brought to the Philistines; whereupon Saul sounded an alarm all through the country, Hebrews, here is news for you! So the word went round that Saul had overpowered a Philistine garrison, and Israel was at war with the Philistines; and they raised their battle-cry under Saul's command at Galgala.

Meanwhile the Philistines mustered their forces to make war on Israel, their chariots thirty thousand, their horsemen six thousand strong, and the rest of their host countless as the sand by the sea. On they came, and encamped at Machmas, east of Bethaven. And now the Israelite folk found themselves hard pressed; and their evil plight drove them to take hiding in den and thicket, cave and cleft and pit; there were Hebrews, too, that fled across Jordan into Gad and Galaad. As for Saul, he stood his ground at Galgala, but it was a dispirited army that followed him.

For seven days he waited to keep tryst with Samuel, but still Samuel did not come; and meanwhile, men were deserting from his ranks; so at last he bade them bring the victims for burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering, and performed the sacrifice himself. And now, when the burnt-sacrifice was over, he saw Samuel coming, and went out to greet him. What is this thou hast done? Samuel asked. And he answered, I found that men were deserting from my ranks; thou hadst not kept the tryst, and already the Philistines had raised their standard at Machmas. Can I let the Philistines sweep down on me here in Galgala, thought I, without first winning the Lord's favour? So I offered the burnt-sacrifice; there was no other way. But Samuel told him, This was great folly in thee, so to transgress the commands which the Lord thy God had given thee. But for this, the Lord would have destined thee, here and now, to found a line of kings that should have ruled Israel for ever.³ Now thy dynasty shall fall with thee; the Lord

¹ 'Your race'; literally, 'your fathers'. The Septuagint Greek gives an easier reading, 'you and your King'.

² It would seem that some numeral must have fallen out in the Hebrew text before the word meaning 'years' or 'a year'; hence most versions give us the rendering, 'Saul was one year old'.

³ Since no other explanation is given in the sacred text, it seems best to suppose that Saul's disobedience consisted in not waiting till Samuel came before taking action preparatory to battle. Samuel had indicated seven days as the time of waiting (to. 8), but Saul should have waited longer. See note on to. 8.

has found a man to fulfil his purposes, and rule his people instead of thee; such is the reward of disobedience.

- 15 With that, Samuel left him, returning from Galgala to Gabaa in Benjamin. From Galgala, too, Saul and the forces that remained with him went up to Gabaa and the hill-country of Benjamin, to meet the attack; when he counted the roll, there were only some six hundred men to be found in his company. There, at Gabaa, Saul and his son Jonathan encamped with their followers, while the Philistines confronted them at Machmas. Meanwhile, there were three parties of the Philistine army that went out to find plunder; one of them to the Sual country, on the way to Ephra, one by the Bethoron road, and one by the frontier path that looks down on the valley of Seboim, going out towards the desert. (At this time, there were no workers in metal left in the whole of Israel; the Philistines had taken good care that the Hebrews should not be able to make sword or spear. When a man would sharpen share or spade, axe or hoe, in whatever part of the country he lived, he must go down into the Philistine lands to do it. Blunted were share and spade, fork and axe; even the goods needed to be straightened; and in times of battle Saul and his son Jonathan were the only men in the army that carried sword or lance.) There was, too, a detachment of the Philistines that guarded the pass to Machmas.

14 And one day, Saul's son Jonathan proposed to the lad who carried his armour for him, Let us attack the Philistine detachment over yonder; but he said no word of it to Saul.

- 2 Saul was encamped on the outskirts of Gabaa, under the pomegranate tree at Magron, with some six hundred men under him; he had a priest with him, bearing the sacred mantle, Achias son of Achitob. (This Achitob was brother to Ichabod, and son of that Phinees whose father Heli was once the Lord's priest at Silo.) The men in the ranks, too, knew nothing of Jonathan's errand. Just where he planned his attack on the Philistines, between the paths that climbed the hill,

rock jutted out on either hand like a single tooth, sheer on every side. One was called Boses and the other Sene; one faced northwards towards Machmas, and the other southwards towards Gabaa. Here, then, Jonathan said to his squire, Let us attack the post these uncircumcised Philistines have set on guard, and see if the Lord will speed us. Many or few, if the Lord means to grant us victory, who shall prevent him? As thou wilt, his squire answered; lead on, I will follow where thou biddest.

We approach them, then, said Jonathan, and shew ourselves. And now, if they bid us wait till they come down to fetch us, let us keep our ground, and abandon all thought of the ascent. But if they bid us come up to their side, then go up we will; it is a sign that the Lord means to give us the mastery. So both shewed themselves to the Philistine detachment; Why, said the Philistines, here are the Hebrews coming out of the pits where they lay in hiding! And they cried out from their post to Jonathan and his squire, Come up to our side; we have something to disclose to you. And at that, Jonathan said to his squire, Up, then, go we; follow me close; the Lord is giving Israel the mastery. So, crawling upon hands and knees, Jonathan climbed up, and his squire after him; and of the enemy, some fell to Jonathan himself, some to the squire as he came up behind him. This first slaughter that befell, when Jonathan and his squire assailed them, was but of twenty men, on a piece of ground that measured half an acre, a day's ploughing for a pair of oxen. But all through the camp, all through the countryside, came a sudden terror; the rest of the detachment, that were returning from a foray, stood there open-mouthed; the earth, too, shook, and it seemed as if a divine terror were abroad.

Looking out from Gabaa, the watchmen of Saul's army wondered at the sight; so many men that lay slain, so many more in flight this way and that. And now Saul bade his men find out who it was that had left the ranks, and learned that Jonathan was not there, nor his squire. So he bade Achias consult the ark of God¹ (it was there that day, God's ark, among the ranks

¹ According to the Septuagint Greek, it was not the ark but the sacred mantle (Ex. 25. 7) that was here used for divination.

19 of Israel); but even as he was talking with the priest, a great clamour arose in the Philistine camp, that gained force and grew louder with every moment. Stay thy hand, he said to the priest, and so, with his whole army, raised the war-cry and went to the attack. They found that the Philistines had come to blows, friend turning his sword against friend, and the slaughter raged beyond all bounds. Those Hebrews who, till now, had taken part with the Philistines, and were fighting at their side, now went over to the camp of Israel, the camp of Saul and Jonathan; and all those others who were in hiding among the hills of Ephraim, when they heard of the Philistine rout, came out to aid their fellow-countrymen, till Saul found himself at the head of some ten thousand men. Thus the Lord gave Israel the victory that day, and the field of battle spread wider till it reached Bethaven.

4 The Israelites were fighting, that day, in a close body, and Saul put a ban on them, Cursed be the man that touches food before evening comes; I must take full vengeance on my enemies! So none of them took any food; even when the whole army passed through a glade where there was honey lying on the ground, and they saw the honey oozing from its combs as they entered the glade, not one in the ranks put his hand to his mouth, such was their terror of the ban. Jonathan had not heard his father bind the people so; and he, reaching forward and dipping the end of his staff into a honeycomb, took a mouthful from his hand; whereupon his eyesight grew clearer at once. And what of the ban thy father laid on us, one of the men said to him, calling down a curse on anyone who should touch food to-day? But the Israelites were faint on their march, and Jonathan said, It is an ill turn my father has done to his country; why, could you not see for yourselves how my eyes grew brighter for a mouthful of yonder honey? Think what a blow we might have struck, if the men had eaten their fill when we came upon the plunder the enemy had left behind them!

That day's pursuit took the army all the way from Machmas to Aialon, and they were weary men indeed; falling on the plunder they had recovered, they carried off sheep and ox and calf and slaughtered them there on the ground, eating them blood and all. When complaint was made that his men had disobeyed the Lord's command by eating meat with the blood in it, Saul told them, You have broken the law; find a great stone, and roll it up to where I stand. Then he said, Go round and bid the folk bring ox and ram to me here, to slaughter their meat on this stone; sin no more by eating it with the blood in it. So, till late at night, each man brought his ox with him and slaughtered it there. And Saul built an altar to the Lord there, the first he ever raised to him.

And now, cried Saul, let us attack the Philistines in the darkness, and harry them till day dawns, so that none is left alive. Do as thou seest best, the people answered; but the priest said, God is present with us, let us have recourse to him. Saul, then, asked the Lord whether he should pursue the Philistines, whether Israel would be granted the victory; but that day no answer came. Summon all the chieftains, cried Saul; we must have clear proof who it is has brought guilt on us this day. As the Lord, Israel's protector, is a living God, though it were Jonathan, my own son, that is answerable for it, he shall die without hope of reprieve. And no voice among them all said him nay. Do you stand on one side, he told the men of Israel, I and my son Jonathan on the other. Do as thou seest best, the people answered. And Saul prayed to the Lord God of Israel, Lord God of Israel, send us right guidance; tell us why it is thou wilt give me, thy servant, no answer this day. If the guilt lies with me, or with my son Jonathan, let the sign be Revelation; if with thy people, let the sign be Holiness. Thereupon Jonathan and Saul were convicted, and the people went clear.¹ Then Saul bade them cast lots between himself and Jonathan, and the lot fell on Jonathan.

Tell me, said Saul to Jonathan, what it

¹ In this verse, the Septuagint Greek differs widely from the Hebrew text, and the Latin version from both. This last probably means us to understand that Saul obtained an oracle by means of the sacred burse (Ex. 28. 30); although the operative words here used (Revelation and Holiness) are not the same as those used in the description of the burse (Wisdom and Truth).

is thou hast done. So Jonathan told him; Touch food I did, but what food? A little honey picked up on the end of the staff I carried, and for that I must die. And Saul answered, Due punishment the Lord give me, Jonathan, and more than due, if thy life is not forfeited! But the people cried out to Saul, What, shall he die, Jonathan, who has won such a victory for Israel? As the Lord is a living God, that were great wrong. Never a hair shall fall from his head; this day he has done good service, God speeding him. So it was that the people, that day, saved Jonathan's life.

46 And Saul halted, not continuing his pursuit of the Philistines, who now went back to their own country.

47 Once he was firmly established on the throne of Israel, Saul carried war into the territory of his enemies, Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings of Soba, and the Philistines; and everywhere he won victories.

48 He, too, it was that mustered an army and defeated Amalec, putting an end to their forays against Israel. Saul had three sons, Jonathan, Jessui and Melchisua, and two daughters, the elder called Merob and the younger Michol. His wife's name was Achinoam, daughter to Achimaas. And he put his army under the command of his cousin Abner, son of Ner; like Cis. Saul's father, Ner was son of Abiel. As long as Saul lived, there was bitter war against the Philistines, and wherever he found a brave man or a skilful fighter, Saul would attach him to his own person.

15 But Samuel reminded Saul, It was the Lord that gave me commission to anoint thee king of his people Israel; to his voice thou must needs listen. And this is the message that comes to thee from the Lord of hosts: I have not forgotten how Amalec treated the Israelites, standing in their path when they were on the way here from Egypt. This, then, is thy errand, to destroy Amalec and all his domains, granting no pardon, coveting no plunder, but slaying man and woman, child and infant at the breast, camel and ass. Whereupon Saul summoned all his men to arms, and counted their muster as closely as a shepherd counts his lambs; two hundred thousand warriors, besides ten thousand from

Juda. With these, Saul marched to Amalec's capital, and laid an ambush in the ravine there; but first of all he warned the Cinites, Up, move your camping ground clear of the Amalecites; I would not involve you in their ruin; the men of Israel, on their way here from Egypt, had nothing but kindness from you. So the Cinites separated from Amalec, and Saul routed the Amalecites, driving them before him all the way from Hevila to Sur, on the confines of Egypt. He captured Agag, the Amalecite king, but although he put all the common folk to the sword, he and his army spared Agag; spared, too, the best of the flocks and herds, the choicest garments, the fattest rams; they would not destroy anything that was precious. All that was mean and worthless they destroyed readily enough.

And the Lord's word came to Samuel, I repent, now, of having made Saul king of Israel; he has played me false, and left my command unfulfilled. At this, Samuel was greatly moved, and all night long he pleaded with the Lord. At early dawn he rose up, resolved to find Saul that same morning; Saul, he was told, upon reaching the town of Carmel,¹ had set up a monument there in his own honour, but had passed on now and made his way to Gulgala. When Samuel reached it, he found Saul offering the Lord burnt-sacrifice, out of the first-fruits of the plunder taken from Amalec. The Lord's blessing on thee, was Saul's greeting to him; I have fulfilled the divine command.

And this bleating of sheep, Samuel asked, that comes to my ears, this lowing of oxen that I hear? Why, answered Saul, these are what they brought back from Amalec; my men saved the best out of flock and herd, to be offered in sacrifice to the Lord; all the rest we have destroyed. May I tell thee, asked Samuel, the message the Lord has given me in the night? and when Saul bade him speak out, he went on, It was little conceit thou hadst of thyself, when the tribes of Israel were committed to thy leadership. And the Lord anointed thee king of Israel, and sent thee on an errand; Up, he said, destroy the sinful men of Amalec, smiting them down till none is left. How is it thou didst not obey the

¹ A town near Hebron, quite unconnected with mount Carmel in the north; cf. 25. 2.

Lord's command? Why didst thou fall to plundering, in defiance of the Lord's will? Nay, protested Saul, obey the Lord I did; I went where the Lord's errand took me, and brought back Agag, king of Amalec, in chains, and destroyed Amalec utterly. If my men carried off sheep and oxen, these were but first-fruits that were saved from the slaughter of all the rest, to be offered up to the Lord their God here in Gulgala. What, said Samuel, thinkest thou the Lord's favour can be won by offering him sacrifice and victim, instead of obeying his divine will? The Lord loves obedience better than any sacrifice, the attentive ear better than the fat of rams. Rebellion is sin as witchcraft is sin, all one with idolatry is the unsubmitive heart. Thou hast revoked thy loyalty to the Lord, and he thy kingship.

Then Saul confessed to Samuel, I have sinned; I have transgressed the Lord's will and thy command; I was afraid of my own people, and humoured their desire. Grant that sin forgiveness; let me have thy company, while I go back to pay the Lord worship. Nay, answered Samuel, thou shalt have no company of mine; the Lord has revoked thy kingship over Israel, since thou hast revoked thy loyalty to him. With that, Samuel turned to go, and the other caught him by the border of his cloak, which tore in his hand. This day, Samuel told him, the Lord has torn away the kingship of Israel from thee, and given it to another and a better man than thyself. He who wins victories for Israel does not spare, does not relent; not his to alter his purpose like mortal men.¹ But Saul still pleaded with him, Guilty though I be, at least give me countenance before the elders of my people and before the men of Israel, by bearing me company as I go to worship. Thereupon Samuel turned back and went with him, and worship he did.

Then Samuel would have Agag, king of Amalec, brought into his presence; and he

was brought in, gross of body and trembling with fear; A bitter parting, said he, is this of death.² But Samuel told him, Many a woman that sword of thine has made childless, and now a childless woman thy own mother shall be; and he cut Agag to pieces, there in the Lord's presence at Gulgala. So Samuel went back to Ramatha, and Saul to his home at Gabaa, nor did Samuel, long as he lived, meet Saul again. But ever he lamented over him, that the Lord should have made him king of Israel, and afterwards revoked his kingship.

16 But now the Lord said to Samuel, What, still lamenting over Saul? I have cast him off; he is to be king of Israel no longer. Come, put oil in that phial of thine, and go on an errand for me to Jesse of Bethlehem; in one of his sons I have looked myself out a king. How can I undertake such a journey, asked Samuel, without Saul coming to hear of it, and killing me? Take a young bull with thee, the Lord answered, and make it known, I have come to offer the Lord sacrifice. To this sacrifice Jesse must be bidden; then I will reveal my will to thee, and thou shalt anoint the man I direct thee to anoint.

Thereupon Samuel did as the Lord bade him; and when he reached Bethlehem, the elders of the city greeted him in alarm, asking whether his coming boded well for them. Yes, he told them, I have come to offer the Lord sacrifice. Rid yourselves of defilement, and join with me in offering it. And with that he hallowed Jesse and his sons, and bade them come to the sacrifice with the rest. As soon as they entered the house, his eye fell on Eliab, and he said, Here stands the Lord's choice, in the Lord's presence! But the Lord warned Samuel, Have no eyes for noble mien or tall stature; I have passed this one by. Not where man's glance falls, falls the Lord's choice; men see but outward appearances, he reads the heart.³ Then Jesse called

¹ Samuel here rebukes the optimism of Saul (verse 25) by pointing out that God does not take rash decisions and then go back on them, as we men do. There is only a verbal contradiction between this theological statement of the case and the phrase 'I repent' used in verse 11 above; in verse 11 (as often in the Old Testament) the Divine attitude is loosely described in the language of ordinary human life.

² 'A bitter parting is this of death'; literally, 'Does bitter death so separate?' The Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning 'The bitterness of death has already been removed'.³ The Latin version here assumes that Samuel had told Jesse the meaning of his errand, and announced to him the rejection of each son as he was brought in. The Hebrew text may also be understood (though perhaps less probably, as describing only Samuel's thoughts, the words of rejection being spoken to Samuel interiorly by Almighty God himself).

Abinadab, and brought him into Samuel's presence; but, No, said he, this is not the Lord's choice; then Samma, but he said, No, not this one either. Seven sons of his did Jesse thus present before Samuel, but none of these, he was told, had the Lord chosen. Then Samuel asked Jesse whether these were all, and he answered, One still remains, the youngest, herding the sheep. Send for him, answered Samuel; we must not sit down till he comes. And Jesse sent and fetched him, red-cheeked, fair of face, pleasant of mien. And now the Lord said, Up, anoint him; this is my choice. Whereupon Samuel took out the phial of oil and anointed him then and there in his brethren's presence; and on him, on David, the spirit of the Lord came down, ever after that day. As for Samuël, he rose up and went home to Ramatha.

14 Meanwhile the Lord's spirit passed away from Saul; instead, at the Lord's bidding, an evil mood came upon him that gave him no rest. God sends thee an ill mood, his servants told him, to disquiet thee. We are thy servants, waiting on our lord's bidding; shall we go and find some skilful player on the harp, to relieve thee, when God visits thee with this evil mood, by his music? Yes, answered Saul, find one who can play the harp well, and bring him to me. And here one of his servants offered advice; Stay, I myself have met such a man, a skilful player indeed, a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite. He is sturdy besides, and a tried warrior, well-spoken and personable, and the Lord is with him.

19 Thereupon a message went out from Saul to Jesse, There is a son of thine, David, that looks after thy sheep; send him to me.

20 And Jesse loaded an ass with bread, and a flagon of wine, and a kid, and sent these by David as a present to Saul. Thus it was that David met Saul and entered his service; and became his armour-bearer, so well Saul loved him. Let David remain here in attendance on me, Saul told Jesse; I like him well. And whenever Saul was taken with this evil mood of his, David would fetch his harp, and play; whereupon Saul was comforted and felt easier, till at last the evil mood left him.

17 And now the Philistines mustered their army for battle, and raised their standard at Socho, in Juda, encamping between Socho and Azeca, in the region of Dommim. Saul, too, mustered the Israelites, and they marched to the Valley of the Terebinth, where they drew up their array to meet the enemy; the Philistines held the mountain-slope on one side, and Israel on the other, with the valley between them. And the Philistines had a champion, a bastard born,¹ that was called Goliath of Geth. His height was six cubits and a span; he wore a helmet of bronze and a breastplate of mail, this too made of bronze, and weighing five thousand sicles; greaves of bronze on his legs, and a shield of bronze to guard his shoulders. As for his spear, it had a shaft as big as a weaver's beam, with an iron head that weighed six hundred sicles; and a man went before to carry his armour for him.

Such a man confronted the ranks of Israel, crying out, What need to come here armed for battle? Here am I, a Philistine born; do you, that wear Saul's livery, choose out one of yourselves to meet me in single combat. If he is a match for me, and can strike me down, we will accept your rule; if I have the mastery, and he falls, you shall accept Philistine rule, and become our subjects instead. Here and now, I set the host of Israel at defiance (said the Philistine); let them put forward a champion that will fight hand to hand with me. Terror fell upon Saul and all the men of Israel as they listened to the challenge, and their hearts failed them.

Now turn we to David, son of that Ephrathite of whom we spoke but now. This man, Jesse of Bethlehem-Juda, was father of eight sons, and in Saul's reign he was well on in years, and passed for an old man. Three of his sons, the eldest, had gone to the wars with king Saul; three warrior sons, the first-born Eliab, and Abinadab, and Samma. David was the youngest; and when his three eldest brothers went into Saul's service, he left it, and must go home to tend his father's flock at Bethlehem. When the Philistine had already been coming out from the ranks and confronting the Israelites for forty

¹ 'A bastard born'; the word in the Hebrew text is of uncertain meaning, and some would translate simply 'a champion'.

7 days together, it chanced that Jesse sent his son David on an errand. Here is a bushel of flour, said he, and ten loaves; take them with all speed to thy brethren in the camp; ay, and ten cheeses to be a present for thy commander. Go and look for thy brethren, to see that all is well with them, and find out what their place is in the ranks.

9 It was in the Valley of the Terebinth he must find them, where they were carrying arms with Saul and all the men of Israel; 10 David rose early, leaving a man in charge of the flock, and went off with his load, to do his father's bidding. When he reached Magala, the army had raised its war-cry and gone out to fight; Israel was now marshalled for battle, and the Philistines awaited them. So David left all the gifts he had brought with him in the care of the baggage-master, and ran to the field of battle, to ask how his brethren fared.

13 Even as he spoke, out came the champion of the Philistine cause, Goliath, the bastard of Geth; and David heard him repeat his customary challenge. All the men of Israel were shrinking away in terror from the sight of him; and the talk went round among them, Saw you this warrior that went by? He has challenged Israel; and great good fortune awaits the man who overcomes him. The king has promised such a man great riches, and his daughter's hand in marriage, and for his father's house, freedom from every tax levied in Israel. And now here was David asking, What reward is there for saving Israel's honour, by overcoming the Philistines? What, shall an uncircumcised Philistine defy the armies of the living God? So they repeated to him the tale of what the reward should be.

18 When his elder brother Eliab overheard the talk, he turned upon David in anger; Why hast thou come here? he asked. Why must that sorry flock of thine go astray in the desert? This is thy old self-conceit, thy old cunning; thou hast come here only to watch the battle! Why, what wrong have I done? David asked. Is there not matter here for questioning? Then, passing on a little beyond him, he spoke to another man, using the same words, and folk gave him the same answer as before. What David had said was soon noised

abroad, till it came to the ears of Saul; and he was summoned ere long into Saul's presence. There is nothing here, he said, to daunt any man's spirits; I, my lord, will go and do battle with the Philistine. What, answered Saul, thou meet the Philistine and engage him in battle? Why, thou art only a boy, and this is a man trained to arms from his youth. But David told Saul, My lord, I used to feed my father's flock; and if lion or bear came and carried off one of my rams, I would go in pursuit, and get the mastery, and snatch the prey from their jaws. Did they threaten me, I would catch them by the throat and strangle them; that was my way of killing them. Lion or bear, my lord, I would slay them, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall have no better lot than theirs. Let me go out and save the honour of Israel; shall an uncircumcised Philistine defy the army of the living God? The Lord, said David, who protected me against lion and bear, will protect me against this Philistine.

Why then, said Saul, go, and the Lord be with thee. Then he made David wear his own armour, put a helmet of bronze on his head, and a breastplate round him; and David, as he girded on a sword over his armour, tried whether he had strength to walk in this unwonted array. Nay, he told Saul, I cannot walk, so clad; it was never my wont. So he disarmed, and took nothing but the staff he ever carried, and five smooth stones, which he picked out from the river-bed and put in his shepherd's wallet, and a sling in his hand; and so he went out to meet the Philistine.

The Philistine, with his armour-bearer going before him, came ever nearer on his way, and looked at David with contempt; here was a boy, red-cheeked and fair of face. What, he asked, dost thou take me for a dog, that thou comest to meet me with a staff? And he cursed David in the name of his gods. Come close, he said; let me give thy carrion to bird and beast. Nay, said David, though thou comest with sword and spear and shield to meet me, meet thee I will, in the name of the Lord of hosts; in the name of that God who fights for the armies of Israel. Thou hast defied them this day, and this day the Lord will give me the mastery; I will strike thee down, and cut off thy head. I will feed bird and

beast with the corpses of Philistine warriors, and prove to all the world that Israel has a God; prove to all who stand about us that the Lord sends victory without the help of sword or spear. God rules the battle; he will put you at our mercy.

48 By now, the Philistine had bestirred himself, and was coming on to attack David at close quarters; so, without more ado, David ran towards the enemy's lines, to meet him. He felt in his wallet, took out one of the stones, and shot it from his sling, with a whirl so dexterous that it struck Goliath on his forehead; deep in his forehead the stone buried itself, and he fell, face downwards, to the earth. Thus David overcame the Philistine with sling and stone, smote and slew him. No sword he bore of his own, but he ran up and took the Philistine's own sword from its sheath, where he lay, and with this slew him, cutting off his head. And now, seeing their champion dead, the Philistines betook themselves to flight; while the men of Israel and of Juda rose up with a cry, and gave chase till they reached the low ground, and the very gates of Accaron; all the way to Geth and Accaron, along the road to Saraim, Philistines lay dying of their wounds. At last the men of Israel returned from their pursuit, and fell to plundering the Philistine camp.

54 As for David, he brought Goliath's head back with him to Jerusalem, and laid up the armour in his tent. Saul, as he watched him going out to meet the Philistine, had asked the commander of his men, Abner, from what stock this boy came. On thy life, my lord, said Abner, I cannot tell. So the king bade him find out who the boy's father was; and David fresh from his victory, was taken by Abner into Saul's presence, still carrying the Philistine's head with him. And when Saul asked of his lineage, David told him, I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.¹

18 By the time he had finished speaking with Saul, David's heart was knit to the heart of Jonathan by a close bond, and Jonathan loved David

thenceforward as dearly as his own life. It was then that Saul took David into his service, and would not allow him to go back home; and Jonathan, loving him dearly as his own life, made a covenant of friendship with David, took off his robe and all his gear, even to sword and bow and belt, and gave them to David to wear.

This way and that David went at Saul's bidding, and his skill never failed him; when Saul put him at the head of his army, he earned the good will of the whole people, and of Saul's servants above the rest. But when David returned from slaying the Philistine, the women who came out from every part of Israel to meet Saul, singing and dancing merrily with tambour and cymbal, matched their music with the refrain, By Saul's hand a thousand, by David's ten thousand fell. And at this Saul was much displeased; it was no song to win his favour. What, he said, ten thousand for David, and but a thousand for me? What lies now between him and the kingdom? So ever after, Saul eyed him askance. Next day, the evil mood had come upon Saul, divinely sent, and a frenzy took him, there in his house; David was playing, as he ever did, upon the harp, and Saul, who had a lance in his hand, threw it at him, thinking to pin David to the wall. Twice David must needs flee from his presence, thus threatened.

Saul, then, began to fear David, as the heir to that divine favour he had lost; to remove him from his person, he gave him command of a thousand warriors, so that he must take the field at the head of his men. David's skill never failed him in his enterprises, and the Lord was ever at his side; and Saul, seeing how well he prospered, began to be afraid of him; he was in high favour, too, with the men of Israel and Juda, marching out to battle at their head. Saul, therefore, promised him the hand of his elder daughter, Merob, in marriage, if he would play a man's part in fighting the Lord's battles; No need for me to touch him, Saul thought to himself, let the Philistines rid me of him. Why, David answered, who am I, what rank

¹ It seems clear, from what is said here, that verses 21 and 22 of chapter sixteen were written by way of anticipation, describing what was to happen later on. It was not until after the combat with Goliath that Saul took any notice of the boy who had played the harp, now and again, in his presence. "A frenzy took him"; literally, 'he prophesied', but evidently this time under a malign influence.

have I, what place does my father's kindred hold in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law? And sure enough, when the time came that David should have wedded Saul's daughter Merob, her hand was given to Hadriel the Molathite instead. Meanwhile, David had fallen in love with his younger daughter, Michol; and Saul was well pleased when he heard of it. I will promise her, thought Saul, in such a way as to entrap him; the Philistines shall rid me of him. And he told David, I have a second condition for thee to fulfil, and thereupon thou shalt have my daughter.¹

Meanwhile, Saul had bidden his servants encourage David, when he himself was not by, telling him what favour the king, what love the king's servants bore him; it was time he became the king's son-in-law. But when they whispered these hopes to him, David said, Think you such a prize is won easily, when a man has neither purse nor station? When his servants came back to him with the news that David had answered thus, Saul bade them tell David, The king claims no bridal gifts, if thou wilt bring him the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, to give him a royal revenge on his enemies. In this way, Saul thought to betray David into the power of the Philistines; but when they told him what their master had said, David was well pleased to win the king's daughter so. A few days afterwards, he set out with the men under his command, slew two hundred Philistines, and brought back their foreskins, which he counted out before the king as the price of his bride. And now Saul must give David his daughter Michol's hand.

That the Lord was with David, Saul could tell beyond doubt, and here was his daughter Michol David's loving wife; more than ever Saul grew afraid of him, and remained thenceforward his enemy. Meanwhile, the Philistine chiefs came out to battle; David, from the time when their attacks began, shewed greater skill than all the rest of Saul's officers, and his name was in high renown.

19 Once, Saul gave the word to Jonathan and to all his servants that they must put David to death. But Saul's

son Jonathan, who loved David well, told him of the design; My father Saul, he said, means thy death; be on the watch tomorrow, keep apart, and hide thyself. Out in the open fields, close to thy hiding-place, I will stand talking to my father and will speak to him of thee; and afterwards I will tell thee what I have learned. So Jonathan pleaded David's cause with his father Saul; Do no wrong he said, to thy servant David, that has done thee no wrong, but is much thy benefactor. Did he not put his life in peril, that day when he slew the Philistine, and the Lord gave the whole army of Israel a great victory? Thou wast there to see it, and rejoice at it; and wilt thou bring on thyself the guilt of blood wrongfully shed, by slaying David, who is innocent of fault? Saul listened to the plea of Jonathan, and relented; As the Lord is a living God, said he, no harm shall befall him. So Jonathan called to David, and told him all that had passed; then he brought him back into Saul's presence, where he remained as he had been ever wont. And when war broke out afresh, David went into battle against the Philistines, and won a great victory, putting them to rout.

One day, Saul was sitting in his house, lance in hand, with the evil spirit upon him, divinely sent; and David was playing the harp before him. He tried to pin David to the wall, and David escaped from his presence, while the lance stuck in the wall, balked of its aim. That night, David fled for his life; Saul had sent armed men to his house to make sure of him, for on the morrow he must die. But Michol, David's wife, warned him that death awaited him next day if he did not escape then and there, and let him down from a window. So David made good his escape that night; meanwhile, Michol brought out a sacred image and laid it in his bed, with goat's hair at its head, and coverlets wrapped about it; when Saul's pursuivants came to fetch David, they were told that he lay sick. But now they were sent back again to find David and bring him with them, bed and all, to die in Saul's presence; so they found, when they came in, an image lying on the bed, with goat's hair at the head of it. What is this trick thou hast played on

¹ 'A second condition'; for the first, see 17. 25 above.

me, Saul asked, helping my enemy to escape? Why, answered Michol, he threatened to kill me if I did not let him go.

- 18 So David reached safety, and went to Ramatha to find Samuel, and tell him of Saul's doings; and they retired, both of them, to live at the Naioth.¹ Saul, when he heard from common report that David was
20 there at Ramatha, in the Naioth, sent pursuivants there to seize him. But all they found was a company of prophets standing there in ecstasy, with Samuel, their leader, at their head; and with that, the spirit of the Lord fell on the pursuivants, and they were carried away in ecstasy like the rest.
21 When Saul heard the news, and sent fresh messengers, these too fell into ecstasy, and the like happened when he sent a third
22 time; so, in high displeasure, Saul took the road for Ramatha himself. When he reached the Great Well at Socho, he asked where Samuel and David were, and was told they were at the Naioth in Ramatha,
23 so to the Naioth in Ramatha he went; and on him, too, the spirit of the Lord fell as he journeyed. Still in ecstasy he made his
24 way to the Naioth in Ramatha, where he stripped off his garments and stood before Samuel in ecstasy with the rest; all that day and that night he lay on the ground naked. And so the proverb went abroad, Has Saul, too, turned prophet?

- 20** David meanwhile escaped from the Naioth at Ramatha, and came back to have speech with Jonathan. What is it I have done? he asked. For what wrong, what fault of mine does thy father threaten my life? Nay, said he, never that; thy life is safe enough. My father does nothing, of much moment or of little, without telling me first; why should he have kept this one design dark? It cannot be.
3 And once again he swore friendship. But David said, Thy father knows well enough what favour I enjoy with thee, and he thinks to himself, Jonathan must not know; this were great grief to him. But, as the Lord is a living God, and thy soul a living soul, there is but a step between
4 me and death. Then, said Jonathan, make

known thy will, and I will perform it. Tomorrow, David answered, is the first day of the month, and custom will have it that I should sit next to the king at table. Bear with me if I hide in the open fields, instead, till that day and the next are over; and if thy father looks about him and misses me, tell him that David asked leave of thee to go home on a sudden to Bethlehem, where all his clan are holding their yearly sacrifice. If he is content, all is well with me; if he falls into a rage, be sure that he is bent on doing me harm. I am thy servant, and thou hast made me swear a covenant of friendship with thee before the Lord; do me, then, this kindness. And if I am guilty of any fault, do thou thyself slay me, without seeking to reconcile me with thy father. God forbid! said Jonathan. If I find out that my father is bent on doing thee harm, nothing shall prevent me from telling thee of it.

And now, said David, if thy father gives thee a rough answer, who is to bring me news of it? Come out with me, said Jonathan; let us walk together in the open fields. And when they were together in the open, he said to David, Let the Lord God of Israel be my witness, if I sound my father to-morrow or next day, and hear good news of David, I will send a messenger to give thee the news; if not, may the Lord punish Jonathan as he deserves, and more than he deserves! But if my father is still bent on thy harm, then I myself will bring it to thy ear, and send thee on thy way unharmed; and the Lord be with thee, as he was once with my father. While I live, shew me friendship in the Lord's name, and when I die, let time never diminish thy friendship for my race. May the Lord, as he roots out David's enemies, one by one, from the land that knew them, leave out Jonathan's name from the list of his kindred; only on David's enemies let his vengeance fall! Thus did Jonathan make a covenant with the line of David, and the Lord's vengeance fell only on David's enemies.² And Jonathan swore a fresh oath to David, so dearly he loved him, dearly as his own life.

¹ 'The Naioth'; we do not know whether this was a building or a quarter of the town, but it seems likely, since it means 'the Abodes', that it was a settlement in which the prophetic influence was focussed; cf. IV Kg. 2. 3-5. ² There is considerable confusion in the Hebrew text; it does not contain the end of verse 15, and verse 16 is absent both there and in the Septuagint Greek.

18 Then Jonathan said, Since it is the first
 19 day of the month to-morrow, thou wilt be
 missed; thy place will be empty then and
 the day after. Make quickly, then, for the
 valley, and hide thyself; thou must needs
 be in hiding that third day, when men can
 go about their work again. Wait, then, near
 20 the rock called Ezel; and I will come and
 shoot three arrows close to it, letting fly as
 21 if I were shooting at a mark. Then I will
 send a servant after them, bidding him go
 and fetch my arrows. If I tell him the
 22 arrows are on the near side of him, he has
 only to go and pick them up, then do thou
 come out to me; it means, as the Lord is
 a living God, that all is well and no harm
 is meant thee. If I tell him the arrows are
 beyond him, then depart, and peace be
 23 with thee; the Lord will have thee go. And
 as for the promises we have exchanged,
 may the Lord be arbiter for ever between
 me and thee.

24 So David went and hid, out in the fields,
 and the new month came, and the king sat
 25 down to meat. He sat, as was his wont, on
 a seat close to the wall; Jonathan was
 standing there, and Abner took his place
 next to Saul, but David's was seen to be
 26 empty. That day, Saul said nothing of it;
 perhaps David had incurred some defilement,
 and had not yet been cleansed. But
 27 when the next day dawned after the new
 moon, and David's place was empty still,
 Saul asked Jonathan why the son of Jesse
 had not sat down to meat that day or the
 28 day before. He urged me, answered Jonathan,
 29 to let him go to Bethlehem. Pray
 give me leave, said he; a yearly sacrifice is
 being offered in the city, and one of my
 30 brothers has summoned me there. Do me
 the favour, then, to let me go with all speed
 and visit my brethren. At this, Saul fell
 into a rage with Jonathan; What, cried he,
 thou son of a lecherous wife, dost thou
 think I have not marked how thou lovest
 31 this son of Jesse, to thy own undoing and
 hers, the shameful mother that bore thee?
 32 Never, while the son of Jesse is left alive
 on earth, will thy right to the throne be
 established. Send and bring him to me,
 33 here and now; he is a dead man. And why
 must he die? Jonathan asked of his father.
 34 What wrong has he done? Thereupon
 Saul caught up a lance as if to kill him; and
 Jonathan saw his father was determined

upon David's death; so he rose from table 34
 in hot anger, and that second day of the
 month no food crossed his lips, so grieved
 was he, for David's sake, by his father's
 insults.

When day dawned, Jonathan went afield 35
 to keep his tryst with David, taking with
 him a boy that was his servant. Go and 36
 pick up the arrows I shoot, he told him, and
 bring them back to me. Then, as the boy
 ran for the first, he shot a second arrow
 beyond him; and when he reached the 37
 place where the first fell, Jonathan cried
 out after him, There is an arrow there
 beyond thee. And now he called out after 38
 him, Make haste, do not linger where thou
 art. So the boy gathered up Jonathan's
 arrows, and brought them to his master;
 but of the business that was toward, he 39
 knew nothing; only Jonathan and David
 knew that. And now Jonathan handed the 40
 boy his weapons, and said, Take them back
 with thee to the city.

When the servant had gone, David rose 41
 up from his hiding-place, that gave upon
 the south country; he bowed his face to the
 earth, and three times did reverence, and
 then they kissed one another and wept to-
 42 gether; there was no staunching David's
 tears. Go, said Jonathan, and peace go
 with thee. That, and the oath we have
 sworn in the Lord's name, making him the
 arbiter between me and thee, between my
 posterity and thine, for ever! So David set 43
 out on his journey, and Jonathan made his
 way back to the city.

21 It was to the priest Achimelech, at
 Nob, that David betook himself.
 Achimelech was dismayed at his coming;
 Why art thou alone, he asked, with none to
 attend thee? The king, David told him, 2
 has given me a task to perform, but errand
 and instructions are both secret; and he
 has given me a trysting-place where I am
 to meet my companions. Hast thou food 3
 for them ready to hand, though it were but
 five loaves? Let me have what thou canst
 afford. Why, answered the priest, never a 4
 loaf have I here for common uses; there is
 only the holy bread. Are they free from
 defilement, these followers of thine, from
 the touch of woman, at least? As to 5
 women, David told the priest, we are as
 clean as when we set out a day or two back;

- and the packs the men carry are as clean as themselves. This is no holy errand of ours, but it will not bring any defilement, to-day, upon aught we carry with us.¹ So the priest gave him hallowed bread, since he had nothing but the loaves which had been set out in the Lord's presence, and must now be taken away to make room for a new batch.
- 7 One of Saul's servants was there that day, waiting in the Lord's precincts, a man of Edom called Doeg, chief of Saul's shepherds.
- 8 And now David said to Achimelech, Hast thou a sword or spear here for me? My sword and all my weapons I left behind, so urgent was the royal command.
- 9 Yes, answered the priest, there is the sword of the Philistine, Goliath, whom thou didst slay in the Valley of the Terebinth. Wrapped in a cloth it lies, behind the sacred mantle. If thou wilt take that, take it; there is none other but that. And there is none other like that, said David; give it me.
- 10 David set out the same day, to find refuge from Saul's pursuit, and betook himself to Achis, king of Geth. And at the sight of him, Achis' men said to their master, Why, is not this David, a king in his own land? Was it not in his honour their dancers used to sing, By Saul's hand a thousand, by David's ten thousand fell?
- 12 David marked their words well, and now he went in fear of Achis king of Geth. So he changed his mien when they were by, swooning in their hands and clinging to the door-posts and letting the spittle fall on his beard, till Achis told his men, Why, this is a madman you have found; why must you bring him into my presence? Have we not fools enough, that you bring this fellow in to let me watch his antics? Is this the man you would have me take into my house?

- 22** Afterwards David moved on, and took refuge in the cave of Odollam. His brethren and all his father's kindred followed him there; and soon a band of men gathered about him, the ill-used, the debtors, the disaffected, and David became their leader, so that he had some four hundred men at his heels. From

Odollam, he went on to Maspha, in the domains of Moab, and asked the king of Moab to let his father and mother dwell there, until they should find out what fortune the Lord meant to send him; under the protection of the Moabite king they were left there, and remained with him all the time David was in the hills. But the prophet Gad bade him leave his hill-fastness and make his way back to the domain of Juda; so he moved on, and betook himself to the forest of Haret.

When the news reached Saul that David and his followers had come into view, Saul was dwelling at Gabaa, and held his court, spear in hand, in the wood of Rama. Listen, men of Jemini, he said to his vassals who stood there at his side, do you think the son of Jesse is like to give all of you lands and vineyards, make all of you chiefs and captains under him? How is it that you are all in conspiracy against me, and none of you will tell me the truth, even when my own son is in league with the son of Jesse? Is there none of you that will feel my wrongs, and bring me news of it when my own son encourages my own servant in disaffection, a man that has ever plotted against me, and plots against me still? And the answer came from Doeg, the man of Edom, who was chief among Saul's servants. I was by, he said, at Nobe, when the son of Jesse was there with the priest Achimelech, son of Achitob, who consulted the Lord for him, and gave him food for his journey; armed him, too, with the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

Thereupon the king sent out his summons to the high priest Achimelech, son of Achitob, and all his priestly kindred at Nobe, and they all came into his presence. Listen, son of Achitob, Saul began, and Achimelech answered, I am here, my lord, at thy command. Why hast thou conspired against me, asked Saul, with the son of Jesse? Why didst thou give him bread, and a sword, and consult the Lord in his behalf, to help him in his rebellion, a man that has ever plotted against me, and plots against me still? Why, my lord, answered Achimelech, what servant of thine was ever

¹ The meaning of the Hebrew text is uncertain but the Latin version gives a clear sense. Ceremonial uncleanness could infect things as well as persons, and a body of soldiers must often have incurred the uncleanness which came from contact with a dead body (cf. Lev. 11. 32). David assures the priest that his imaginary companions, although they have not set out to fulfil the conditions of a pious pilgrimage, are in fact free from defilement so far. Some think the word rendered 'packs' means 'bodies' here. Cf. Mt. 12. 4.

so trusted as David, a king's son-in-law; one who ever goes on thy errands, and fills
 15 so high a place in thy household? This was not the first time I had consulted the Lord for him. God forbid, my lord king, that either I, thy servant, or any of my kindred should be brought under any such suspicion! Nay, I knew nothing of this business from first to last. And the king said,
 16 Achimelech, thou must die for it; thou and all thy kindred; then he bade his retainers, that stood about him, set to and kill the
 17 Lord's priests, men who had helped David by being privy to his flight and giving no tidings of it. But the king's retainers were afraid to lay hands on the priests of the
 18 Lord; so the king bade Doeg set to, and fall upon the priests. Fall upon them he did, Doeg the man of Edom, and slew that day eighty men that wore the linen mantle.
 19 Nobe, too, the city of the priests, the king put to the sword; man and woman, child and infant, ox and ass and sheep, all put to the sword.

20 There was only one descendant of Achimelech, son of Achitob, that escaped; his name was Abiathar, and he took refuge with David, bringing him the news that Saul had killed all the Lord's priests. I knew well, David told him, when I found Doeg the Edomite there that day, that he would not fail to tell Saul of it. I am answerable for the slaughter of all thy kinsmen. Stay with me here, and fear nothing; my enemies are thine, and here thou wilt be in safety.

23 News was brought to David that the Philistines were attacking Ceila, and plundering its threshing-floors.
 2 So he consulted the Lord, asking whether he should go and attack these Philistines; and the Lord answered, attack them he should, and bring the townspeople relief.
 3 But David's followers protested, Here are we going in fear of our lives, even on the soil of Juda; and wouldst thou have us make our way to Ceila, and fight the army of the Philistines? So David consulted the Lord again, and still the Lord said, Up, and to Ceila betake thee; I will give thee
 5 victory over the Philistines. So David and his men marched there and made war on the Philistines, driving off their cattle; he defeated them with great loss, and the
 6 town was rid of them. (It was here that

Abiathar, son of Achimelech, took refuge with David; and he came bringing the sacred mantle with him.)

When news reached Saul that David had gone to Ceila, he thought, The Lord has put him at my mercy; he is shut in, now, by the barred gates of a city. And he bade
 8 his whole army march down there and lay siege to David and his men; but David,
 9 hearing of the secret plans that were being made for his hurt, would have Abiathar consult the sacred mantle. Lord God of
 10 Israel, was David's prayer, news has reached me that Saul is on his way to Ceila, to destroy the city that shelters me; what if the townspeople should hand me
 11 over to him? Tell me, Lord God of Israel, is the report true that Saul is on his way down? It is true, the Lord answered. Then
 12 David asked, Will the townspeople betray me and my companions into Saul's hands? And the Lord answered, They will. So
 13 David and his men, about six hundred strong, left Ceila and went back to their wandering life; and Saul, hearing that David had made good his escape from the town, said no more about his purposed attack.

After this, David must keep to desert
 14 fastnesses, and he made his home among the wooded hills in the wilderness of Ziph; and evermore Saul made search for him, but the Lord disappointed him of his prey. David lay close in the woods of Ziph, well
 15 knowing that Saul was bent on taking his life. And now Saul's son Jonathan ventured out, and visited him there in the woods, to bid him God-speed; Have no
 17 fear, said he, my father Saul will never find thee. Thou art destined to reign over Israel, and I to take the second place; my father Saul knows well that so it must be. So they made a covenant between them,
 18 there in the Lord's presence; and David lay close in the woods, while Jonathan went home again.

Meantime the men of Ziph betook
 19 themselves to Saul at Gabaa, and said to him, We have news of David for thee; he lies hidden in a forest stronghold on the slopes of Hachila, south of the desert. Come, then, where thou mayest have thy
 20 dearest wish; we will undertake to hand him over to the royal custody. The Lord's
 21 blessing on you! answered Saul; here are

22 men that feel for my wrongs. Go and make your preparations carefully; take good heed to enquire where he has halted on his march and who has seen him there; he knows well enough that a skilful hunter is on his track. Keep watch, and note all the lairs he lurks in; then come back to me with sure news, and I will go with you. Let him go to ground as he will, I will hunt him out among all the multitudes of Juda!

24 So they went back to Ziph to prepare the way for Saul, and found that David and his men were in the desert of Maon, on the low ground south of Jesimon. When Saul and his followers came in pursuit, David had news of it, and took refuge in a rock-fastness, haunting still the desert of Maon; and through the desert of Maon Saul went in pursuit of him, learning that he was to be found there. At last a time came when Saul was traversing one side of a mountain, while David and his men were on the opposite side. David had lost hope of slipping through Saul's hands, now that Saul's men had encircled his, ready to cut them off. But a message reached Saul, Come with all speed; the Philistines have invaded the land. Whereupon Saul must needs give up his pursuit of David, and go back to meet the Philistines. That is how the place came by the name it bears, the Sundering Rock.

24 Then David withdrew, and made the fastness of Engaddi his home. So, when Saul returned from driving the Philistines away, word was brought to him, David is over yonder, in the desert of Engaddi; and with three thousand picked men from the Israelite ranks he went to hunt out David and his followers, though it were among rocks so steep that only the wild goats could find a footing. Close by some sheep-folds that met him on his way, there was a cave, into which Saul went to ease himself; and in the inner part of this same cave, David and his men lay hidden.

5 Now, David's servants told him, the time has come which the Lord foretold to thee, when he promised he would put thy enemy at thy mercy. Whereupon David rose to his feet, and silently cut off the skirt of Saul's cloak. Then his heart smote him, that he had even mutilated Saul's cloak;

7 God be merciful to me, said he to his men, never may I do such despite to the Lord's

unction, as to lay hands on the king he has anointed! So, with a word, he checked his men, and would not let them do Saul any violence.

When Saul left the cave, to go forward on his march, David followed him; he too left the cave, crying out after him, My lord king! And when Saul looked behind him, there was David bowing to the earth in reverence. Why wouldst thou lend an ear, David asked him, to such as tell thee David is thy enemy? Thou canst see with thy own eyes that the Lord put thee at my mercy, yonder in the cave, and the thought came to me that I might kill thee. But no, I looked down and spared thee; Never will I lift a hand, thought I, against the king the Lord has anointed. Do but look, my father, on what I hold in my hand; dost thou recognize the skirt of thy cloak? The skirt of thy cloak I cut off; kill thee I would not. Think on this, and tell thyself that there was never despite or wrong on my part, never a fault committed against thee; it is thou that art plotting against me, ready to compass my death. The Lord pass sentence between us; it is for the Lord to avenge me on thee; this hand shall never be lifted against thee. (So the old proverb says, Leave wrong to the wrong-doer, my hand shall not touch thee.) A fine quarry thou huntest, king of Israel, a fine quarry indeed! A dead dog, a flea, is all thy quest. The Lord give sentence between us; the Lord witness and redress my wrongs, and rescue me from thy power.

All this David said to him, and then Saul asked, Is it thy voice I hear, my son David? and wept aloud. Thou givest better measure, he said, than I; thou returnest good for evil, and I evil for good. And thou hast shewn thyself a true friend this day, sparing my life when the Lord had put it at thy mercy; should a man meet his enemy, and let him go unharmed? The Lord reward thee for this day's kindness. This I know past all doubt, that one day thou wilt be king, and have this realm of Israel in thy power; swear to me in the Lord's name that thou wilt not destroy the posterity which survives me, wilt not leave my name forgotten in the record of my father's race. So David bound himself to Saul by oath, and Saul went home, while David and his followers returned to their hill-fastness.

25 And now the Israelites must bewail the death of Samuel; all gathered with one accord and gave him burial at Ramatha, his home. Afterwards, David betook himself to the wilderness of Pharan.

2 There was a man who lived in the desert of Maon, and had lands at Carmel, a very rich man, owning three thousand sheep and a thousand goats; it happened just then that he was shearing his flocks at Carmel. Nabal was his name, and he had a wife called Abigail, that was a woman of good sense and of great beauty; but this husband of hers, descended from Caleb, was a churlish fellow, wicked and spiteful

3 in all his dealings. When news came to David, there in the desert, that Nabal was at his shearing, he sent ten of his men to Carmel, to find Nabal and wish him well in David's name. And they were to bear this message: My brethren wish thee well, and thy kindred too, and all that is thine.

4 News has come to me that they are shearing, those herdsmen of thine whom we met out in the desert; all the time we were at Carmel, we left them unmolested, and never a beast was missing from their herds; ask thy men, and they will assure thee of it.

5 My servants come at an auspicious time; look kindly on their request, and send such a present as thou canst best afford to thy servants here, and thy son David.

6 So David's men went on their errand, gave him the message in David's name, and waited for his answer. From David? said he. From the son of Jesse? There is no lack, in these days, of slaves that run away from their masters. Tell him that bread of mine and water of mine and the meat I kill are for my shearers here, not for strangers that have sprung up I know not whence. So David's men must make their way home again, and bring him his answer. Whereupon he bade all his followers gird on their swords. Gird themselves they did, and so did he; some four hundred men went with him, and the other two hundred were left to guard the baggage.

7 Meanwhile Abigail, Nabal's wife, had been warned by one of the servants, Some

messengers came here, sent by David from the desert to greet our master, and he has turned them away. And yet these men were good friends to us, leaving us ever unmolested; loss had we none all the time they were with us in the desert; nay, they were a protection to us, night and day, while we pastured our flocks among them. Take thought, then, and resolve what thou wilt do; thy husband and thy house are marked down for vengeance, and he is so cross-grained a man that there is no reasoning with him. Abigail wasted no time; she brought out two hundred loaves, two skins of wine, five rams ready cooked, five pecks of flour, a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of dried figs; all these she loaded on asses, and bade the drivers go on before; she herself would follow. But she said no word of this to her husband Nabal.

8 She had mounted her ass, and was now at the bottom of the valley, when she saw David and his men coming down towards her; and she went to meet them. And still, as he came, David uttered threats; It was a thankless care of mine to protect all this man's goods, out in the desert, so that he never felt loss; it is an ill return he makes me for such a service. God grant David's enemies all they desire and more than they desire, if I let any male in this man's house live till morning! But Abigail no sooner met David than she dismounted from her ass and fell down before him, her face bowed to earth, and said, kneeling at his feet, For this fault, my lord, let me bear the blame! Listen to thy handmaid, that craves audience of thee. My lord, pay no heed to this cross-grained fellow Nabal, a fool in nature as in name; I myself saw nothing of the men that came from thee. Oh, then, as thou art a living man, and the Lord is a living God, the Lord who has restrained thee from deeds of blood and kept thy hands clean, (may all my lord's enemies and ill-wishers be as ill-advised as Nabal!); I entreat thee to accept this offering I have brought thee, as a handmaid to her master; share it, my lord, with

¹ This is the same formula of imprecation which is used in Ruth 1:17, and frequently elsewhere, evidently in the sense 'May the Lord punish me and over-punish me if I do not...'. The Septuagint Greek here has 'David' instead of 'David's enemies'.
² 'Has restrained thee from deeds of blood', it is ordinarily supposed that Abigail, in using this phrase, is assuming the success of her own mission. The words gain more force if we take them as an allusion to the events of chapter 24; the parenthesis which follows will then apply to Saul.

28 thy followers. And so let the fault of thy handmaid be forgiven! Sure it is the Lord means to grant thee abiding posterity, so well, my lord, dost thou fight his battles; and never may ill fortune attend thee, long as thou livest!¹ Rise up who may to wrong thee and plot against thee, yet shall that soul of thine be in safe keeping with the Lord thy God, stored up in his casket of life; it is the souls of thy enemies he shall cast away, as from the whirling heart of a sling. Why then, when the Lord has granted thee all his promised blessings, and made thee master of Israel, let there be no sigh of remorse in my lord's heart, at the memory of innocent blood shed, or vengeance cruelly taken! Rather, when the Lord has so blessed thee, mayest thou think gratefully of me, thy handmaid.

32 And David said to her, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel! A blessing, too, on these words of thine, and on thyself, who hast prevented me this day from going on a bloody errand, using violence to avenge my wrongs! Nay, as the Lord is a living God, the Lord who has preserved me from doing thee hurt, if thou hadst not come to meet me thus early, never a male in Nabal's house should have lived till morning. So David accepted all the gifts she brought him; Go home in peace, he said to her; thy prayer is granted, thy suit has prospered.

36 So she went home to Nabal, and found him feasting royally. His heart was merry, for he had drunk deep; and she said no word to him, of little import, or great, till morning. But in the morning, when he had slept away his carouse, his wife told him of all that had passed, and his heart went dead within him, cold as a stone; and when ten days had passed, the Lord struck Nabal down, and he died. When David heard of his death, he said, Blessed be the Lord, that has given me redress for Nabal's ill usage of me, keeping his servant clear of wrong, and himself punishing Nabal's spite! Then he sent a message to Abigail, offering her marriage. And when David's messengers reached her at Carmel, and told her David had sent them on this errand, she rose up, and bowed down to earth; Let thy handmaid be a waiting-woman, she said, to wash the feet of my

lord's retainers! Then, without more ado, 42 Abigail mounted her ass, took five maidens with her to wait on her needs, and went with David's messengers; and so he made her his wife.

He wedded Achinoam, too, from Jezrahel; both of these were wives to David. But as for Michol, that had been his wife once, her father Saul gave her in marriage to Phalti, son of Lais, a man of Gailim.

26 When the men of Ziph brought news to Saul in Gabaa that David was in hiding on the slopes of Hachila, that look out towards the desert, he set out with three thousand picked men from the ranks of Israel, and made his way to the desert of Ziph, to search for David there. On the slopes of Hachila Saul encamped; David, meanwhile, who was out in the desert, knowing that Saul meant to follow him there, had sent men to watch his movements, and it was Hachila they reported as Saul's halting-place. Then David himself went on a secret journey, and made his way to the spot; looked down at the place where Saul lay, where Abner lay, the commander of his army, and the very tent in which Saul slept, with all the rest of his men camped about him.

Thereupon David said to his companions, Achimelech the man of Heth, and Abisai, Sarvia's son, that was brother to Joab, Which of you comes down with me to the camp where Saul lies? And Abisai said, I will bear thee company. So, at dead of night, David and Abisai passed through into the Israelite lines, and found Saul asleep in his tent, with his spear driven into the ground by his pillow; all around him, Abner and the rest of his army lay sleeping too. Now, said Abisai, the Lord has left thy enemy at thy mercy! Let me pin him to the ground as he lies with one thrust of yonder spear; there will be no need for a second. Nay, answered David, kill him thou must not; none can lay hands on the king whom the Lord has anointed but he incurs guilt. As the Lord is a living God, David said, I will wait for the Lord to smite him down, till death comes to him, or he falls on the field of battle. The Lord be merciful to me, never will I lay hands on the king he has anointed! Come, take

¹ 'Never may ill fortune attend thee'; or perhaps, 'never may wickedness be found in thee'.

up the spear that is by his head, and yonder
pitcher of water, and let us begone. So
David took away the spear, and the pitcher
of water that was by Saul's head, and back
they went; none saw, none knew of it, none
stirred; all lay tranced in a deep sleep the
Lord had sent down upon them.

When David had crossed to the further
slope, he stood on a peak of the hill far
away, parted from them by a long distance,
and cried out to the army of Israel, cried
out to Abner, son of Ner. What, Abner, he
said, wilt thou never answer? And answer
he did, Who art thou, that criest so, dis-
turbing the king's sleep? Thou wast ever
a brave man, Abner, David said, none like
thee in Israel; what guard is this thou
keepest over thy lord the king? The life of
thy lord the king was in danger but now,
from a subject of his that found his way
into the camp. This was great fault in thee;
as the Lord is a living God, you are no
better than dead men, you that watch so
ill over your master, the king he has
anointed. Look about thee, and see what
has become of the king's spear, and the
pitcher of water that was by his head.

With that, Saul himself recognized
David's voice; Is it thy voice I hear, he
asked, my son David? And David answered,
It is mine, my lord king, no other.
My lord, said he, why wouldst thou hunt
down this poor servant of thine? What
have I done amiss, what guilt lies at my
door? My lord king, give thy servant a
hearing. If it is the Lord that inspires thee
with such hatred of me, then let him be
appeased by sacrifice. But if it is the work
of men, the Lord's curse be on them; they
have exiled me this day from the Lord's
domain, bidden me go and worship alien
gods. Why must the earth be stained with
my blood, under the Lord's eye? A fine
quarry for the king of Israel! A flea, a
partridge on the hills, were as well worth
his chase. I have done thee wrong, Saul
answered; return, my son David, return.
Never again will I do thee hurt, after this
day when thou hast spared my life. My
folly, I see it now; my long blindness, I see
it now. Here is the king's spear, said

David; best that one of the king's men
should come across and take it. The Lord
will make every man the return his own
faith and honour have deserved; this day
the Lord put thee at my mercy, and I
would not lift a hand against the king he
has anointed. I held thy life precious; may
the Lord hold mine precious, and deliver
me at all time of peril. A blessing on thee,
my son David, Saul answered; much thou
shalt achieve, much win. And with that,
David passed on, and Saul went back
whence he came.

27 The time must come, David
thought to himself, when I shall
fall into Saul's hands; were it not better to
escape, and take refuge in the country of
the Philistines? Then Saul will give up the
hope of hunting me down within the bor-
ders of Israel, and I shall be safe from his
power. So David removed, and betook
himself, with six hundred men at his heels,
to Achis, son of Maach, that was king of
Geth; there, in Geth, with Achis, he and
his men settled down, each with his own
household; David with his two wives,
Achinoam from Jezrahel, and Abigail that
had been wife to Nabal at Carmel. As for
Saul, when he heard that David had taken
refuge at Geth, he gave up the pursuit.

And now David said to Achis, Do me
this favour; make me a grant of land in one
of the townships here. No need that I, thy
servant, should make my dwelling with
thee in thy capital city. Whereupon Achis
granted him Siceleg, and it has belonged
to the kings of Juda from that day to this.
David's stay among the Philistines lasted
for four months; he would lead his men
out, and drive off plunder from Gessuri
and Gersi and from the Amalecites; these
were settlements belonging to the old in-
habitants of the land, which reached as far
as Sur, on the borders of Egypt. Wherever
he went, he ravaged the country-side,
leaving neither man nor woman alive; then
he would carry off sheep and ox and ass
and camel and garments as his spoil, and
so return to Achis. Did Achis ask where
he had made his foray that day, he would

¹ It is not clear why David speaks of his blood being spilt 'in the presence of the Lord', a phrase which generally refers to the tabernacle or some other place of special sanctity. The Hebrew text is understood by some as meaning 'away from the Lord's presence'; but there is no indication that the desert of Ziph is regarded as being outside the soil of Israel; cf. 27. 1 below.

answer, On the south of Juda, or of Jerameel, or of Ceni. Neither man nor woman must be taken alive and brought to Geth, for fear they should betray him and his. So David did, of set purpose, all the time he lived in the Philistine country; ¹ and Achis believed what he said, and thought to himself, This man has brought great hurt on his own people of Israel; now he is bound to my service in perpetuity.

28 It happened at this time that the Philistines mustered all their army, to levy war on Israel. Be sure of this, said Achis to David, that thou and thy men shall march at my side to battle. Why then, David answered, thou shalt have proof, now, of thy servant's worth. Prove it, said Achis, and it shall be thine to guard my person at all times.

This was after the time when Samuel died, and was buried at his home in Ramatha, with all Israel to mourn him; after the time when Saul purged the country of soothsayers and diviners. The Philistines had joined their forces and marched to Sunam, where they encamped; and Saul, with the whole muster of Israel, went out to mount Gelboe to meet them; but as he looked down on the Philistine camp he was dismayed, and sorely his heart misgave him. When he consulted the Lord, no answer was sent him, by dream or priest or prophet; and at last he bade his servants find him some woman that was an enchantress, so that he could go and question her. There is such a woman, they told him, living at Endor. So he disguised himself, and put on other garments, and, with two of his men in attendance, visited the woman at dead of night. Use thy enchantments, said he, to bring up from the dead the man I name to thee. Nay, said she, thou knowest well how Saul has been at pains to rid the country of diviners and soothsayers; why wouldst thou entrap a poor soul, to bring her to her death? But Saul swore to her, As the Lord is a living God, no harm shall befall thee. And when she asked whom he would have brought up from the dead, he said, Bring up Samuel for me.

No sooner did Samuel appear to her, than the woman cried aloud, What is this trick thou hast played on me? Thou thyself art Saul! But the king bade her have no fear, and asked what it was she had seen. It seemed, she told him, as if gods were coming up from beneath the earth. What form is it thou seest? he asked. And she said, An old man has come up, wrapped in a cloak. Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed his face to the earth, and did reverence.

Why hast thou disturbed my rest, Samuel asked, and brought me to earth again? I am hard pressed, Saul told him: the Philistines are levying war on me, and the Lord has forsaken me, giving me no answer by prophet or by dream; and I have summoned thee to tell me how I am to make shift. Nay, answered Samuel, what need to ask? The Lord has forsaken thee, and gone over to one that is thy rival. He means to make good the threat I uttered in his name, that he would snatch the kingdom from thy hand, and give it to another; it was of David he spoke. And thy plight this day is the punishment the Lord sends thee for disobeying his command, instead of executing his vengeance on Amalec; over thee and all Israel he will give the Philistines mastery. To-morrow, thou and thy sons will be with me, and the Lord will leave the camp of Israel at the mercy of the Philistines.

With that, Saul fell his full length on the ground, so daunted was he by Samuel's words, so weak from taking no food all that day. The woman went to his side, seeing him thus overcome; My lord, she said, I obeyed thee at the peril of my life, and since I have so humoured thee, wilt thou not humour this handmaid of thine, by letting her set a mouthful of food before thee, to give thee strength for thy journey by the eating of it? But he refused to take any food, until his servants and the woman together put constraint on him; then at last he rose from the ground and sat on the bed. The woman had a calf by her that she had fattened; this she killed without more ado, took flour and kneaded it and baked it without leaven, and so she gave Saul

¹ According to the Hebrew text, the end of this verse should run 'for fear they should betray him by saying, David did this or that. Such was David's policy all the time he lived in the Philistine country.'

² Hebrew usage would allow us to translate 'god' here instead of 'gods'.

and his men their meal. When they had eaten it they rose to go, and on they journeyed the whole night through.

29 So the Philistines marshalled their whole forces in Aphec, while Israel encamped by the spring at Jezrahel; at the head of their hundreds and their thousands the chiefs of the Philistines marched by, and at the rear, with Achis, were David and his men. And now the chiefs of the Philistines began asking what these Hebrews did there; Why, said Achis, you have surely heard of David, that was in the service of Saul, king of Israel? He has been with me a long time, more than a year now, and to this day, from the day when he first took refuge with me I have had no fault to find with him.¹ But the chiefs of the Philistines took it amiss; Let this fellow go home, they said, and remain at the post thou hast allotted to him. He must not march into battle at our side; who knows whether he will turn against us when once we are engaged? What other peace-offering can such a man bring to his old master but these heads of ours? It was of this David the dancers used to sing, By Saul's hand a thousand, by David's ten thousand fell.

So Achis sent for David, and said to him, As the Lord is a living God, I know thee for a good man and true; thy place is at my side in battle, and never to this day from the day when first thou camest to me have I had any fault to find with thee. But the chiefs look askance at thee; go home, then, and peace go with thee; it were well thou shouldst not cross the chiefs of the Philistines. Why, said David, what harm have I done, what fault hast thou to find with thy servant, ever since I first appeared in thy presence, that I should be forbidden to come out and fight against the enemies of my lord the king? Nay, answered Achis, I can vouch for it that to myself thou art welcome as an angel of God; but the chiefs of the Philistines have decreed, He shall not go to battle with us. Come then, march away to-morrow with all thy company; rise up at dawn, and begone with the morning light. So David and his men rose

up early on the morrow to march away and return to the Philistine country, while the Philistines went to the attack against Jezrahel.

30 When David and his men reached Siceleg, the next day but one, they found that the Amalecites from the south had attacked and overpowered it, and burnt it to the ground; the women, too, they had carried off. They did not put anyone to death, of high or low degree, but carried off all they found, and so went on their way. So David and his men, coming back to the city to find it burnt down, and their wives and sons and daughters taken prisoner, raised a great cry of lamentation, and wept till their tears would flow no more. David's two wives, Achinoam from Jezrahel and Abigail, Nabal's widow from Carmel, had been carried off like the rest, and his was a heavy lot to bear; his followers came near to stoning him, so sore were their hearts at the loss of son and daughter. But David found refuge in the Lord his God. Bring out the sacred mantle, he said to the priest Abiathar, Achimelech's son, and when Abiathar had brought it, he asked the Lord, Shall I give these freebooters chase? Is there hope of overtaking them? And the Lord said, Go in pursuit; past doubt thou wilt overtake them, and rob them of their prey.

So David and his six hundred followers marched all the way to the ravine of Besor, where some, for very weariness, must halt; but David himself still gave chase, with four hundred men at his back, leaving the other two hundred to rest from their weariness in the ravine of Besor. Then they came upon an Egyptian, out there on the plain, and brought him to David; but first they must give him bread and water, and part of a cake of dried figs, and two bunches of raisins; he must be restored and revived, after three days and three nights without food or drink. When David asked who he was, whence he came and whither he was bound, he said, I am a serving-man from Egypt; my master is an Amalecite; three days ago I fell sick, and he left me behind here. We had been making a foray over the

¹ 'A long time, more than a year now'; literally, 'days or years'. The statement in 27. 7 that David was in the Philistine country for four months may refer only to the time before he settled in Siceleg; or it may be that Achis here exaggerates, so as to make the other chiefs convinced of David's loyalty.

southern border of the Cherethites, against
 15 Juda, too, and the south of Caleb, and we
 burned Siceleg to the ground. Then David
 asked him, Canst thou shew me where to
 find the company of which thou speakest?
 First, said he, thou must needs swear to
 me in God's name that thou wilt neither
 kill me nor give me up into my master's
 power; then I will shew thee where this
 16 company is to be found. So David took the
 oath asked of him, and the Egyptian led
 him to where they lay, scattered pell-mell
 over the ground, eating and drinking and
 making holiday over their plunder, the
 17 spoils they had won from the Philistine
 country and from Juda. All the rest of that
 day and all the next David drove them
 before him, and not one man escaped,
 except four hundred drivers who mounted
 their camels and fled.

18 So David recovered all the Amalecites
 had carried off, and his two wives with the
 19 rest; never boy or girl or chattel was
 missing; all that had been carried away
 20 David brought back. And as he came
 home, driving before him all the sheep and
 cattle he had won, the cry rose, This is
 21 David's booty. So he reached the two
 hundred men that halted, too weary to
 follow, and were left behind in the ravine
 of Besor; and as they came out to meet him
 and his followers, David went up and gave
 22 them friendly greeting. But there were
 churlish, graceless fellows among his own
 following who reasoned thus: Here are
 men that did not bear us company; for
 them, then, no share in the booty we have
 recovered. Let each of them take his own
 wife and children, and with these go away
 23 content. Nay, brethren, David answered,
 that will not serve. All these gifts the Lord
 has given, besides protecting us and win-
 ning us the mastery over these marauding
 24 enemies. Over this you shall get no hear-
 ing; the man that stays behind with the
 baggage has the same rights as the man
 who went into battle, all must share alike.
 25 Ever since that day this rule has been
 recognized and established; it is the law
 still observed in Israel.

26 When David reached Siceleg, he sent
 presents to the elders of the neighbouring
 cities in Juda, bidding them accept his
 offering taken out of the spoil of the Lord's

enemies. These were Bethel, Ramoth in
 2 the South, Jether, Aroer, Sephamoth,
 2 Esthamo, Rachal, the cities of Jerameel,
 2 the cities of Ceni, Arama, the Hollow of
 3 Asan, Athach, and Hebron; and other
 3 places besides, where David and his men
 had once made their home.

31 Meanwhile, the Philistines had
 engaged Israel; and the Israelites
 fled at their onslaught, and were cut down
 on mount Gelboe as they fled. Ever harder
 the Philistines pressed on the retreat of
 Saul and of his sons, till at last his sons.
 Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchisua
 had fallen, and he himself bore the whole
 weight of the attack. The archers were fol-
 lowing close on his heels, and sorely the
 archers wounded him. Then Saul bade his
 own squire draw on him and kill him; he
 would not have uncircumcised foes kill
 him with outrage. And when the squire's
 heart failed him, so that he would not obey,
 Saul himself caught up a sword, and fell
 on it. Whereupon, seeing his master dead,
 the squire fell upon his own sword, and
 died with him. So perished Saul, and his
 three sons, and his squire, and all that
 army of his, in one day.

And now the Israelites who lived beyond
 the plain, beyond Jordan, when they saw
 Israel routed and Saul and his sons killed,
 abandoned their cities and took to flight,
 leaving the Philistines to come in and settle
 there. Next day, coming to plunder the
 slain, the Philistines found Saul and his
 three sons, where they lay on Mount Gel-
 boe, and they cut off Saul's head, and
 stripped him of his armour, and sent these
 from place to place in the Philistine coun-
 try, to publish the news in the temples of
 their gods, and among their people. His
 1 arms they dedicated in the temple of
 1 Astaroth, and hung up his body on the
 walls of Bethsan. But the folk of Jabes-
 1 Galaad came to hear of what the Philistines
 had done to Saul; whereupon all their
 1 fighting men went out, marching all
 through the night, and took down his body
 and the bodies of his sons from the wall of
 Bethsan; reaching Jabes-Galaad, they
 burned them there, and carried off their
 bones to burial in the wood of Jabes. And
 they fasted seven days to lament him.

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS

SOMETIMES CALLED THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL

SAUL was already dead when David came back from routing Amalec, and spent two days in Siceleg; then, on the third day, a man from Saul's army came in view, his garments torn, his head covered with dust, who, upon sight of David, bowed down to earth and did reverence. Whence comest thou? David asked, and on learning that he had made his way there from the Israelite army, Tell me, how went the day? We were routed, said he, in the battle, and many of the common folk fell slain; worse yet, Saul and his son Jonathan are among the dead. What proof hast thou, David asked the messenger, that Saul and Jonathan were slain? I chanced, said he, to reach mount Gelboe, and there I found Saul, leaning on his spear. Chariots and horsemen were in close pursuit, and he turned to look behind him; saw, and hailed me, and learned I was ready at his command; asked who I was, and learned that I was an Amalecite. Then he said, Stand close, and give me my death-blow; the toils are closing round me, and I am a whole man yet. So I stood close, and dealt the blow, knowing well that there could be no life for him after his fall; then I took the crown from his head and the bracelet from his arm, and here I bring them to my lord. At that, David rent his garments, and so did all the men who were with him; mourned they and wept, and fasted till evening came, for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the Lord's people, men of Israel's race, that lay fallen in battle.

And now David asked the messenger, Whence is it thou comest? My father, he answered, was an alien, a man of Amalec. And wast thou not afraid, said David, to lay hands on the king the Lord had anointed, and slay him? Then he bade one of his men go up and make an end of the

Amalecite, and when the blow had fallen, said over his dead body, Thou hast brought death on thy own head, by owning thyself the murderer of an anointed king.

This is the lament David made over Saul and his son Jonathan, and would have this lament of his, The Bow, taught to the sons of Juda;¹ the words of it are to be found in the Book of the Upright. Remember, Israel, the dead, wounded on thy heights, the flower of Israel, cut down on thy mountains; how fell they, warriors such as these? Keep the secret in Geth, never a word in the streets of Ascalon; shall the women-folk rejoice, shall they triumph, daughters of the Philistine, the uncircumcised? Mountains of Gelboe, never dew, never rain fall upon you, never from your lands be offering made of first-fruits; there the warrior's shield lies dishonoured, the shield of Saul, bright with oil no more. Where the blood of slain men, the flesh of warriors beckoned, never the bow of Jonathan hung back, never the sword of Saul went empty from the feast. Saul and Jonathan, so well beloved, so beautiful; death no more than life could part them; never was eagle so swift, never was lion so strong. Lament, daughters of Israel, lament for Saul, the man who dressed you bravely in scarlet, who decked your apparel out with trinkets of gold. How fell they, warriors such as these, in the battle? On thy heights, Gelboe, Jonathan lies slain.² Shall I not mourn for thee, Jonathan my brother, so beautiful, so well beloved, beyond all love of women? Never woman loved her only son, as I thee.³ How fell such warriors, what could blunt such swords as these?

2 After this David asked counsel from the Lord, whether he should remove

¹ And would have this lament of his, The Bow, taught to the sons of Juda; literally, according to the Hebrew text, 'and he said to teach the sons of Juda the bow'. ² The word 'Gelboe' is not in the original, but some such addition would seem necessary to the sense. ³ The last nine words of this verse are not in the Hebrew text, nor in the Septuagint Greek.

into one of the cities of Juda. When the Lord bade him remove, he asked, Into which of them? And the answer came, To Hebron. So thither David took his two wives, Achinoam from Jezrahel and Abigail that had been wife to Nabal at Carmel; thither, too, went the men who followed him, each with his own household, settling in the townships that belonged to Hebron. There the men of Juda came to him, and anointed him king over the line of Juda. And when David heard how the men of Jabes-Galaad had given Saul burial, he sent messengers to say, The Lord's blessing on you, for the faithfulness you have shewn to Saul, your master, in thus burying him; may the Lord make return to you for your loyalty and kindness! I too will prove myself grateful for it. Strong be those arms of yours, keep your courage high; now that you no longer have Saul to rule over you, the tribe of Juda has anointed me to be its king.

But meanwhile Abner the son of Ner, who was in command of the army, brought Isboseth forward, Saul's remaining son, and gave him a royal progress through the camp; setting him up as king of Galaad and Gessuri and Jezrahel and Ephraim and Benjamin and all the rest of Israel. Isboseth, heir to king Saul, was forty years old when his reign over Israel began, and it lasted two years; David had no following except the tribe of Juda, and as king of Juda, for seven and a half years, he reigned at Hebron.

And now they offered battle from their camp at Gabaon, Abner son of Ner and the men that recognized Isboseth as heir to king Saul; and by the pool at Gabaon the army of David went out to meet them, under Joab son of Sarvia. So they met, and confronted one another on opposite sides of the pool. Thereupon Abner proposed to Joab that champions should come forward and make trial of arms, and to this Joab agreed. Come forward they did, twelve men that acknowledged Isboseth as the heir of Saul, and twelve followers of David, and met one another. Each caught his man by the head and thrust his sword deep, and together they fell slain; there in the field by Gabaon which has taken its

Death of Asael, and Pursuit of Abner

name from them, the Field of the Champions.

It was a fierce battle that raged that day, and David's men routed Abner and the Israelites. Two sons of Sarvia besides Joab were fighting, Abisai and Asael; Asael, swift of foot as any wild roe. And this Asael gave chase to Abner, following him still without swerving to right or left; till at last Abner looked behind him, and asked if he were Asael. When he learned that it was so, he warned him, Why then, turn aside this way or that, overtake one of my men, and from him secure thy spoils. But still Asael would not give up the pursuit, and again Abner warned him, Turn back, and follow me no more; must I strike thee down, and never again look thy brother Joab in the face? At last, finding that he would not listen to him and never turned aside, Abner, with a backward thrust of his spear, smote him through the groin. There and then he fell dead; and none that came up behind him ventured beyond the place where Asael died.

But meanwhile Joab and Abisai were in pursuit of Abner. When the sun set, they had reached the Hill of the Aqueduct, that lies on the side of the ravine opposite the desert road to Gabaon. All the men of Benjamin had rallied to Abner, and there they stood gathered in one mass, with one hill-top to defend. And now Abner cried out to Joab, Is there no glutting that sword of thine? Hast thou never heard that desperate men are dangerous? Call off thy men, before it is too late, from the pursuit of their own brethren. As the Lord is a living God, Joab answered, hadst thou only spoken, my men would have let their brethren alone while it was still morning. With that, he sounded his trumpet, and all his army halted; there was no more pursuit of Israel, no more fighting. All that night Abner and his men marched over the plain, crossed the Jordan, and made their way along Beth-horon to their camp.¹ When Joab returned after abandoning the pursuit, he called the roll and found only nineteen of David's men missing, besides Asael; whereas the toll they had taken of Benjamin and the rest of Abner's forces was three hundred and

¹ 'Along Beth-horon to their camp'; rather, according to the Hebrew text, 'along the ravine to Mahanaim'. We do not hear of any Beth-horon east of the Jordan.

12 sixty dead. Asael they bore off, and gave him burial in his father's tomb at Bethlehem; then they too, Joab and his army, marched all through the night, and reached Hebron as dawn was breaking.

3 It was a long struggle between Saul's line and David's; but ever the fortunes and power of David grew, while the cause of Saul became daily weaker. Six sons were born to David, there in Hebron; Amnon, his first-born, by Achinoam of Jezrahel, then Cheleab, by Abigail, that had been Nabal's wife at Carmel, then Absalom, by Maacha, daughter to Tholmai, king of Gessur. The fourth was Adonias, son of Haggith, the fifth Saphathia, son of Abital, the sixth Jethraam, that David's wife Eglah bore him; of all these Hebron was the birth-place.

16 As long as war lasted between the two dynasties, Abner the son of Ner was the head of Saul's party. But Saul had left a concubine, Respha the daughter of Aia; and of her Isboeth said to Abner, What wouldst thou mate with my father's concubine? And he, greatly angered by Isboeth's words, cried out, I have made all Juda shun me like a carrion-dog, by befriending the line of thy father Saul, his kindred and his court, instead of giving thee up to David; and am I to be called to
19 account this day over a woman? God punish Abner as he deserves and more than he deserves, if I do not fulfil the promise which the Lord made to David; the kingship shall be taken away from Saul's line, and David shall reign over Israel and Juda alike, from Dan to Bersabee! Never a word did Isboeth say in answer, so greatly did he fear him.

22 Then Abner sent a message to David, claiming that the land lay in his own power; League thyself with me, the message ran, and I will help thee, and reduce
3 all Israel to thy obedience. And David answered, Well said; I am ready to make a league with thee, but one thing first. Thou canst not be admitted to my presence unless thou bringest Michol, Saul's daughter, with thee; so only shalt thou find
4 audience. At the same time, he sent a message to Isboeth, that was heir to king Saul, Give me back my wife Michol, the bride I won with the foreskins of a hundred

Philistines. So Isboeth sent and had her
15 taken away from her husband Phaltiel, son of Lais, who followed her, weeping, all
16 the way to Bahurim. But Abner bade him turn and go back, and go back he did. Meanwhile, Abner sent the word round
17 among the elders of Israel, It was but yesterday you were eager to have David for your king. It is time now, to fulfil the
18 promise the Lord made to David; by David's hand I will rid my people Israel of the Philistines, and of all their enemies. Even among the men of Benjamin Abner
19 sent the word out. Then he went to tell David, at Hebron, of the resolve made by Israel, and by the tribe of Benjamin at large. He came to Hebron with twenty
20 men, and there David made a feast for him and his companions. And now, said Abner, I will go and rally all Israel to thy
21 cause, my lord king. By this league of ours, they shall be thy subjects, loyal to thy will. So David took leave of him, and he went on his way in peace.

Soon David's men, with Joab at their
22 head, came home from an attack on the freebooters, loaded with spoil. They did not find Abner in Hebron; David had but now sent him on his way in peace; they
23 came too late, Joab and his men. But Joab was told how Abner, son of Ner, had visited the king, and of their friendly
parting; so he went at once into the royal
24 presence, and cried, What is this? Abner with thee, and thou hast let him slip through thy hands, gone, free as air! Dost thou
25 know Abner so little? He did but come here to play thee false, spying upon thy comings and goings, learning of all thou dost. And Joab left the royal presence
26 to send messengers after Abner, summoning him back, without David's knowledge, from the Pool of Sira. No sooner had
27 Abner come back to Hebron than Joab took him aside, there in the gates, under pretence of speaking with him, and smote him in the groin, avenging by that death the death of his brother Asael. It was
28 all over when David heard of it, and he cried, Never shall I or my kingdom be held answerable for Abner's death! On Joab's head let the guilt fall, and on
29 all his line; let the line of Joab never want a man that has a running at the reins, or is a leper, or works at the distaff

like a woman, or falls in battle, or begs his bread.¹

- 30 Thus Joab and his brother Abisai murdered Abner, who had slain their brother
31 Asael in the fighting at Gabaon. As for David, he bade Joab and his men tear their garments and put on sackcloth, and go mourning at Abner's funeral; he himself
32 followed the bier, and wept aloud over Abner's tomb at Hebron, where they buried him; all the people, too, were in
33 tears. And this was the dirge with which he lamented him: Died Abner as the igno-
34 noble die?² No bond tied thy hands, no gyves thy feet; thou didst fall as men fall when cruel wrong assails them. And all the people took up the refrain as they
35 mourned. Then, while it was still full day, they came together to eat, and would have David eat with them; but he took an oath, The Lord punish me as I deserve, and more than I deserve, if I taste bread or any
36 other food before set of sun! This all the folk heard, and more than ever they ap-
37 plauded the king's doings; among all that multitude, and in all Israel, there was not a man that blamed David for the slaying of
38 Abner, son of Ner. Past all doubt, said the king to his servants, Israel has lost, this
39 day, the greatest of its chieftains. Alas, they have anointed a weakling to be their king; not mine to curb these sons of Sarvia. May the Lord punish the wrong-doer for the wrong done!

4 When Isboseth, Saul's heir, heard news of Abner's death at Hebron, he was a broken man, and all Israel was in confusion. In command of his army, when they went out on forays, were two Berothites from Benjamin, named Baana and Rechab, sons of Remmon; Beroth counted as part of Benjamin, but these Berothites were exiles, and lived in Gethaim ever after. For heir, he had a grandson of Saul by Jonathan, a lame-footed boy;³ he was

five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezrahel, and his nurse carried him off to safety, but in the hurry of the flight he fell and was lamed; he was called Miphiboseth.

And now Baana and Rechab, sons of Remmon the Berothite, entered Isboseth's house when the sun was at its full heat; Isboseth himself was abed, taking his noon-day sleep, and the woman that kept the door had fallen asleep too over the corn she was cleaning. (Taking ears of corn with them, Rechab and Baana made their way in secretly, and smote him in the groin, and made good their escape.⁴) When they had made their way in, they found him there in his own room, asleep on the bed, and despatched him with blows; then they cut off his head, and journeyed with it across the desert road all night. So they brought the head of Isboseth to David at Hebron; See, they told him, here is the head of Isboseth, the heir of Saul, that was thy mortal enemy; the Lord has revenged our royal master this day upon Saul and his race.

But this was the answer David made to Rechab and his brother Baana, sons of Remmon: As the Lord, my rescuer from all peril, is a living God, you shall repent it!⁵ There was one came to me at Siceleg and told me of Saul's death, thinking to bring me good news; and his reward was then and there to be seized and slain. And here are wretches that have murdered an innocent man in his own home, as he lay asleep; do you think I will not exact blood-vengeance from you, rid the land of you? So David ordered his men to kill them and cut off their hands and feet; the bodies were hung up over the fish-pond at Hebron. As for the head of Isboseth, it was carried away, and buried in Abner's grave.

5 After this, all the tribes of Israel rallied to David at Hebron; We are kith and kin of thine, they said. It is not

¹ 'Works at the distaff like a woman'; some understand the Hebrew text as meaning 'leaning on a staff'; that is, a cripple.

² 'The ignoble'; the Latin word used here may mean either 'idle' or 'cowardly'. The corresponding word in the Hebrew text has the sense of recklessness, and usually implies defiance of the Divine law.

³ 'For heir, he had a grandson' in the original simply 'there was a grandson', but the implication seems to be that he was the next in succession to the throne, cf. 21. 7 below.

⁴ No satisfactory explanation has been given of the part played by the ears of corn; some think the whole verse is a note which has crept into the text by error, with the result that Isboseth's murder is described twice over. The Hebrew text contains no mention of the door-keeper; the Septuagint Greek no reference to the ears of corn carried by the murderers.

⁵ 'You shall repent it': these words, though not in the original, have been inserted in order to break up an unmanageably long sentence, which includes the whole of verses 10 and 11.

so long since Israel marched under thy orders, when Saul was still reigning; and the Lord has promised thee that thou shouldst be its shepherd and its captain.

3 And so the elders of Israel went to his court at Hebron; and there, at Hebron, in the Lord's presence, David made a covenant with them, and they anointed him king of Israel. He was thirty years old when his reign began, and it lasted forty

4 years; for seven and a half years over Juda only, with its capital at Hebron, then for thirty-three more years over Israel and Juda both, with its capital at Jerusalem.

6 When the king and his army marched on Jerusalem, to attack the Jebusites, that were native to the soil, they met him with the taunt, Thou must rid thyself of blind men and lame, before thou canst make thy way in here, meaning that David would

7 never make his way in; but take it he did, the Citadel of Sion that is called David's

8 Keep. He had promised a reward to the conqueror of the Jebusites, to the man who should reach the gutters of the roofs, and clear them of the blind and lame (as he called them) that were David's enemies. That was how the saying arose, No entry into the precincts for the blind and the lame.¹

9 And now he made his dwelling in the Citadel, and called it David's Keep; he built walls round it, too, with Mello for their outer bastion. So he went on, prospering and gaining in strength, and the

10 Lord God of hosts was with him. Hiram too, king of Tyre, sent messengers offering him cedar planks and carpenters, and stone-masons for the walls; and they built

2 David's house for him. No doubt could David have that the Lord had ratified his sovereignty over Israel, and made him the

3 king of a great people. So, when he removed from Hebron to Jerusalem, he provided himself with fresh wives and concubines there, and more sons and

4 daughters were born to him; Jerusalem was the birth-place of Samua, Sobab,

Nathan, Solomon, Jebahar, Elisua, Nepheg, Japhia, Elisama, Elioda and Eliphaleth.

When news reached the Philistines that David had been anointed as king of all Israel, they mustered their forces to hunt him down. David, hearing of it, withdrew into his stronghold, while the Philistines came in and occupied the whole valley of Raphaim. Thereupon David consulted the Lord; should he attack the Philistines? Would he be given the mastery? And he was bidden to go to the attack; the Philistines would be at his mercy. So David marched out to Baal-Pharasim, and defeated them there; The Lord has parted the enemy's ranks before me, he said, as easily as water parts this way and that; so the place came by its name, Baal-Pharasim, The Master of the Breach. They left their idols behind them there, and these fell into the hands of David and his men. But once more the Philistines came to attack, and occupied the Raphaim valley; and this time, when David asked whether he might attack them with good hope of mastering them, the answer was, Do not go to the attack, circumvent them and come upon them from the direction of the pear-trees yonder. Wait till thou hearest, in the tops of the pear-trees, the sound of marching feet; then offer battle; it is a sign that the Lord will pass on before thee, to smite down the army of the Philistines. So David did as the Lord had bidden him; and he drove the Philistines before him all the way from Gabaa to Gezer.

6 Then David mustered anew the fighting men of Israel, thirty thousand strong.

Meanwhile, he set out with the men of Juda that followed him, and went to fetch the ark of God home; that ark which takes its name from the Lord God of hosts, dwelling there above it between the cherubim. And they carried the ark away from Abinadab's house at Gabaa, putting it on

¹ The sense of these verses is much disputed, and some think the text has suffered from corruption. As it stands, the meaning seems to be that David had, in the first instance, described the Jebusites contemptuously as blind men, to be torn from their battlements. The Jebusites retorted (verse 7) by telling David that he would not make his way in until he had rid himself of blind and lame men; by which it seems they meant his own troops, since we are told at the end of verse 8, 'That is why they said, The blind and the lame shall not make their way into the house'. The Latin version treats the remark as a proverbial saying, and gives 'temple' instead of 'house'; but the Hebrew text does not necessarily imply this. Some think the reference in verse 8 is not to a gutter, but to a conduit controlling the water-supply of the city.

a newly-made waggon, with Abinadab's
 4 sons, Oza and Ahio, for its drivers. He it
 was had had charge of it, there in Gabaa,
 till now; but now they took it away from
 his house, with Ahio walking before it,
 5 while David and the Israelites played
 music, there in the Lord's presence, on
 instruments of rare workmanship, harp
 and zither and tambour and castanets and
 6 cymbals. They had reached the threshing-
 floor of Nachon, when the oxen began to
 kick and tilted the ark to one side; where-
 upon Oza put out his hand and caught hold
 7 of it. Rash deed of his, that provoked the
 divine anger; the Lord smote him, and he
 died there beside the ark. Great grief it
 8 was to David, this ruin the Lord had
 brought on Oza (the place is still called
 9 Oza's Ruin), and a dread of the Lord came
 upon him that day; How shall I, he asked,
 10 give shelter to the Lord's ark? No longer
 was he minded to give it a lodging in
 David's Keep; it must find a home with
 Obededom the Gethite instead.

11 For three months the ark of the Lord
 was left with Obededom the Gethite, and
 brought a blessing on him and his house-
 12 hold. Then word was brought to David
 how the Lord had blessed Obededom and
 all that was his for the ark's sake. So back
 he went, and brought the ark of God away
 from Obededom's house, into David's
 Keep, with great rejoicing; seven choirs
 of dancers he took with him, and a young
 13 bull for a victim.¹ No sooner had the
 bearers of the ark gone six paces on their
 journey, than he sacrificed the bull and a
 14 ram with it. As for himself, he went
 dancing with all his might, there in the
 Lord's presence; clad in the sacred mantle,
 15 he must dance too. So David, and Israel
 with him, brought back the ark that bears
 record of the Lord's covenant, with re-
 16 joicing and a great din of trumpets. And
 as it came into David's Keep, there was
 Michol, Saul's daughter, looking on from
 her window; she saw king David leaping
 and dancing in the Lord's presence, and
 her heart despised him.

17 When the ark had been brought into the
 city, they put it down at the appointed
 place, in the midst of a tabernacle which
 David had there spread out for it; and

David brought burnt-sacrifices and wel-
 come-offerings into the Lord's presence
 there. Then, when his offering was done,
 18 he blessed the people in the name of the
 Lord of hosts, and gave to every Israelite,
 19 man or woman, a roll of bread and a piece
 of roast beef and a flour cake fried in oil;²
 and with that, the people dispersed to their
 homes. David himself, going back to bless
 20 his own household, was met by Michol,
 Saul's daughter. A day of great renown,
 she said, for the king of Israel, that exposed
 his person to man and maid, his own sub-
 jects, graceless as a common mountebank!
 Nay, answered David, it was at the Lord's
 21 coming. He it is that has chosen me,
 instead of thy father or any of thy father's
 line, to rule the Lord's people of Israel;
 and before his coming play the mounte-
 22 bank I will; humble myself I will in my
 own esteem, and those maids thou speakest
 of will honour me yet the more. And
 23 Michol, that was daughter to king Saul,
 never bore child again to the day of her
 death.

7 The king had now a palace of his own
 to dwell in, and the Lord kept him
 safe, on every side, from all his enemies.
 Whereupon he said to the prophet Nathan,
 Here am I dwelling in a house all of cedar,
 while God's ark has nothing better than
 curtains of hide about it! And Nathan
 answered, Go thy own way, fulfil thy own
 purpose; the Lord is with thee. But that
 same night the divine word came to Na-
 than, Go and give my servant David a
 message from the Lord: Dost thou think to
 build a house for me to dwell in? House
 was never mine, since I rescued the sons
 of Israel from Egypt; still in a tabernacle,
 a wanderer's home, I came and went. This
 way and that the whole race of Israel jour-
 neyed, and I with them; now to this tribe,
 now to that, I gave the leadership of the rest,
 and never did I reproach any of them for
 not building me a house of cedar.

This message, then, thou wilt give to my
 servant David from the Lord of hosts: Out
 in the pasture-lands, where thou wast
 tending the sheep, I summoned thee away
 to bear rule over my people Israel; go
 where thou wouldst, I was ever at thy side.

¹ The last fifteen words of verse 12 are wanting in the Hebrew text; the whole of verse 13 in the Septuagint Greek. ² 'A flour cake fried in oil'; according to the Hebrew text 'a cake of raisins'.

exterminating thy enemies to make room for thee, granting thee such renown as only comes to the greatest on earth. Henceforth my people are to have a settled home, taking root in it and remaining in undisturbed possession of it, no longer harassed by godless neighbours, as they have been ever since I first gave Israel judges to rule them. No longer shall thy enemies trouble thee; and this too the Lord promises, that he will grant thy line continuance. So, when thy days are ended, and thou art laid to rest beside thy fathers, I will grant thee for successor a son of thy own body, established firmly on his throne. He it is that shall build a house to do my name honour. I will prolong for ever his royal dynasty; he shall find in me a father, and I in him a son. If he plays me false, be sure I will punish him; ever for man the rod, ever for Adam's sons the plagues of mortality; but I will not cancel my merciful promise to him, as I cancelled my promise to Saul, the king that was banished from my favour. Through the ages, far as thy thought can reach, dynasty and royalty both shall endure; thy throne shall remain for ever unshaken.

All this message, all this revelation, was handed on by Nathan to king David. And David went into the Lord's presence, and betook himself to prayer; Lord God, he said, that one such as I am, sprung from such a house as mine, should have been brought by thee to such power! But it was not enough, Lord God, thou wouldst do more; thou wouldst foretell the destiny of thy servant's line in days far hence; Lord God, can mortal man claim such rights? No words can thy servant David find; such divine mercy thou showest him. In fulfilment of thy promise, in pursuance of thy will, thou dost bring about all these marvels which thou hast made known to thy servant. So great thou art, Lord God! None is like thee, thou alone art God, read the history of past days aright. Can any other nation say, like thy people Israel, that its God came to buy it back for himself as

his own people, winning such renown for himself, doing such deeds of wonder and dread against any country, and its people, and its god, as thou didst when thou didst buy back thy people from Egypt? So didst thou pledge this people of Israel to be thy people eternally, and thou, Lord God, didst become their God.

This promise, then, Lord God, which thou hast made concerning thy servant and his line, do thou for ever fulfil; make thy word good, that so thy name may be for ever glorified, the Lord of hosts that is God of Israel; under thy divine care may the dynasty of thy servant David remain unshaken. Lord of hosts, God of Israel, thou hast given me secret knowledge of thy will, promised me a long posterity; what wonder that thy servant finds his heart full of such prayers as these? So be it, Lord God; thou art God, and thy word is ever faithful; since blessing thou hast promised to thy servant, blessing on his line bestow, and keep it always under thy protection. Thou, Lord God, hast spoken, and through this blessing of thine my race shall be blessed for ever.

After this, David defeated the Philistines and brought their pride low; wrested from them, too, their claim to exact tribute. He also defeated the Moabites, and measured out their fate to them by lot, bringing them down to the dust; life and death were the two lots he measured out to them; and Moab became tributary to king David. He defeated Adarezer, son of Rohob, king of Soba, that marched out to extend his domains beyond the river Euphrates; seventeen hundred horsemen he took alive, and twenty thousand that fought on foot, and cut the hamstring of the horses, but kept a hundred teams for himself. When the Syrians of Damascus came out to reinforce Adarezer, king of Soba, David routed their army of twenty-two thousand, and put a garrison of his own in the Damascus region of Syria, which became tributary to him.

¹ 'Can mortal man claim such rights?'; it seems necessary to take these words (literally, 'This is the law of Adam') as a question, in order to make them correspond with I Par. 17, 17, where the same thought is otherwise expressed.

² The Hebrew text here is involved (possibly through corruption), and the Latin version hardly less so, but the general sense is clearly that given above.

³ The Hebrew text here is usually understood as meaning that David 'cradled them on the ground' and actually measured them with a rope, but the expression, like the procedure supposed, seems improbable. The language of the Latin version suggests that it understood the word 'rope' metaphorically, as in Ps. 15. 6.

Undertake what enterprise he would, ever the Lord protected him.

7 All the golden trappings, which Adarezer's men wore, David carried off and brought to Jerusalem; from Bete, too, and Beroth, cities in Adarezer's dominion, he carried away great stores of bronze. When the news of this victory over Adarezer's forces reached Thou, king of Emath, he sent his son Joram to greet David and wish him well, out of gratitude for the conquest and rout of Adarezer, who was Thou's enemy; and this Joram brought presents with him, of gold and silver and bronze, which king David consecrated to the Lord, together with all the silver and gold he had set apart from the spoils of the conquered nations, Syria, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, Amalec, and now Adarezer, son of Rohob, king of Soba.

13 David won renown, too, on his way back from the conquest of Syria, by defeating eighteen thousand men in the Valley of the Salt-pits; after this he kept troops in Edom to garrison it, and the whole of Edom became subject to him. And still the Lord protected David in all his enterprises. The whole of Israel was under his rule, and to all his people he administered justice and gave award. His army was commanded by Joab, son of Sarvia, and Josaphat, son of Ahilud, kept the records; the priests were Sadoc, son of Achitob, and Achimelech, son of Abiathar, and Saraias was secretary; 18 Banaias, son of Joiada, was at the head of the Cerethites and Phelethites, and David's sons, too, were his ministers.¹

9 Meanwhile the thought came to David, whether there were any of Saul's line left, so that he could shew them kindness in memory of Jonathan. There was a serving-man left over from Saul's household, whose name was Siba; David now sent for him. Art thou Siba? he asked. And ready at thy command, the other answered. Tell me, said the king, has Saul left any descendant alive, to whom I can shew the friendship God requires of me? Why yes, answered Siba, there is a son of Jonathan that is lame-footed; and when David asked where he might be found, he told him, At the house of Machir, son of

Ammiel, at Lodabar. So from the house of Machir, son of Ammiel, at Lodabar, David had him brought, Miphiboseh, son of Jonathan, that was the son of Saul. He came into David's presence, and bowed low to do him reverence; and when David called him by name, he answered, I am here at thy command. Do not be afraid, David said; I mean to shew thee friendship for the sake of Jonathan, that was thy father, and restore to thee all the lands which belong to thee as Saul's heir; and evermore thou shalt sit down to eat at my table. And the other said, bowing low. Wouldst thou concern thyself with such a man as I am, no better than a dead dog?

Then the king sent to fetch Siba, that had been serving-man to Saul. All that belonged to Saul, he told him, all the household that once was his, I have given to thy master's heir. Do thou, then, and thy sons, and the servants under thee, till the lands for him, and bring in its revenues to maintain him. He, Miphiboseh, thy master's heir, shall evermore sit down to eat at my table. This Siba had fifteen sons, and twenty servants under him, and he told David, My lord king, I am at thy service to do thy bidding. So Miphiboseh ate at the king's table, as if he had been one of the king's own sons. He had, too, a little son of his own, called Micha. Thus Siba and his household worked for Miphiboseh, while he himself lived at Jerusalem, eating ever at the king's table; a lame man, lame of either foot.

10 When the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanon succeeded him, David thought to himself, I will shew friendliness to Hanon, as his father Naas did to me; and he dispatched envoys to condole with him over his father's death. But when these reached the Ammonite country, the chiefs there said to Hanon, their sovereign, What. David send messengers to comfort thee, in honour of thy father's memory? Nay, if he has sent men here, they are spies who will make a report on the city, so that he may come and destroy it. So Hanon seized David's messengers, shaved their beards on one side, and cut off the skirts of their

¹ 'Ministers'; the word ordinarily means 'priests', but is understood by most authors, here and in certain other contexts, to mean court officials of some kind.

clothes right up to the buttocks, and in that
 5 guise sent them back. David, when he
 heard of this, sent out to meet them,
 covered with confusion as they were, and
 bade them wait in Jericho, not returning
 home until their beards were grown again.

6 Meanwhile the Ammonites, well aware
 that they had made an enemy of David,
 sent and hired mercenaries from the
 Syrians of Rohob and the Syrians of Soba,
 twenty thousand men that marched on
 foot; a thousand, too, from the king of
 Maacha, and twelve thousand from Istob.

7 Upon hearing this news, David sent the
 whole of his forces to engage them, under

8 Joab. The Ammonites themselves had
 come out from the city, and drawn up their
 line at the approaches to its gates; the
 Syrians from Soba, Rohob, Istob and
 Maacha were at a distance, out in the open
 9 country; and Joab saw that he must fight
 one enemy in front while another was
 ready to take him in the rear. So he chose
 the best of his troops and led them against
 10 the Syrians, leaving the rest, under his
 brother Abisai, to face the Ammonites.

11 Bring me aid, said Joab, if the Syrians are
 too strong for me, and I, if the Ammonites
 have the mastery, will bring aid to thee
 12 instead. Play the man, fight we valiantly
 for our people, and for the city walls that
 are sacred to our God; the Lord's will be
 13 done. So Joab and his men engaged the
 Syrians, who were routed by his first on-
 14 slaught, and the Ammonites, when they
 saw the Syrians in full flight, gave way in
 their turn before the onslaught of Abisai,
 retreating into the city. After this, Joab
 went back from the Ammonite country to
 Jerusalem.

15 Thus defeated, the Syrians mustered
 the whole of their army, and Adarezer sent
 for those others of their race who lived on
 the further side of the river to reinforce
 him, putting his general, Sobach, in com-
 17 mand of them. David, as soon as he heard
 the news, mustered the whole forces of
 Israel, and marched across the Jordan to
 Helam. There the Syrians drew up their
 forces to meet him, and gave battle; but
 the Israelites routed them, and David won
 18 the victory. Seven hundred chariots Syria
 lost that day, and four thousand horse-
 men; Sobach, too, their general, was
 wounded and died on the field of battle.

And now all the other kings who were
 19 vassals of Adarezer saw that they were no
 match for Israel; their troops lost heart
 and fled, fifty-eight thousand of them, at
 the enemy's approach. So they made
 peace with the Israelites and became their
 subjects; and no more was heard of the
 Syrians bringing aid to the men of
 Ammon.

11 And now spring returned, the
 time when kings march out to
 battle; and David sent Joab, with other
 servants of his and the whole army of
 Israel, to lay waste the Ammonite country
 and besiege Rabba, while he himself re-
 mained at Jerusalem. One day, he had
 2 risen from his midday rest, and was walk-
 ing on the roof of his palace, when he saw
 a woman come up to bathe on the roof of
 a house opposite, a woman of rare beauty.
 So the king sent to enquire who she was,
 3 and was told that it was Bethsabee, Eliam's
 daughter, wife to Urias the Hethite.
 Thereupon he sent messengers to bring
 4 her to him; she came, and he mated with
 her, and as soon as she was cleansed from
 her defilement, back she went to her home.
 Then, finding she had conceived, she sent
 5 the news of her conception to David.

Therewith came a message to Joab,
 6 summoning Urias the Hethite to David's
 presence. So Joab sent him; and David,
 7 when Urias reached him, asked whether
 all was well with Joab and the army, and
 how the fighting went; then he bade him
 8 go back home and wash the dust from his
 feet. So Urias left the palace, and the king
 sent food after him from the royal table;
 but Urias slept the night at the palace gate
 9 among his master's attendants; go home
 he would not. Then David, learning from
 common talk that Urias had not gone
 home, said to him, Thou art newly come
 from a journey; why wouldst thou not go
 back to thy house? What, answered Urias,
 11 here are the ark of God and all Israel and
 all Juda encamped in tents, here are my
 lord Joab and all those other servants of
 my master sleeping on the hard ground;
 should I go home, and eat, and drink, and
 bed with my wife? The Lord save thee
 and keep thee, never that! David bade
 12 him stay one day more; he would let him
 go on the morrow. That day and the next

13 Urias spent in Jerusalem, and ever he must eat and drink in the king's presence, till he was bemused with wine; but still, when he went out at night, he made his bed beside his master's attendants, and never returned to his home.

14 Next morning, David wrote a letter to Joab, which he despatched by Urias himself; and this was its purport, You are to find a place for Urias in the first line, where the fighting is bitterest; there leave him unaided, to die by the enemy's hands. So, when he next made an assault upon the city, Joab gave Urias the post where he knew the defenders were strongest; and some of these made a sally against Joab's men, killing Urias and other of David's men besides. Then Joab sent David a full account of the battle; and this was his word to the messenger who carried it: When thou hast finished giving the king the report of the battle, it may be he will shew indignation. Why did you go so close to the wall, he will ask, when you were attacking it? You must have known that weapons fall thick under the battlements. 21 How fell Abimelech, that was son to Jerobaal? Was it not a piece of mill-stone, thrown by a woman, that killed him, there at Thebes? Why did you go so close to the wall? Then let this be thy answer, Thy servant Urias the Hethite is among the dead.

22 So the messenger left him, and when he came into David's presence he gave him all Joab's message. The enemy were too strong for us, he told David; they sallied out to fight us in the open, so we went to the attack, and chased them back to the very gate of the city. But here the archers were shooting at us from the wall above, and many of the king's men fell; thy servant Urias the Hethite is among the dead. 25 Upon this, David sent him back with a message for Joab: Never be daunted by what has befallen; still uncertain are the chances of war; now one, now another, the sword claims for its prey. Hurl thy men ever more strongly against the city, and destroy it; bid them keep their courage high.

26 When Urias' wife heard that he was dead, she mourned for him; her mourning over, David sent and fetched her to his

palace, wedded her and had a son by her. But meanwhile David's act had earned the Lord's displeasure.

12 So it was that the Lord sent Nathan on an errand to David; and this was the message he brought him. There were two men that lived in the same town, one rich, one poor. The rich man had flocks and herds in great abundance; the poor man had nothing except one ewe-lamb which he had bought and reared, letting it grow up in his house like his own children, share his own food and drink, sleep in his bosom; it was like a daughter to him. The rich man was to entertain a friend, who was on his travels; and, to make a feast for this foreign guest, he would take no toll of his own flocks and herds; he robbed the poor man of the one lamb that was his, and welcomed the traveller with that. David, burning with indignation at the wrong, said to Nathan. As the Lord is a living God, death is the due of such a man as this; for this cruel deed of his, he shall make compensation fourfold. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.

Here is a message for thee, said he, from the Lord God of Israel: I anointed thee king of Israel, I saved thy life when Saul threatened it; I gave thee thy master's goods to enjoy, thy master's wives to cherish in thy bosom; all Israel and Juda are in thy power, and if that were not enough, more should be thine for the asking. And thou, wouldst thou defy the Lord's commandment, and do the wrong he hates, putting Urias the Hethite to the sword, so as to take his wife for thy own? The men of Ammon struck the blow, but thou art his murderer. For the wrong thou hast done in robbing Urias the Hethite of his wife, to make her thine, murder shall be the heirloom of thy own race. This is the Lord's message to thee: I mean to stir up rebellion against thee in thy own household; before thy very eyes take thy own wives from thee and give them to another, that shall bed them in the full light of yonder sun. Thou didst go to work secretly; when this threat of mine is fulfilled, all Israel and yonder sun shall witness it.

Then David said to Nathan, I have

¹ See Judges 9. 53.

sinned against the Lord; and Nathan answered, The Lord has given thy sin quit-
 4 tance, thou shalt not die for it. But thou
 hast brought on the Lord the contempt of
 his enemies,¹ and the son that has been
 5 born to thee is doomed to die. So Nathan
 went home, and now the little son Urias'
 wife had borne to David was struck down
 by the Lord, and no hope was left for him.
 6 David still interceded for him with the
 Lord, keeping strict fast and passing his
 7 nights on the ground; he would not hum-
 our his counsellors when they came and
 bade him rise to his feet again, nor would
 8 he take food with them. Then, after six
 days, the child died; and David's servants
 had not the courage to tell him it was so.
 If he would not listen to our remon-
 strances, they thought, while the child yet
 lived, what penance will he do when we
 9 tell him it is dead! But David, as he
 marked them whispering to one another,
 10 guessed what had befallen; The child is
 dead? he asked, and when he heard that it
 was, he rose from the ground, washed and
 anointed himself, changed his garments,
 and went into the Lord's house to do
 reverence there. Then he came back to his
 house, asked for food, and ate. And when
 his servants asked what his meaning was,
 that he should fast and lament over the
 child still living, rise up and take food once
 11 the child was dead, he answered, Fast and
 lament I would, for the child's sake, while
 he lived; It may be, I thought, the Lord
 12 will grant me his life. Now that he is dead,
 what need to fast? Can I bring him back
 from the grave? I shall go to be with him,
 13 he will not come back to me. Then David
 comforted his wife Bethsabee, and took
 her to his bed; and she bore him a son
 whom he called Solomon. Him the Lord
 14 loved, and sent word by the prophet
 Nathan that he was to be called The Lord's
 Favourite, in proof of his great love.
 15 Meanwhile, Joab was attacking Rab-
 bath, and took the royal quarter of it. Then
 he sent a message to David, I have been

attacking Rabbath, but the river-side part
 of the city remains yet to be won. Muster
 all the rest of thy army to attack the city
 and take it; I would not earn the credit of
 the victory by taking it myself.² So David,
 28 mustering all his forces, marched on Rab-
 bath and stormed it. He took the king's
 29 crown from his head, a crown of gold
 weighing a full talent, set with the rarest
 jewels, and wore it himself; ³ much plunder
 he carried off from the city besides. As for
 31 the people, he had them brought out and
 sawed in pieces, or crushed under iron
 chariots, or cut up with knives, or passed
 through a brick-kiln; and the same treat-
 ment he gave to all the cities of Ammon.
 Then David and his army returned to
 Jerusalem.⁴

13 A maid there was of rare beauty,
 called Tamar, sister to David's
 son Absalom; and it befell at this time that
 another of David's sons, Amnon, fell in
 love with her. Such was his longing that
 2 he pined away wanting her; how should
 he approach a maid unwed, to compass her
 dishonour? But he had a friend called
 3 Jonadab, son to Semmaa that was David's
 brother, a man of shrewd wits, that ex-
 postulated with him, Should a royal prince
 4 pine away, day in, day out, and not tell the
 reason? Then Amnon told him, I am in love
 with my brother Absalom's sister, Tamar.

Lie down on thy bed, Jonadab told him,
 5 and feign illness; then, when thy father
 visits thee, ask him to let thy sister Tamar
 come and tend thy wants, cook some
 dainty for thee, and give it thee with her
 own hand. So Amnon lay down, and
 6 feigned to fall sick, and said to the king,
 when he came to visit him, Pray send my
 sister Tamar to boil me two mouthfuls of
 gruel, here in my presence, and give them
 me with her own hand. So David sent
 7 word to Tamar's home, bidding her go to
 her brother Amnon's house and make
 gruel for him; and to her brother Amnon's
 8 house she went, to find him lying abed.

¹ The Hebrew text here should mean 'thou hast despised the enemies of the Lord'; some think it ran originally 'thou hast despised the Lord', and was altered by the Jewish copyists as an irreverence.

² The Hebrew text probably implies that Joab took the lower part of the city (by the river side); and wrote to tell David he had done so (calling it the 'royal' part of the city); David was to come and storm the citadel above.

³ According to the Hebrew text, it is possible to suppose that one very precious stone was set in the Ammonite crown, and that David transferred it to his own crown instead. The weight assigned to the crown itself, some sixty-five pounds, seems to preclude the possibility of its being actually worn.

⁴ The sense of this verse is obscure in the Hebrew text, and some think the Ammonites were not killed, but reduced to the position of slaves in iron-works and brick-kilns.

She took the flour and stirred it and boiled it, and when her cooking was done, she poured it out, and put it down beside him; but he refused to eat. Then Amnon would have all that were there leave his presence, and when all had left him, he bade her come into his room and give it to him with her own hand. So Tamar took the gruel and brought it into her brother Amnon's room; but when she held it out, he caught hold of his sister and would have her bed with him. Nay, brother, said she, do not force me to thy will; in all Israel, that were deemed great wrong. Forbear thy recklessness; else can I never shew my face, and all Israel will cry out on thy reckless folly. Ask me of the king for thy bride; he will not deny thee. But Amnon would not listen to her; he forced her to his will and so bedded her.

And now Amnon conceived a hatred of her that passed all measure; the love he once had for her could not compare with his hatred now; Up, he cried, and begone! Nay, said she, this is a greater wrong than the first wrong thou didst me, to drive me away thus. But he would not listen to her; he called to the serving-man that waited on him, and bade him thrust the woman out and shut the door on her. Clad in the long robe of a princess, she was thrust out, and the door was shut on her. Dust she sprinkled on her hair, tore the long robe, put her head between her hands, and went on her way in tears. So thy brother Amnon bedded thee? Absalom said to her. Keep silent for this while; he is thy brother. Do not eat thy heart out over it. So Tamar remained there in Absalom's house, pining away. Great sorrow had king David when the news came to him, but he would do nothing to cross his son Amnon, that he loved dearly; was he not his first-born? As for Absalom, he spoke no word to Amnon, fair or foul; so deeply did he hate him for dishonouring his sister Tamar.

Two years after, when it was shearing-time for Absalom's sheep at Baal-Hasor, by Ephraim, he would have all the king's sons there. But when he went to the king, and said, Thy servant's sheep are a-shearing, will not my lord king come to

the feast, and his servants with him? the king answered, Nay, my son, do not ask us all to come and be a burden to thee; nor would he consent, for all Absalom's pleading; he would only give him his blessing for the journey. Then at least, said Absalom, let my brother Amnon come with us, if thou wilt not. There is no need for that, David said, but at last Absalom had his way, and David sent Amnon and all the princes with him. It was a royal banquet Absalom prepared for them; but first he gave orders to his men, Wait till Amnon is bemused with wine; then, when I say Strike, slay him. Have no fear; you do but execute my orders; take heart, and shew yourselves men of mettle. So Absalom's servants did his bidding on Amnon; and all the rest of the princes mounted on their mules and fled.

While they were still on their way, the story reached David that Absalom had slain all the princes, and not one had escaped with his life. At that the king rose up, and tore his garments, and cast himself down on the ground; and his servants tore their garments, all that stood by waiting on him. Only Jonadab, son of Semmaa that was David's brother, would have none of it; Do not believe, my lord King, he said, that all the princes have been killed; Amnon is dead, but only he. His name was ever on Absalom's lips, since the day of his sister Tamar's dishonouring. Never burden thy heart, my lord king, with the fancy that all are dead; it is only Amnon.

Absalom betook himself to flight. Meanwhile, a servant that was on the watch looked out and saw a throng of men coming down by an unfrequented path on the mountain-side; whereupon Jonadab said to the king, It is the princes that are coming; thy servant was in the right. And indeed, as soon as he had finished speaking, the princes came in view, and loud they wept as they came; the king, too, and all his servants made great lament. Absalom took refuge with Tholomai, son of Ammiud king of Gessur; and David all the while went on mourning for his son. Three years Absalom spent at Gessur as a fugitive; then David gave up the quest for him; already his grief for Amnon was assuaged.

¹ The Hebrew text here is obscure; some think its meaning is that David longed to go out to Absalom with the intention of bringing him home; but this hardly agrees with verse 24 of the next chapter.

14 Then Joab, son of Sarvia, aware that the king's heart had relented towards Absalom, sent for a wise woman who lived at Thecua, and spoke to her thus: Make as if thou wert in mourning, put on funeral garments, and never a drop of oil to anoint thee, like a woman who has long been mourning for the dead. Then go into the king's presence, and speak as I bid thee speak. And with that, he told her all she should say.

So the woman from Thecua came into David's presence and there bowed to the ground to do him reverence; Lord king, she said, give me redress! What wrong, asked he, is being done thee? And she said, I am a widow, with no husband to protect me. And, my lord, I had two sons; but they came to blows out in the open fields, where there was none to interfere, and one gave the other a blow which killed him. And now the whole clan is at my heels; give up the murderer I must, so that they may kill him in vengeance for his brother's death, and make an end of the race. The one hope that is left me they would extinguish, so that my husband will have none left on earth to bear his name. Go home, said the king; I will see that justice is done thee. And the guilt, said the woman of Thecua, let that rest with me and with my own kindred; the king and his heirs shall be quit of it. If anyone crosses thy will, the king said, bring him before me, and I will not let him do thee any more hurt. Ah, said she, if the king would only take an oath in the name of the Lord his God that the kinsfolk shall not be allowed to carry on the feud, that my son's life shall indeed be spared! Not a hair shall fall from his head, the king answered.

And now the woman asked leave to speak one word besides, and the king granted it. Then she said, Why does the king's grace treat the people of God so differently? Why does he persist in doing them wrong, by refusing to restore the man he has exiled? We must all die, water spilt on the ground; there is no bringing back the dead. Never a soul will God suffer to be lost in the reckoning; still he

busies himself with remedies to save the life of him who is banished.¹ I came to make my suit before my lord the king, with his subjects standing by, thinking to myself, Come, I will plead with the king, and perhaps he will grant his handmaid's request; and the king's grace has listened to me, and given me redress against those who would have blotted out my name and my son's name from the record of the Lord's people. And now let this plea of thy handmaid's move thee, my lord king, to speak a generous word.² Though indeed my lord the king is wise as an angel of God; thou art not moved from thy purpose by fair word or foul; the Lord thy God is with thee.

Then the king said to her, I have a question to ask thee; answer it openly. My Lord king, she said, thou hast only to speak. Tell me then, said the king, was not Joab concerned in all this? As thou art a living man, she answered, that guess the king's grace has made has not missed the truth by a hair's breadth. It was thy servant Joab who sent me on my errand, and told me all I was to say; it was thy servant Joab who bade me use this parable. My lord king, thou art wise as an angel of God; nothing on earth is hidden from thee. And the king turned to Joab, and said, I relent, and grant thy request; go and bring my son Absalom home. Whereupon Joab bowed his face to the ground in reverence, and blessed the king's name. To-day, he said, I am assured of thy royal favour, that thou shouldst so grant thy servant his will. Then he set out on his journey to Gessur, and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. But the king said, Let him go back to his own house, and never come into my presence; so Absalom went home, and might not have access to the king.

This Absalom was a man of good presence and famed for his beauty, none like him in all Israel; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head was no blemish to be found; and when he cut his hair, as each year he must for the heavy burden it was, the locks that were cut weighed two hundred sicles by common weight.³ Three

¹ This rendering seems to give the best sense to the Latin; but its language is obscure, and that of the Hebrew text even more so. ² 'To speak a generous word'; literally, 'that thy word may be as a sacrifice', but the Hebrew word evidently means 'one which can also mean 'a free gift''. The Hebrew text has a 'refreshment'. ³ Two hundred sicles would be more than six pounds, and some think the figure has been exaggerated by an error in the text.

sons he had, and one daughter called Tamar, a woman fair to see.

28 So for two years Absalom was in Jerusalem without sight of the king; then he sent for Joab, to win him audience, but Joab would not come. A second time the request was made and refused; then Absalom said to his servants, You know that field of Joab's next to mine, that is under barley; go and set fire to it. So Absalom's men set fire to the crop, and now Joab's men went to find him with their garments torn about them, and told him Absalom had had part of his field burned. Thereupon Joab went to see Absalom at his house, and asked, What means it, that thy men have set fire to my crop? Why, answered Absalom, I was fain to see thee; it was my thought to send thee to the king, and ask him why he brought me home from Gessur. Better have stayed there; pray win me admittance to the king's presence, or let him put me to death if he cannot forgive the wrong. So Joab went and repeated this to the king, and Absalom was summoned into the king's presence. Low he bowed before him, with his face to the ground; but David greeted Absalom with a kiss.

15 And now Absalom must drive in state, with chariots and outriders, and fifty men that ran before him. He would rise early, and stand at the entrance to the gate, beckoning to him everyone who had business that called for the king's award, asking what city he came from, and, if he mentioned one of the Israelite tribes,¹ telling him, Thy pleadings seem to me well-founded and just, but the king has not appointed any judge to try thy cause. Ah, said Absalom, if only I could be appointed as judge in the land, so that all who had matters to decide could bring them to me for a careful hearing! And when men came up to greet him, he would put out his hand and take them to himself with a kiss. So he did to all the men of Israel who came up to get a hearing from the king, and stole away the hearts of the Israelites.

7 Then, in the fortieth year of the reign,² Absalom said to David, Grant me leave to

go to Hebron and pay a vow I made to the Lord. It is a yew thy servant took when he was at Gessur in Syria, that if the Lord would restore him to Jerusalem, he would offer a sacrifice. Go, said David, and peace go with thee. To Hebron, then, he went, and meanwhile he had sent agents of his throughout all the tribes of Israel, bidding them wait till they heard the trumpet sound, and then raise the cry, Absalom is king! Absalom reigns at Hebron! And from Jerusalem itself he took two hundred men, who went with guileless hearts, not knowing why they had been summoned. He also invited from Gilo Achitophel, the Gilonite that was David's own counsellor. So Absalom began to offer his victims, and his conspiracy grew ever stronger, and the number ever greater that came to his support.

Soon a messenger came and told David that the whole of Israel was giving its allegiance to Absalom; and he said to the servants he had with him at Jerusalem, Up, we must make our escape, or we are in Absalom's hands! We must depart with all speed, or he will come and take us by surprise, overwhelm us and put the whole city to the sword! And his servants answered, We are at the command of our lord the king, we will do his bidding. So the king left the city on foot with all his attendants, leaving only ten concubines in charge of the palace. At some distance away he halted on his journey, with all the throng that accompanied him, his own servants walking at his side, and the Cerethite and Phelethite companies, as well as the Gethite warriors (six hundred foot, that had come from Geth in his retinue), marching on before him. Why dost thou come with us? the king asked of Ethai the Gethite. Go back to the court; thou art a wanderer who has already left his home and camest here but yesterday; there is no need for thee to leave Jerusalem, as the rest of us are leaving it, to-day. I will go where I must; do thou and these brethren of thine return, and may the Lord's faithful mercies reward thee for this loyal service thou hast shewn. But Ethai answered, As the Lord is a living

¹ The translation given assumes that 'Israel' here is contrasted with Juda, the other tribes being more amenable to disloyal proposals. If Israel as a whole is meant, the last clause of the verse seems to want significance.

² Literally, 'after forty years'.

God, as my lord the king is a living man, it cannot be. Wherever thou art, my lord king, in life or in death, there also will thy servant be. Come then, David said to him, pass on over the stream. So Ethai and his men passed over, and then the rest, weeping aloud as they went, till the whole throng had gone across. The king himself crossed Cedron stream, and they all set out on the road which leads to the desert.

Sadoc the priest was among them, and with him the Levites, carrying the ark that bore witness of God's covenant. They now set the ark down, only Abiathar going forward on his journey, till the whole multitude that had left the city should have passed by. But the king said to Sadoc, Carry God's ark back into the city; if the Lord takes my part, he will bring me home again, and I shall see his ark and his tabernacle there; if he tells me that I have lost his favour, I am at his command; his will be done. Thou hast the seer's gift; go back in peace to the city with thy son Achimaas and Abiathar's son Jonathan, and I will wait till I have word from thee before I come back from my hiding-place in the desert plain. So Sadoc and Abiathar carried the ark back to Jerusalem, and remained there.

So David went up the mount of Olives, and wept as he climbed it; bare-footed he went and with his head covered, and all that were in his company passed on, with covered heads, lamenting. And now David was told that Achitophel had taken part in Absalom's conspiracy; Lord, he prayed, do thou foil the designs of Achitophel. He had already reached the top of the hill, where he meant to pay the Lord worship, when he met Chusai the Arachite, his garments torn, and his head all smeared with dust. Nay, said David, if thou shouldst come with me, thou canst only be a burden to me; go back to the city, and tell Absalom, lord king, I am at thy command, I will be thy servant as I was thy father's. So thou wilt be able to thwart the designs of Achitophel. Thou hast the priests, Sadoc and Abiathar, to help thee; pass on to the priests, to Sadoc and Abiathar, every word thou hearest at court. Their sons remain with them, Sadoc's son Achimaas and Abiathar's son Jonathan; by them thou canst send me news of all thou

hearest. So David's friend Chusai went back, and Absalom was entering Jerusalem as he reached it.

16 When David passed a little way beyond the top of the hill, there was Siba, the servant of Miphiboseth, coming to meet them. He had two asses with him, laden with two hundred loaves, and a hundred bunches of raisins, and a hundred cakes of figs, and a skin of wine. When the king asked what he did with all these, Siba answered, I brought the asses to be ridden by the king's courtiers, the bread and fruit for thy servants to eat, the wine to revive such as are faint in the desert. And where is thy master's son? the king asked. He remained in Jerusalem, Siba answered, thinking that the men of Israel would restore him this day to the throne of his father. Why then, the king told him, all that was Miphiboseth's is thine. And Siba answered, My prayer is that I may ever enjoy thy favour, my lord king.

But, as David reached Bahurim, a man of Saul's kindred came out to meet him, one Semei, son of Gera, and ever he cursed as he went, and threw stones after David, and his servants that walked to left and right of him, plain folk and warriors alike. Go thy ways, cried Semei, cursing the king, go thy ways, murderer and upstart! Now the Lord has avenged the blood of Saul's race, by handing over the kingdom thou didst usurp to thy son Absalom; no wonder if calamity comes home to thee, murderer as thou art! At this Abisai, son of Sarvia, protested to the king, Why must this hang-dog fellow be allowed to curse my lord the king? Let me go and cut the head from his body! What, sons of Sarvia, David replied, will you never give me any rest? Let him curse as he will; the Lord has bidden him curse David, and who shall call him to question for doing it? Then he cried out, so that Abisai and all his servants could hear him, Look you, here is the son of my own body conspiring against my life; why may not yonder Benjamite do as much? Let him curse as curse the Lord has bidden him; perhaps it will move the Lord to pity my calamities, and bring good out of the ill fame I must endure this day. So David passed on, and his companions

with him, while Semei strode along the ridge on the other side of the valley, cursing, and throwing stones and handfuls
14 of earth. A weary man was the king, and weary were all the people with him, when they reached their halting-place; and there they rested.

15 Meanwhile Absalom and his men had entered Jerusalem, and Achitophel with
16 him; and there David's friend, Chusai the Arachite, met them; Greeting, he said,
17 greeting to the king! Why, said Absalom, is this thy friendship? Wouldst thou not
18 bear that friend of thine company? Not I, said Chusai; for me, the king who has been
chosen out by the Lord, by these folk here, by the whole of Israel; my place is by his
19 side. And indeed, to whom is my service due, if not to the king's own son? Thou
20 shalt have the same loyalty thy father had from me. And now Absalom said to Achitophel, Bethink thee, what were best done.
21 Whereupon Achitophel answered, Go and mate with the concubines thy father has left in charge of the palace. When they
hear thou hast come between thy father's sheets, all Israel will rally to thy cause the
22 more fearlessly. So they spread a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he went in to bed
his father's concubines, there with all Israel to witness it. Men followed Achitophel's
23 advice then as if it were God himself they had consulted; so it was all the time he was David's counsellor, and all the time he was Absalom's.

17 Now, said Achitophel to Absalom, let me pick twelve thousand men, and set out in pursuit of David this
2 very night; so I shall overtake him and easily defeat him, weary as he is and un-
nerved; first scatter the company that went with him, and then strike him down, with
3 none to aid him. All the people I will bring round to thy cause, as easily as I would persuade a single man; thou hast
but one enemy, the rest of the people will be well content.

4 Both Absalom and all the elders of Israel liked his counsel well; but Absalom would
have them summon Chusai the Arachite,
6 to find out his opinion too. So Chusai the Arachite came in, and Absalom told him
what Achitophel had said; Were it well done? he asked. What advice givest thou?

And Chusai answered, No, it will not serve
our turn, this counsel Achitophel has
7 given. Bethink thee now, what brave warriors they are, thy father and the men he
8 leads; how fierce in their anger, fierce as the she-bear that lurks in a wood, when her
cubs have been taken away from her; thy
father is a fighting man, he will not remain
there among the common folk. No, by
9 now he is hidden in some pit under ground, or some other vantage-point. A few deaths
among his pursuers, and the word will go
round, Absalom's followers are routed!
Then the most lion-hearted will be over-
10 come with sudden fear; well all the people of Israel knows that thy father and the
warriors that bear him company are men
of mettle. No, here is a plan more to my
11 liking, that thou shouldst summon all Israel, from Dan to Bersabee, an army
countless as the sand, and thyself march
out with it. Hide he where he may, we will
12 find him, and we will be all about him, covering the earth like dew; never a man
of his company shall escape us. Why, even
13 if he should defend himself behind city walls, this great army of Israel could wind
ropes round it and drag it down into the
nearest valley, till never a stone was to be
found of it! Thereupon Absalom and all
14 the men of Israel agreed that Chusai the Arachite had given better counsel than
Achitophel. Whereas in truth Achitophel's
advice was the more to their purpose, but
the Lord foiled it, to compass Absalom's
ruin.

Then Chusai told the priests, Sadoc and
15 Abiathar, what Achitophel's counsel had been, and what his own; Send a message
16 to David, said he, with all speed, telling him not to linger in the desert plain this
night, but cross Jordan without delay; else
he and all that are with him may be over-
17 whelmed. Jonathan and Achimaas stood at their post by the spring of Rogel, and a
maid-servant must go and give them the
message before they could take it to king
David; they did not dare shew themselves
in the city. Even so a lad saw them, and
18 told Absalom, and they must turn aside with all speed into the house of a man at
Bahurim, that had a well by the porch of
it, and climb down into this for safety.
Nor was their hiding-place discovered; a
19 woman came and spread a cloth over the

mouth of the well, as if she would dry her
 20 barley-groats there; and when Absalom's
 men reached the house, asking her where
 were Jonathan and Achimaas, she said they
 had gone quickly on their way, only stop-
 ping for a mouthful of water; so their
 21 pursuers returned baffled to Jerusalem.
 These gone, Jonathan and Achimaas
 climbed up out of the well, and brought
 king David word; Bestir yourselves, they
 said, and cross the river without more ado;
 and told what advice Achitophel had given.
 12 So king David and all that bore him com-
 pany took the road, and were across Jordan
 before ever dawn broke; not a man was left
 west of the river.

13 As for Achitophel, when he found that
 his advice was not followed, he saddled his
 ass and went home to Gilon; there he put
 his affairs in order, and hanged himself.
 So there they buried him, in his father's
 tomb.

14 David made his way to the Encamp-
 ment; and now Absalom crossed the Jordan
 after him, with all Israel at his back.
 5 In Joab's place, Absalom gave the com-
 mand of his army to Amasa, that was son
 to a man called Jethra, of Jezrahel; he had
 mated with Abigail, daughter of Naas, that
 6 was sister to Joab's mother Sarvia. So
 Israel, and Absalom with them, pitched
 their tents in the country of Galaad.
 7 Meanwhile, upon David's coming to the
 Encampment, Sobi son of Naas the Am-
 monite, and Machir son of Ammiel from
 Lodabar, and Berzellai that dwelt in Ga-
 8 laad, at Rogelim, brought him presents;
 beds and coverlets and earthenware, wheat
 and barley, flour and parched corn, beans
 9 and lentils and fried pulse, honey and
 butter, sheep and fattened calves. So they
 made provision for David and his fol-
 lowers, that were like to be hard pressed
 with hunger and thirst, there in the desert.

18 And now David passed the men
 who were with him under review,
 appointing commanders and captains over
 2 them; one third he entrusted to Joab, one
 third to Joab's brother Abisai, and the re-
 mainder to Ethai of Geth. He himself, he
 told his men, would go into battle with
 3 them, but they would not have it. It makes
 no great matter to the enemy, they said,
 whether we are routed: even if half of us

should fall, they would set little store by
 it; thy life is more to them than the lives
 of ten thousand others. Better that thou
 shouldst remain in the city and garrison it
 for us. So the king told them he would
 4 abide by their judgement, and he stood
 watching at the gate while they marched
 out company by company, in their hun-
 dreds and thousands. One charge the king
 5 laid upon Joab and Abisai and Ethai alike,
 Spare me my son Absalom; and this charge
 about Absalom was so given to each of
 them that the men in the ranks could
 hear it.

So his army took the field against Israel; 6
 it was in the forest of Ephraim that battle
 was joined. And the Israelites were routed 7
 by David's men, with great loss; twenty 8
 thousand men fell that day, and more of
 them perished in the woods than in the
 fighting itself, so scattered was their flight
 over all the country-side. Some of David's 9
 men encountered Absalom himself, riding
 on a mule; and away the mule went, under
 the tangled branches of a great oak, which
 caught him by the head and kept him
 hanging there between earth and sky,
 while the beast that carried him pressed
 on. A soldier, who witnessed it, went and 10
 told Joab that he had seen Absalom hang-
 ing from an oak. Thou sawest him, Joab 11
 answered, and didst not smite him then
 and there to the ground? I would have
 given thee ten sicles of silver and a belt 12
 besides. Nay, said he, thou mightest count
 out a thousand silver pieces into my purse,
 and still I would not lift a hand against the
 king's son. We were all of us within hearing
 when the king bade thee and Abisai and
 Ethai spare his son Absalom. It would 13
 have been at the risk of my life, and the
 thing would never have passed unnoticed
 by the king; why, thou wouldst thyself be
 laying information against me. That will 14
 not serve, answered Joab; I will smite him
 myself, and thou shalt be there to witness
 it. So he took three javelins with him, and
 thrust Absalom right through with them;
 then, as he still hung there writhing on the
 oak, ten squires who attended on Joab ran 15
 up and dispatched him. With that, Joab 16
 sounded the trumpet, and would not let
 his men go further in pursuit of Israel, to
 spare the lives of the common folk. As for 17
 Absalom, they threw his body into a deep

pit, there in the forest, and piled a great heap of stones over him. Meanwhile, the men of Israel fled away to their tents.

18 (The monument which stands in the King's Vale is one which Absalom erected for himself in his own life-time, thinking thus to perpetuate his name, since he had no son to follow him. And as he gave this monument his own name, it has been called Absalom's Mark ever since.)

19 And now Achimaas, son of Sadoc, asked leave to run and tell the king how God had punished his enemies, but Joab told him, Better some other day than this for bearing the message; I would not have thee tell the news to-day; here is a king's son dead.

21 Afterwards Joab bade Chusi go and tell the king what he had seen;¹ so Chusi did reverence to him, and ran. And thereupon Sadoc's son Achimaas asked whether he might not run after Chusi. No need for that, my son, Joab answered; it is not good news thou wilt carry. But may I run? asked he. Run if thou wilt, said Joab. And Achimaas took a shorter way, and passed Chusi by.

24 David was sitting between the two gates; and now the watchman that stood above the roof over the gate, high up on the wall, looked up and saw a man running, all alone, and cried out to let the king know of it. If he is alone, the king said, he has good news to tell. Then, as the runner came nearer, the watchman saw a second courier on his way, and cried out from the roof, I see a second man running all alone. He too, the king said, is a welcome messenger. And the watchman told him, I have marked how the first messenger runs; he runs like Achimaas, son of Sadoc. A good man, the king said; his will be good news. And now Achimaas cried out, Hail, my lord king! Then he bowed down with his face to the earth, to do the king reverence, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God; he has not suffered them to escape, the men who took up arms against the king's grace. Is all well, the king asked, with my son Absalom? And Achimaas answered, There was a great stir round about Joab when he sent me, thy servant,

on my errand; I can tell thee no more. Stand aside here, the king said; and as he did so, Chusi came up after him; Good news, said he, for my lord the king! The Lord has maintained thy cause against the rebels. Then the king asked Chusi, Is all well with my son Absalom? My lord king, Chusi answered, may all thy enemies, and all that conspire to thy hurt, fare as the prince has fared!

And with that, the king went up to the room over the gate in bitter sorrow, and wept there. O, my son Absalom, he said as he went, my son, my son Absalom! Would to God I had died instead of thee, Absalom, my son, my son!

19 Word came back to Joab that the king was in tears, mourning over his son; and the news of the royal grief went round among the army, so that the victory they had won that day issued only in lament. They would not even return that day to the city, feeling such shame as a broken and routed army feels; and all the while the king hid his face away, and went on crying aloud, My son Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son! At last Joab made his way into the royal lodging, and said to the king, Here is a fine day's work, to make all thy followers go about hanging their heads! The men who have saved thee and thy sons and daughters, thy wives and concubines, from peril of death! Nothing but love for thy enemies, nothing but hatred for thy friends; never a thought, this day, for thy own captains and thy own men! If we were all dead, and Absalom still lived, I warrant thou hadst been the better pleased. Besür thyself, come out and speak to thy men, and earn their good will; I swear by the Lord that if thou dost not come out, not a man will be left to serve thy cause by night-fall; and worse awaits thee than all the troubles which have come upon thee from the days of thy youth till now. So the king rose up, and seated himself at the gateway; and there, once the word had gone round that the king was sitting in the gateway, all his followers came into the royal presence.

¹ It is not clear why Joab preferred to send Chusi as a messenger; it may be he wished to spare Achimaas the fate of the Amalecite in 1. 15 above. Of Chusi (wrongly confused by the older English versions with Chusai the Arachite) nothing is known, and some think it is only a description of his race, 'the Cushite' (or Ethiopian). But verse 14 above suggests that it may be the soldier there mentioned.

9 But the men of Israel had fled home. And now, all through the tribes of Israel, there was high debate; Here is a king, men said, that has rid us of our enemies, rescued us from the power of the Philistines, and he must be exiled from his kingdom to please Absalom! This Absalom, whom we anointed to be our king, has fallen in battle; why is no voice raised for bringing the king back to us? News of what the Israelites were saying had reached the court, and now king David sent word to the priests, Sadoc and Abiathar, bidding them ask the elders of Juda, Why are you the last to welcome the king home again? 2 You are my own tribesmen, my own kith and kin, why do you hang back, instead of restoring me to the throne? He bade them, 3 too, give this message to Amasa, Art thou not my own flesh and blood? May the Lord punish me as I deserve, and more than I deserve, if I do not make thee, instead of Joab, commander of my army henceforward! Thus he won over the men of Juda till they had but a single thought, and a message was sent to the king bidding him come back to them, and all his men with him. 5 So the king set out for home, and by the time he reached the Jordan, the whole of Juda had assembled at Galgal to meet him and escort him over the river. Semei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, hastened to bear them company, welcoming king David with a thousand of his own tribesmen; there was Siba, too, that had once been a servant in the court of Saul, with his fifteen 8 sons and twenty servants of his, and these, plunging into the Jordan before the king could reach it, were across the ford, ready to escort his household and wait upon his bidding. Semei, Gera's son, was no sooner across Jordan than he fell at the king's 9 feet; My lord, he said, do not hold me guilty, forget the wrong thy servant did thee when thou, my lord king, hadst left Jerusalem; let there be no grudge in thy 10 royal heart. I, thy servant, confess this

day the wrong I did; that is why I have come, first spokesman of the other tribes, to meet the king's grace on his way.¹ At this, Abisai son of Sarvia would have Semei put to death, for the curses he uttered against an anointed king. What, 22 sons of Sarvia, David answered, will you never give me rest? This day, of all others, would you mar my peace? No Israelite shall lose his life this day, which has taught me for the first time that I am king in Israel. And to Semei he said, 23 Thou shalt not die, and took his oath to confirm it.

Then the king was met by Miphiboseth, 24 that was heir to Saul; he came with feet begrimed, with beard untrimmed, in garments that went unwashed from the day of the king's departure to the day of his return. Down from Jerusalem he came to 25 meet him, and when the king asked, Why didst thou not bear me company, Miphiboseth? his answer was, My lord king, 26 my own servant played me false; may it please thee, I bade him saddle me an ass, so that I could ride in the king's company, lame as I am; and he, not content with disobeying, has brought a false charge against me before my lord the king. But thou, my lord king, art wise as an angel of God; do what thou wilt. For indeed, the whole of 28 my father's line deserve nothing better than death at thy hands, and thou hast given me, thy servant, a place among the guests at thy table; what right have I to complain? I will raise my voice no more in my defence. And the king told him, 29 No need to say more. My word has been passed; do thou and Siba divide the lands between you.² Why, let him take all, 30 Miphiboseth answered; enough for me that my lord the king has come home in peace.

Bertzellai, too, the man of Galaad, came 31 down from Rogelim, to attend his crossing of Jordan, ready to accompany him to the further bank. Bertzellai of Galaad was 32 an old man, eighty years old; he it was that

¹ 'First spokesman of the other tribes'; literally, 'first among all the house of Joseph', but the name Joseph is evidently used here, as in several other places, to designate the rest of Israel apart from Juda. Benjamin is here included under 'Joseph', although, when the kingdom was divided under Roboam, it remained united to Juda. ² 'My word has been passed', cf. 16. 4 above. David is perhaps interpreting his promise there made, 'All that was Miphiboseth's is thine' as meaning 'All that was Miphiboseth's is equally thine', so that the property would have to be divided between them. David has been criticized for not punishing Siba's treachery to his master; but it is quite possible that Siba was acting partly in Miphiboseth's interest, under the impression that Absalom was likely to be victorious—the property which Siba managed for his master (9. 10) would be safe from confiscation in either event.

brought the king provisions, while he lay at the Encampment, for he was a man of great riches. To him the king said, Bear me company, and take thy ease with me at Jerusalem. But Berzellai answered, What, a man of my years go up to Jerusalem with the king's grace? I am eighty years old now; are my senses still keen, to tell sweet from bitter? Can thy servant take pleasure in food and drink? Can my ear catch the tone of songster and songstress? Nay, I would not be a burden to my lord the king; let thy servant go with thee a little of the way beyond Jordan, and no more. I need no such exchange of friendship; rather, my prayer is that I should be allowed to go back and die in my own city, and be buried close to the grave where my father and mother lie. Here is thy servant Chamaam; let him go with thee, my lord king, and do with him what thou wilt. Chamaam shall go with me, the king replied, and it shall be for thee to choose what is to be done with him; no request of thine shall go ungranted. So, when he and all the people had crossed over Jordan, the king kissed Berzellai and blessed him, and he went home, while the king passed on to Galgal, and Chamaam with him.

All the men of Juda had been the king's escort, but of the other Israelites only a half; and now the men of Israel came to him with one accord, and asked, How is it that our brethren, the men of Juda, have stolen thee from us? By what warrant did they escort the king, and his household and the warriors of David's army, on their passage over Jordan? Why, answered the men of Juda, he is nearer of kin to us. There is no cause here for anger. Have we lived on the king's bounty, or been singled out to receive his gifts? And the Israelites replied, We are ten to one; our rights with the king, our claims upon David, are ten times as great as yours. Why did you wrong us by not conferring with us first about our king's restoration? Thus either side pleaded its own cause, but the men of Juda more bitterly than the men of Israel.

20 It chanced that there was a turbulent fellow there, called Seba, son of Bochri, from Benjamin, who now sounded his trumpet and raised the cry: David, then, is none of ours; not for us the son of Jesse; go back, men of Israel, to your homes! Thereupon all the Israelites parted from David's company, and marched away with Seba, son of Bochri; it was only the men of Juda that escorted David all the way from Jordan to Jerusalem. So the king came home. As for the ten concubines he had left in charge of the palace, he shut these away, giving them their allowance of food still, but never again having commerce with them; they remained shut away in their widowhood as long as they lived.

And now the king said to Amasa, Muster all the warriors of Juda, three days from now, and present thyself here with them. Amasa went to muster them, but dallied beyond the time which the king had named; and David said to Abisai, This Seba, son of Bochri, will do us more harm than ever Absalom did. Take the royal troops with thee, and go in pursuit of him; or he will find refuge within city walls and escape us. So in pursuit of Seba they went, under Abisai's command, Joab's men, and the Cerethites and Phelethites, and all the picked warriors in Jerusalem; and when they reached the great stone of Gabaon, they fell in with Amasa. Joab was there, clad in a tight-fitting cloak of the same length as his coat, and girt with a dagger whose sheath only reached to his loins, such that he could draw it easily and strike.¹ Greetings to thee, brother, said Joab, and with that he clapped his right hand under Amasa's chin, as if he would kiss him; then, with the dagger that had gone unmarked, he struck him in the side, and spilt his entrails on the ground, so that he died without a second blow. After this, Joab and his brother Abisai continued their pursuit of Seba, son of Bochri. And among Joab's men, that stood beside the body, the word went round, Here he lies that would have been David's chosen friend in place of Joab.² There Amasa lay, drenched in his own blood, till one who

¹ The sense here is uncertain; the Hebrew text seems to say (at the end of the verse) that Joab's dagger fell out. If, as seems probable, it is corrupt, it may perhaps be conjectured that the dagger hung so as to be used with the left hand. ² According to the Hebrew text, the words used seem to mean 'All those that love Joab and are for king David, follow Joab!'

saw all the passers-by stopping to look at him, carried the body off into a field, away from the road; so they would halt on their journey no more. And sure enough, when it had been taken aside from the road, all were ready to follow Joab in pursuit of Seba, the son of Bochri.

Seba had gone through all the tribes of Israel, till he reached Abela that is called Beth-Maacha; and all their choicest warriors had rallied to him.¹ So to Abela Beth-Maacha they went, and besieged him there, surrounding the city with works, so that it was quite cut off; nor did Joab's men spare any pains to make a breach in the wall. But now a wise woman cried out from within the city, A word with you, a word with you! Bid Joab come here, and let me speak to him. Thou art Joab? she asked, as he came near; and when he answered to the name, Listen, she besought him, to what thy handmaid has to say. Listen I will, said he. There is an old proverb, she told him, that says, They who ask counsel must ask it at Abela; and so they did.² Here dwells a woman that tells Israelites the truth; and wouldst thou overthrow such a city, a mother-city in Israel? Why wouldst thou bring ruin on the Lord's chosen land? Never that, never that, Joab answered; ruin and destruction are not for me. The case stands otherwise; there is one Seba, son of Bochri, from the hill-country of Ephraim, that is in rebellion against king David; hand that one man over, and we will raise the siege. Wait then, said the woman; his head shall be thrown down to thee from the wall. And with that she went in, and spoke to the defenders in the wisdom that was her craft; whereupon they cut off the head of Seba, son of Bochri, and cast it down to Joab. So he blew his trumpet, and his men raised the siege and went to their tents; Joab himself went back to the king's court at Jerusalem.

Joab, then, commanded the army of Israel, and Banaïas son of Joiada the

Cerethites and Phelethites; Aduram was overseer of the revenues, and Josaphat, son of Ahilud, kept the records; Siva was secretary, Sadoc and Abiathar chief priests; Ira, too, the Jairite, was one of David's ministers.³

21 There was a famine in David's reign that lasted three years continuously; and when David consulted the Lord's oracle he was told, It is because of Saul; he slew the Gabaonites, and the guilt of blood still rests upon his line. The Gabaonites did not belong to Israel; they were of the old Amorrhite stock, and their lives had been spared in fulfilment of an oath, but Saul, jealous for the honour of Israel and of Juda, had tried to exterminate them. So king David summoned them, and asked what he could do to content them; what amends he could make, to recover their good will for the Lord's chosen people. Of silver and gold, the Gabaonites told him, there is no question here; our quarrel is with Saul and his kin; we would not take any toll of Israelite lives. What would you have me do, then? the king asked. And they said, We must efface the memory of the man who persecuted us and wrongfully oppressed us, leaving none of his stock alive from end to end of Israel. Hand over to us seven men of his line, and let us crucify them before the Lord at Gabaa, that is named after him; there dwelt he when the Lord chose him out to be king.⁴ And David said, You shall have them. But he spared Miphiboseth, the heir of Saul through Jonathan, to honour the covenant which Jonathan, Saul's son, had made with him; he took two sons that were born to Saul by Respha, daughter of Aia, one called Armoni and one that bore his cousin's name of Miphiboseth, and five sons of Michol, Saul's daughter, that she bore to Hadriel, son of Berzellai, at Molathi, and handed these over to the Gabaonites. And the Gabaonites crucified them before the Lord, there on the

¹ 'Seba had gone'; this is presumably the meaning of the Latin, but both in the Latin and in the Hebrew text the sense might be, 'Joab had gone'. Both in this and in the following verse there is some discrepancy between the Latin and the Hebrew.

² It is possible that the text has suffered from corruption; according to the Septuagint Greek, the proverb insisted that Abela (at the north of Dan) was a genuine Israelite city.

³ 'Ministers'; cf. note on 8. 18. ⁴ The word translated 'crucify', here and in the following verses, is of uncertain meaning. If the Gabaonites kept the Mosaic law, they should have cut down a man 'hanged on a tree' the same day (Deut. 21. 23); but it is not certain from the text that the bodies remained hanging. Some think the Hebrew verb signifies, not hanging, but throwing over a rock.

hillside. It was in the first days of the harvest, when the barley was beginning to be cut, that the seven of them perished, all at one time; and Respha, the daughter of Aia, spread herself a covering of sackcloth and sat there on the rock, from the beginning of harvest till the first rains fell on them; bird by day nor beast by night should touch them. The news of what Saul's concubine, Respha the daughter of Aia, had done, reached David's ears. And thereupon he recovered the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from the men of Jabes-Galaad, who had stolen them back when the Philistines hung them up in the streets of Bethsan, soon after Saul's death on Gelboe; carried these away, and collected the bones, too, of the men crucified at Gabaa, and buried them. So they were laid in the tomb of Cis, that was Saul's father, in the Benjaminite country, beside the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan; all this was done at the king's command. And now the land was restored to God's favour.

War broke out again between Israel and the Philistines, and David went to battle against them with his men. But David's strength had left him; and he came near to being struck down by Jesbi-Benob, a man of the Araphite breed, that had a spear-head of ten pounds weight, and a new sword at his side. It was Abisai, Sarvia's son, that came to the king's rescue, and gave the Philistine his death-blow. But after that David's men swore that he should never go into battle with them again; that light must not be lost to Israel.

In another battle against the Philistines, at Gob, Saph, of the giant breed of Arapha, was slain by Sobochai, from Husathi; in a third, also at Gob, Elehanan the son of Jaare, an embroiderer from Bethlehem, slew Goliath of Geth, that had a shaft to his spear as big as a weaver's beam.¹ In a fourth, at Geth, there was a man of huge stature that had twelve fingers and twelve toes, another of the Araphite breed; and he taunted Israel, till Jonathan, son of David's brother Semma, struck him down.

All these four were Araphites from Geth, all slain by David and his men.

22 And this was David's song of thanksgiving when he found that the Lord had rescued him from the power of Saul, and from his other enemies: The Lord is my rock-fastness, my bulwark, my rescuer. It is my God that brings me aid, and gives me confidence; he is my shield, my weapon of deliverance, my protector, my stronghold; he it is that preserves me and frees me from wrong. Praised be the Lord! When I invoke him I am secure from my enemies. Death's terrors were near at hand, deep flowed the tide of wickedness, to daunt me; the toils of the grave were all about me, deadly snares had trapped my feet. One cry to the Lord, in my affliction, one word of summons to my God, and he, from his sanctuary, listens to my voice; the complaint I make before him finds a hearing.

Earth shivered and shook, the very foundations of the hills quailed and quaked before his anger; smoke went up before his indignant presence, and a consuming fire; burning coals were kindled as he went. He bade heaven stoop, and came down to earth, with mist at his feet; he came, mounted on the cherubim, borne up on the wings of the wind, shrouded in a pall of darkness, wringing out the rain-storm from the clouds of heaven; burning coals were kindled by the lightning that went before him; the Lord, sending his thunder from heaven, the Most High, letting his voice be heard. How they scattered when he rained down his arrows on them, fled in confusion before his lightning! The secret springs of ocean came to light, the very foundations of the world were laid bare, when the Lord threatened them, blew upon them with the breath of his anger. Then he reached down from heaven, caught hold of me, rescued me from that flood, saved me from triumphant malice, from the enemies that held me at their mercy. In that evil day he came to my side; the Lord upheld me and brought me out into freedom again; his great love befriended me.

And still as he sees me dutiful, the Lord will requite me; as he sees me guiltless in

¹ 'Elehanan the son of Jaare' is represented in the Latin by equivalent words, 'Adeodatus (the God-given man) son of Saitus (the Forester)'. The word 'embroiderer' or 'weaver' has probably slipped into the Hebrew text by accident, since it occurs in the next line. In I Par. 20. 5 it is the brother of Goliath, not Goliath himself, that is killed; as if the name were a kind of title, borne first by the giant slain in I Kg. 17 and then by his younger brother.

act, he will make return. Have I not kept true to the Lord's paths? Have I not been loyal to my God? No law of his, but I have kept it before my eyes; no task he laid upon me have I refused; ever stainless in his presence, ever watchful to keep myself clear of guilt. Surely the Lord will requite me as he sees me dutiful, as he sees me guiltless in act. Lovingly thou dost treat those who love thee, faithfully the courageous; he that is thy own shall find thee his very own, from the man who turns against thee thou wilt turn away. To humble folk thou wilt bring deliverance; the proud, with their haughty looks, thou wilt bring down to earth. Thou, Lord, art the lamp of my hope; thou, Lord, dost shine on the darkness about me. In thy strength I shall run well girded; in the strength of my God I will leap over a wall.

Such is my God, unsullied in his dealings; his promises are like metal tried in the fire; he is the sure defence of all who trust in him. Who but the Lord is God? What other power can there be except our God? It is he that girds me with strength, he that makes me go on a smooth way, untroubled. He makes me sure-footed as the deer, and gives me the freedom of the hills; these hands, through him, are skilled in battle, these arms are a match for any bow of bronze. Thy saving power, Lord, is my defence, thy tender care fosters me. Through thee, my steps are untrammelled as I go, foot of mine never falters; I can master the enemies I pursue, and never turn home till I have made an end of them; made an end of them, beating them to their knees, hurling them down at my feet. Thou girdest me about with a warrior's strength; whatever power challenges me thou dost subdue before me, putting my enemies to flight, and throwing all their malice into confusion. Loudly they cry out to the Lord, bereft of aid, but he makes no answer to their cries. I can crush them to pieces, like dust on the ground, spurn and trample them like mire in the streets.

Thou wilt deliver me, then, from sedition among my people; nay, thou hast a higher destiny for me yet, to rule over other nations, with alien folk for my subjects. Aliens offering battle, and then brought to my allegiance, so feeble have they grown, so hard pinched by distress! Blessed be the living Lord who is my God, praised be the God who rescues me! It is thou, my God, that bringest me redress, that grantest me dominion over my people, that savest me from my enemies, so that I am high above the reach of their assaults, proof against their violence. Then, Lord, I will give thee thanks in the hearing of all nations, singing in praise of thy name; how powerful thou art to protect the king thou hast chosen, how merciful thou art towards him thou hast anointed, towards David, and David's line for ever.¹

23 These are the words of David's last psalm. Thus speaks David, son of Jesse, thus speaks the man whom the God of Jacob swore to anoint, he who sang as none other sang in Israel. Through me the spirit of the Lord has spoken; his words are on my tongue. What says Israel's God, Israel's strong defender? That he who rules among men, governing them justly in the fear of God, shines out like the light of dawn, when the sun rises in a cloudless sky, grows strong like meadow grass watered by the rain. What worth has my kindred in God's sight, that he should make an everlasting covenant with me, sealed and ratified all of it? Everywhere he preserves me, everywhere grants me my will; no wish of mine but bears fruit. Sinful men he treats like briars, too sturdy to be plucked away with the hand, so that all who would interfere with them go armed with iron-shod poles, setting fire to them at last and burning them away to nothing.²

And these are the names of David's champions; first among the first three was Jesbaam the son of Hachamoni (the same that was called Plump as a Wood-worm).³

¹ See Ps. 17, which is only distinguishable from this canticle by verbal differences, some of them due to the Latin translator.

² *vv.* 1-7. The Latin version of David's canticle disagrees in several places with the Hebrew text, and also with the (widely different) version given in the Septuagint Greek; it seems likely that there was some early corruption in the manuscripts.

³ 'Jesbaam the son of Hachamoni'; so the Latin version transliterates the name in I Par. 11. 11; here, evidently finding the same names slightly distorted in the Hebrew original, it has translated them as if they were common nouns, 'a very wise man sitting in a chair'. The phrase 'the same that was called Plump as a Wood-worm' is an attempt to translate two words of uncertain signification in the Hebrew text, which possibly conceal a fresh proper name. Some think they are a corruption of the words 'he lifted his spear' (as in Paralipomena).

who slew eight hundred men in one assault.

9 After him, his cousin Eleazar the Ahohite,¹ one of the three champions that were with David when they defied the Philistines.

10 These had mustered for battle, and the men of Israel had left the field; Eleazar stood there and cut down the Philistines until his arm grew weary and his hand stiff about his sword. A great victory the Lord gave Israel that day, and the men who had fled at first came back to gather up the

11 spoils of the dead. And after him Semma, the son of Age, from Arari. When a company of Philistines had gathered, close by a field of lentils, and routed the Israelites,

12 he stood there in the middle of the field and held it against the Philistines till he defeated them; that day, too, the Lord gave Israel a great victory.

13 Once, when it was harvest-time, these three, the foremost of the Thirty, were at the king's side in the cave of Odollam; the Philistines had encamped in the Valley of the Giants, and David kept close in his stronghold. The Philistines had a garrison

14 at this time in Bethlehem: and now David, overcome with longing, said aloud, Oh for a cup of water from the well by Bethlehem gate! Whereupon the three champions

15 broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem, and brought it to David. Instead

16 of drinking it, he poured it out as a libation to the Lord; The Lord be merciful to me, said he, never that! That were to drink men's blood; they brought it at the peril of their lives; it is not for my drinking. Such were the feats of the three first champions.

17

18 Abisai, too, Joab's brother, son of Sarvia, was one of three champions; he it was that engaged three hundred men with his own spear, and slew them. His name

19 stood as one of three, and among these he was foremost, leading the others, but he could not rival the first three. There was

20 Banaias, too, whose father, Joiada of Cabseel, was a warrior famous for his exploits. Banaias it was that slew the two heroes of Moab; he also went down into a cavern

on a day of snow, and killed a lion there. And there was an Egyptian he slew, a wondrous man to see, that carried a great spear; Banaias went into battle with a club, and killed the Egyptian with his own spear, wresting it from his hand. Such were the feats of Banaias, son of Joiada; he, too, was one of the three champions that were foremost among the Thirty, but he could not rival the first three. He was the man David appointed to carry out his secret commands.

And these were the men who belonged to the Thirty; Asael, Joab's brother, and his cousin, Elehanan of Bethlehem; Semma from Harodi, Elica from Harodi; Heles from Phalti; Hira, son of Acces, from Thecua; Abiezer from Anathoth; Moberonai from Husati; Selmon the Ahohite; Maharai the Netophathite; Heled, son of Baana, also from Netophath; Ithai, son of Ribai, from Gabaath in Benjamin; Banaia the Pharathonite; Heddai from the valley of Gaas; Abialbon the Arbathite; Azmaveth from Beromi; Eliaba from Salaboni; the sons of Jassen, Jonathan, Semma from Orori; Aiam, son of Sarar, the Arorite; Eliphelet, son of Asbai, son of Machati; Eliam, son of Achitophel, the Gelonite; Hesrai from Carmel; Pharai from Arbi; Igaal, son of Nathan, from Soba; Bonni from Gadi; Selec from Ammoni; Naharai the Berothite, that was squire to Joab the son of Sarvia; Ira and Gareb, the Jethrites, and Urias the Hethite; thirty-seven names in all.

24 But still the Lord's vengeance threatened Israel; and now it was through David he disturbed their peace, with a design for registering Israel and Juda.² The king said to Joab, the chief of his army, Go through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Bersabee, and make a muster-roll of the people, so that I may know the full tale of them. Why, said Joab, my prayer is that the Lord may increase yet more the number of the people, great as it is, and that thou mayest live to see it

¹ 'His cousin'; this may also be read as a proper name, 'the son of Dodo'. So also in verse 24 below.

² 'Two heroes'; the Hebrew word here used, of uncertain significance, is translated as 'lions' in the Latin version here, and transliterated as 'ariels' in I Par. 11. 22.

³ Here, as often, the Old Testament record describes God's dealings with mankind in strictly human terms. By a somewhat violent metaphor, he is compared to a human ruler who is anxious to pick a quarrel with his neighbours, and employs an agent provocateur to give him a pretext for interference. In I Par. 21. 1 the same course of events is described in theological terms, and we are told that Satan tempted David to register the people.

a hundred times as great! But what is it my lord the king means by this design? But all that Joab and the captains of the army could say might not thwart the king's will; so Joab and the other commanders left the king's presence to make a register of Israel. They crossed the Jordan, and reached Aroer, on the right side of the city that stands in the vale of Gad; then they passed by way of Jazer into Galaad to the plain country of Hodsi, and so reached the woodlands of Dan. Thence they turned towards Sidon, passed close to the walls of Tyre, and all along the country that was still held by Chanaanite and Hevite, and came at last to the southern end of Juda, at Bersabee. So they made their review of the whole country, and returned to Jerusalem after nine months' and twenty days' absence. And Joab gave in the register to the king; it proved that there were eight hundred thousand warriors that bore arms in Israel, and five hundred thousand in Juda.

But, now the count of Israel had been made, David's heart reproached him. And he confessed to the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done; Lord, give my sin quittance; I have played a fool's part.¹ And by the time he rose next morning, the word of the Lord had come to the prophet Gad, that was David's seer, Go and give David this message from the Lord; he is given a threefold choice, and he must choose his own punishment among the three. So Gad went to David with the message: Wilt thou have seven years of famine in thy country, or three months of flight from the pursuit of thy enemies, or three days in which thy country is smitten with plague? Think well, and tell me what answer I shall make to him whose word I bear thee. I am hard pressed on all sides, David told him; but it is better to fall into the hands of the Lord, so rich is he in mercy, than into the hands of men. So the Lord sent a plague upon Israel, from that morning till the time he had appointed; and it raged all the

way from Dan to Bersabee, till seventy thousand men had perished. But when the angel of the Lord was stretching out his hand over Jerusalem, to bring destruction on it, the Lord was moved with pity over their calamity, and said to the angel who was smiting the people down, It is enough, stay thy hand. The angel of the Lord stood close, then, to the threshing-floor of Areuna the Jebusite. David, when he saw how the angel was smiting the people down, had said to the Lord, The sin is mine, the fault is mine; these poor sheep of mine, what wrong have they done? Nay, turn thy hand against me, and my own father's race!

Then Gad brought David the message, Go up to the threshing-floor of Areuna the Jebusite, and build an altar there. So David went up, in obedience to the command which the Lord had given him through Gad; and when Areuna looked round, to see the king and the king's servants coming towards him, he came forward, bowing down with his face to the ground to do the king reverence. What would my lord king with his servant? he asked. And David said, I have come to buy thy threshing-floor; I must build an altar here to the Lord, to put an end to the mortality which goes unhindered among the people. Then Areuna answered, Let the king's grace take all he needs for his offering; here are sheep for a burnt-sacrifice, here is the waggon, and the yoke my oxen bear, for kindling-wood. All this is Areuna's royal gift to the king.² And may the Lord, Areuna added, grant thy prayer. But the king would not let him have his will; Nay, said he, I must buy it from thee; the victims I offer to the Lord my God must not be procured without cost. So David bought threshing-floor and ox-team for fifty silver pieces; there he built an altar to the Lord, and there he brought burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering. So the land was received back into the Lord's favour, and the plague disappeared from Israel.

¹ Some think the sin of David consisted only in pride. But it seems likely that the census he took was an act of tyranny, designed to transform the free citizens of Israel into servants of the state. The forced labour which King Solomon exacted from his subjects was the direct cause of their revolt after the accession of Roboam (III Kg. 12. 4). ² 'All this is', or perhaps, 'All this was'; it is not certain where Areuna's speech ends. If his allusion to a 'royal gift' is to be taken literally, it is most natural to suppose that he claimed descent from the Jebusite kings who reigned before the Israelites conquered Jerusalem.

THE THIRD BOOK OF KINGS

AND now David had grown old, and so chilled with age that there was no warming him by heaping coverlets on his bed; so his attendants asked leave of him to go and find a young maid, who should be brought to the court and cherish him by sleeping in his bosom, to give their royal master warmth. And of all the fair maids in Israel they chose out one, Abisag from Sunam, who was brought into the king's presence; a fair maid indeed, who now shared the king's bed and waited on him, yet never did the king mate with her.

Meanwhile Adonias, David's son by Haggith, aspired to win the throne; he must drive in state, with chariots and outriders, and fifty men to run before him; and never a word did his father say to check or challenge him; he came next to Absalom in birth, and was like Absalom for beauty. Joab, son of Sarvia, and the priest Abiathar were in his confidence; but, while these favoured Adonias's cause, he could not win over the priest Sadoc, and Banaias son of Joiada, and the prophet Nathan, Semei and Rei and the picked men of David's army. Adonias, then, would offer sacrifice of rams and calves and other fattened beasts at the Stone of Zohemoth, by Enrogel spring; bidding his brother princes there as guests, and the men of Juda that were in David's service, but not the prophet Nathan, or Banaias, or the leaders of the army, or his brother Solomon.

Thereupon Nathan said to Solomon's mother Bethsabee, Hast thou heard the news that Haggith's son Adonias has come to the throne, and our lord king David none the wiser? Act quickly, following the advice I now give thee, if thou wouldst protect thyself, and thy son Solomon, from mortal peril. Go and demand access to king David's presence; ask him openly, My lord King, didst thou not promise me, thy handmaid, upon oath, to let my son Solomon be thy heir, and succeed to thy throne? How comes it that Adonias is

king? And while thou art still speaking, I will come in after thee, and lend weight to these words of thine. So Bethsabee gained access to the king's own room, where he sat, an old, old man, with Abisag the Sunamite in attendance on him. Low was the reverence Bethsabee made, and when the king asked what was her will, she answered, My lord, thou didst swear to me by the Lord thy God that my son Solomon should be thy heir, and succeed to thy throne; and here is Adonias already reigning, while thou, my lord king, art kept in ignorance. Nay, he has sacrificed bulls, fattened beasts, and rams without number, with the priest Abiathar, and Joab, the commander of thy men, for his guests, and all the princes except thy servant Solomon. My lord king, all Israel looks to thee for a sign, to know who shall sit on thy royal throne after thee. How shall we fare, I and my son Solomon, when the king's grace has been laid to rest with his fathers? Our lives will be forfeit.

She was still speaking with the king, when the prophet Nathan came, and word was brought in that the prophet Nathan was in attendance. So in he came, and made his reverence before the king, with his face bowed to the ground; Lord King, he said, was it thy decree that Adonias should be thy heir, and succeed to thy throne? Away he goes, to offer up bulls, fatten beasts, and rams without number; all the princes are summoned to the feast, and the chiefs of the army, and the priest Abiathar; and there they sit, eating and drinking, while the cry goes up, Long live king Adonias! As for me, thy servant, and the priest Sadoc, and Banaias son of Joiada, and prince Solomon, no summons came to us. Can it be that the king's grace has made this decree, without a word to me, his servant, to say who should succeed my lord the king on his throne? Send for Bethsabee, king David answered; and when she had come in, and stood there in the royal presence, the king took an oath: As the Lord is a living God, he who has

90 preserved my life against all perils, my
sworn word to thee, in the name of the
Lord God of Israel, that thy son Solomon
should be my heir and succeed to my
91 throne, shall be fulfilled this day. And
Bethsabee, bowing her face to the ground,
did reverence; Unending life, said she, to
my lord king David!

92 Then king David would have the priest
Sadoc, and the prophet Nathan, and Banaias
son of Joiada, summoned to his
presence, and when these waited on him,
93 his orders were: Take the royal troops
with you, and escort my son Solomon,
mounted upon my own mule, to Gihon;
94 there let him be made king of Israel, with
the priest Sadoc and the prophet Nathan
to anoint him; there sound the trumpet,
and make proclamation, Long live king
95 Solomon! Then bring him back, to sit on
my throne and reign instead of me; to him
I commit the charge of Israel and Juda
96 alike. And Banaias son of Joiada cried,
Well said! May the Lord, the God who
protects the king's grace, decree no other-
97 wise; as he has been with thee, so may he
be with thy son, and make Solomon's
throne more glorious than the throne of
98 David himself. Then Sadoc and Nathan
and Banaias, mustering the Cerethites and
the Phlethites, mounted Solomon on king
David's own mule, and escorted him to
99 Gihon; there, with a phial of oil brought
out from the tabernacle, the priest Sadoc
anointed Solomon king; and they sounded
100 the trumpet, while the cry went up every-
where, Long live king Solomon! All the
common folk went with him, and there
was playing of flutes and great rejoicing,
till earth echoed again with the noise
of it.

1 It reached Adonias and his guests when
the banquet was already over; and Joab,
as he heard the cries of the multitude,
began asking what this uproar in the city
2 might mean. The words were still on his
lips when Jonathan approached, that was
son to the priest Abiathar. Come in, cried
Adonias; a brave fellow such as thou art
3 surely brings good news. That have I none,
Jonathan answered him; our lord king
David has given the throne to Solomon.
4 Mounted on the royal mule, with the priest
Sadoc and the prophet Nathan and Banaias
son of Joiada, with the Cerethites too

and the Phlethites for his escort, he has
5 ridden to Gihon, where Sadoc and Nathan
anointed him king. And now they have
come back in triumph, and all the city is
echoing with it; that is the noise which has
reached your ears. There Solomon sits on
46 the royal throne, while the courtiers
47 shower blessings on our lord king David,
praying God to make Solomon's renown
greater than his, Solomon's domains wider
than his; and he, lying on his bed, cries out
in adoration, Blessed be the Lord God of
48 Israel, that has given me this day an heir
to my throne, while I still have eyes to
see it!

His words spread terror, and all Ado-
49 nias' guests rose up, and scattered to their
homes. As for Adonias himself, in his
50 great fear of Solomon he left the place and
made his way to the altar, and clung to one
of its horns. So news came to Solomon
51 that Adonias, in fear of his royal brother,
was clinging to the altar's horn, crying out,
I must have king Solomon's oath this day
that my life shall be spared! Why, answered
52 Solomon, prove he a loyal man,
never a hair shall fall from his head; if he
is found to be plotting mischief, he shall
die for it. Then he sent to bring him away
53 from the altar, and Adonias came into king
Solomon's presence, and did reverence
there. And with that, Solomon sent him
away to his house.

2 And now the time drew near when
David must die; but first he left with
his son Solomon this charge. I am going,
said he, the way all mortal things go at
last; do thou keep thy courage high and
play the man. Hold ever true to the Lord
3 thy God, following the paths he has shewn
us, observing his ceremonies, and all those
commands and awards and decrees that
are contained in the law of Moses; so shalt
thou be well advised in all thou doest, at
every turn of the way. So will the Lord
4 make good his promise to me, that if my
sons would but tread those paths of his,
still proving loyal to him with the whole
purpose of their heart and soul, the throne
of Israel should never lack one of my race
to fill it.

And now to speak of Joab, son of Sarvia.
5 Thou knowest well the ill turn he has done
me; here were two commanders of the

Israelite army, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether, that fell by his hand. They were at peace with him when he struck the warrior's blow, stained himself, from the shoes on his feet to the girdle on his loins, with the blood that should have been spilt in war. Let prudence be thy guide, do not allow those grey hairs to find a peaceful end. To the sons of Berzellai the Galaadite thou must shew gratitude, and let them be among those who eat at thy table; they made me welcome when I fled to escape from thy brother Absalom. Thou hast to reckon, moreover, with Semei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim. Foul were the curses he hurled at me on my way to the Encampment; but when I crossed Jordan again he came out to meet me, and I swore to him in the Lord's name that I would not slay him. Thou hast no cause to leave him unharmed; thou hast wit enough to resolve what to do with him, how to prepare a bloody end for his grey hairs.

So David was laid to rest with his fathers, and the Keep of David was his burial-place; he had ruled Israel forty years, seven at Hebron and thirty-three at Jerusalem. And Solomon, who succeeded as his father's heir, established himself firmly on the throne.

As for Adonias, son of Haggith, he gained access to Bethsabee, king Solomon's mother, telling her that he came on a peaceful errand; there was a matter he would confide to her. So she bade him speak out, but still he hesitated; Once, said he, the throne was mine, and all Israel had chosen me for their king; now the royal power has changed hands, and gone to my brother; it was God's will. There is only one request now that I would make of thee; pray do not disappoint me. And still she bade him speak out. My request is, said he, that thou wouldst say a word for me to king Solomon; there is nothing he can refuse thee. Bid him give me Abisag the Sunamite for my wife. Why, yes, answered Bethsabee, I will speak to the king on thy behalf. Bethsabee, then, made her way to king Solomon, to prefer Adonias' request; the king rose to meet her and bowed low, then he sat down on his

throne again, and a throne was brought for her, the king's mother, to sit down at his right hand. There is a light request, she told him, that I would make of thee; pray do not disappoint me. Make thy request, mother, said he; I will not turn a deaf ear to it. It is, said she, that thy brother Adonias should be given Abisag the Sunamite for his wife. But this was king Solomon's answer to his mother, What, Abisag the Sunamite for Adonias? Ask me to give him the kingdom, too; he is my elder brother, and has the priest Abiathar, and Joab son of Sarvia, to maintain his cause.

And hereupon king Solomon took an oath in the Lord's name; May the Lord punish me as I deserve, and more than I deserve, if this plea Adonias has made does not cost him his life! As the Lord is a living God, he that has established me firmly on my father David's throne, and made the dynasty mine, as he promised. Adonias shall die this day! So king Solomon gave orders to Banaias son of Joiada, and by his hand Adonias was put to death. The king had a command, too, for the priest Abiathar; Go back to thy lands at Anathoth. Nothing better thou deservest than death, but I will spare thy life this day; thine it was to carry the ark in my father's presence, and to share all the perils he endured. Thus king Solomon deprived Abiathar of his priesthood, in fulfilment of that sentence which the Lord passed on the race of Heli, long ago at Silo.

Tidings of this came to Joab, that had taken part with Adonias, not with Solomon; and he took refuge in the Lord's tabernacle, where he clung to one of the altar-horns. And king Solomon, hearing he had fled to the tabernacle and was to be found there, close by the altar, sent Banaias son of Joiada with orders to kill him. So Banaias went to the Lord's tabernacle and bade Joab remove from it, in the king's name. Not I, said Joab, I will die here. When Banaias brought tidings of the answer Joab had made him, the king said, Let him have his will; put him to death there, and give him burial. Only rid me, and my father's kindred, of the blood-guilt Joab has brought upon us. On his

¹ According to the Hebrew text, 'Had taken part with Adonias, although he had not taken part with Absalom'.

head may the Lord's vengeance fall; did he not slay two innocent men that were his betters, Abner son of Ner that commanded Israel, and Amasa son of Jether that commanded Juda, drawing his sword on them with no word said to my father, king David? On Joab let the blood-guilt fall, and on his race for ever; to David and David's race, to David's throne and dynasty, may the Lord grant eternal prosperity! With that, Banaias son of Joiada went back and gave Joab his death-blow. He was buried at his own home, out in the wilderness; command of the army the king gave to Banaias son of Joiada, and the high-priesthood to Sadoc instead of Abiathar.

Then the king bade Semei come before him; Thou must build thyself a house, he told him, here at Jerusalem, and come to live there, instead of travelling freely this way and that. The day on which thou leavest Jerusalem to cross Cedron river shall be thy last, and the blame will lie only on thyself. To this Semei agreed, promising obedience to the royal command; and for a long time he continued to live at Jerusalem. Then, after three years, it chanced that some of his servants ran away, and took refuge with Achis son of Maacha, king of Geth. And when Semei was told that his servants were in Geth, he saddled his ass for a journey; to Geth he went and to the court of Achis in search of them, and brought them home with him. The news that Semei had journeyed to Geth and back reached Solomon's ears, and thereupon he sent for him. Did I not bind thee by an oath in the Lord's name, said he, warning thee that the day when thou shouldst begin to travel this way and that should be thy last? And didst thou not agree to the conditions I made? Forgotten, thy oath to the Lord, forgotten, the warning I gave thee! Then he added, Be-think thee, for it rankles yet in thy heart, of thy malice towards my father king David. Now the Lord has made thy ill will recoil on thyself; it is a blessing, not a curse, king Solomon inherits, and David's dynasty remains firm on the throne, to serve the Lord for ever. Then the king gave orders to Banaias son of Joiada, and he followed Semei out and put him to death.

By now, Solomon's power was firmly established, and he allied himself by marriage to the king of Egypt, whose daughter he wedded. He took her to live in the Keep of David; not yet had he built his own palace, or the Lord's house; not yet had he finished walling in Jerusalem. In those days, the Lord had no temple built for him, and men used to sacrifice on hill-tops.

Great love had Solomon for the Lord, and followed the counsel of his father David, though indeed he too went to mountain shrines, to sacrifice and offer up incense. Once he had betaken himself to Gabaon, where there was a famous mountain shrine, to worship there; a thousand victims king Solomon offered in burnt-sacrifice, there on the altar at Gabaon. And that night the Lord appeared to him in a dream, bidding him choose what gift he would. Thou hast been very merciful, answered Solomon, to my father David, a servant of thine that ever shewed himself loyal and observant, and kept his heart true to thee; and one great mercy thou didst keep till the last; thou hast granted the succession to a son of his own, the man thou seest. Yes, Lord God, thou hast bidden this servant of thine reign where his father reigned; but, Lord, what am I? No better than a little child, that has no skill to find its way back and forth. And here am I, thy servant, lost among the thousands of the people thou hast chosen, a people whose numbers are beyond all count and reckoning. Be this, then, thy gift to thy servant, a heart quick to learn, so that I may be able to judge thy people's disputes, and discern between good and ill. How else should a man sit in judgement over such a people as this, great as thy people is great? The Lord listened well pleased, and looked with favour on the choice he had made. For this request of thine, he told Solomon, thou shalt be rewarded. Thou didst not ask for a long life, or riches, or vengeance upon thy enemies, but for wisdom to administer justice. Thy prayer is granted; hereby I grant thee a heart full of wisdom and discernment, beyond all that went before thee or shall come after thee. And I grant thee moreover all thou didst not ask for; in wealth, in glory, no king that ever was may compare with thee.

- 14 And if thou wilt follow the paths I have chosen for thee, as thy father did, keeping charge and commandment of mine, long
- 15 life thou shalt have too. With that, Solomon awoke; it was a dream. But when he came back to Jerusalem, he stood before the ark that bears record of the Lord's covenant, and brought burnt-sacrifice, and made welcome-offerings, with a great feast for all his servants.
- 16 And now two women, harlots both of them, came and stood in the royal presence. Justice, my lord! said one of them. This woman and I share a single house, and there, in her presence, I gave birth to
- 18 a child; three days after my delivery, she too gave birth. We were still living together; none else was in the house but we
- 19 two. Then, one night, she overlay her child as she slept, and it died. So, rising at dead
- 20 of night, when all was still, she took my son from beside me, my lord, while I slept, put him in her own bosom, and her dead
- 21 son in mine. In the morning, when I raised myself to give my child suck, a dead child was there; and it was not till I looked at it more closely under the full light of day that I found this was never the child I bore.
- 22 And when the other woman said, No, it is thy child that is dead, mine that is alive, she persisted in answering, Thou liest; it is my child that lives, thine that is dead. Such was the angry debate they held in the king's presence.
- 23 See, said the king, it is all, My child lives and thine is dead, on the one side, and Thy child is dead and mine lives, on the other.
- 24 Bring me a sword. So a sword was brought
- 25 out before the king. Cut the living child in two, he said, and give half to one, half
- 26 to the other. Whereupon the true mother of the living child, whose heart went out to her son, cried out, No, my lord, give her the living child; never kill it! Not so the other; Neither mine nor thine, she said;
- 27 let it be divided between us.¹ No, said the king, do not kill the living child, give it to
- 28 the first; she is its mother.² This award was talked of throughout all Israel, and men feared the king, that was so inspired by divine wisdom in the judgements he gave.

4 All the tribes of Israel were under king Solomon's rule. These are the names of his ministers; Azarias, son of the priest Sadoc, and the two sons of Sisa, Elihoreph and Ahia, were secretaries; Josaphat, son of Ahilud, kept the records; Banaias, son of Joiada, commanded the army; Sadoc and Abiathar were the chief priests; Azarias, son of Nathan, was head of the royal prefects; Zabud, son of Nathan, a priest, was the king's privy counsellor; Ahisar was controller of the household, and Adoniram, son of Abda, controller of the revenues.

Solomon appointed twelve commissioners in the various parts of Israel to secure the maintenance of the king and his court, each of them providing the revenues needed for one month in the year. They were these; the son of Hur, for the hill country of Ephraim, the son of Decar for Maces, Salebim, Bethsames, Elon and Bethhanan, the son of Hesed for Aruboth, with Socho and the whole of Ephraim, the son of Abinadab, who married Solomon's daughter Taphet, for the whole of Naphath-Dor. Bana, son of Ahilud, for Thanac and Mageddo and the whole region of Bethsan (close by Sarthana that lies under Jezrahel) from Bethsan itself to Abel-Mehula, that faces Jecmaan. The son of Gaber for Ramoth-Galaad, with the townships Jair, son of Manasses, conquered in Galaad; he controlled all the Argob district of Basan, containing sixty great walled cities that had bolts of bronze. Ahinadab, son of Addo, for Manaim; Achimaas (husband of Solomon's daughter Basemath) for Nephthali; Baana, son of Husi, for Aser and Baloth; Josaphat, son of Pharue, for Issachar; Semei, son of Ela, for Benjamin; Gaber, son of Uri, for Galaad, that once belonged to the Amorrhite king Schon and to Og, king of Basan; for all that country he alone was answerable.

So Juda and Israel, countless in number as the sand by the sea, ate, drank, and were merry. As for Solomon, he bore rule over all the kingdoms between Euphrates and the Philistine country, right up to the frontiers of Egypt, enjoying the tribute

¹ No indication is given whether the plaintiff or the defendant was in fact the true mother. ² 'To the first'; literally, according to the Latin, 'to this woman', according to the Hebrew text and the Septuagint Greek, 'to her'. But the context makes it evident that the first of the speakers in verse 26 is indicated.

they brought him and the service they did him all his life long.¹ Sixty quarters of flour went every day to Solomon's household, and a hundred and twenty of meal, ten oxen from the stall, and twenty from the meadow, and a hundred rams; besides venison of red-deer and roe-deer and gazelle, and farmyard birds. All the country that lies west of the Euphrates, from Thaphsa to Gaza, was subject to him, with all the kings that dwelt in those parts; look about him where he would, all was peace. As long as the reign of Solomon lasted, Juda and Israel lived secure from alarm, each man under vine and fig-tree of his own, all the land's length from Dan to Bersabee. Forty thousand stalls king Solomon had for his chariot-horses, and twelve thousand mounted men; the keep of these was a charge on the royal commissioners aforesaid, beside the great ado they had to furnish the king's table month by month; barley and straw for horse and mule must be conveyed to this place or that, according to the king's own movements.

Wisdom, too, God gave to Solomon, and great discernment, and a store of knowledge wide as the sand on the sea-shore. For that, no king of the east or of Egypt could vie with him, of all men the wisest; wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, or Heman, or Chalcol, or Dorda, that were sons of Mahol; no nation round about but had heard of his fame. Three thousand parables king Solomon uttered, and of songs he made a thousand and five; and he discoursed of all the trees there are, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out from the wall; and of beasts, and birds, and creeping things, and fish. From all peoples and all kings of the world, when his fame reached them, men came to take back word of Solomon's wisdom.

5 Messengers, too, were sent by Hiram, king of Tyre, when he heard that Solomon had been anointed king in place of his father David, that had ever been Hiram's friend. And this message Solomon sent to Hiram in return; My father David, as thou knowest, was for

building a house in honour of the Lord his God; but there were threats of war all about him, and he must needs defer his purpose till the Lord should have crushed his enemies under his feet. Now, the Lord my God has given me security on every side; neither foe nor ill chance assails me, and I have a mind to build a temple dedicated to the Lord my God. He himself promised my father David, The son I will give thee for thy successor shall build a house in honour of my name. If thou wilt bid thy workmen cut down cedars for me on Lebanon, and let my workmen take part with thine, thy workmen shall have whatever pay thou demandest. As thou knowest, there is no woodman's craft among my people such as the Sidonians have.

When Solomon's message reached Hiram, great was the joy it gave him; Blessed be the Lord God, said he, for what he has done this day, in granting David so wise a son to rule so populous a kingdom. Then he sent Solomon his answer: I have heard thy message, and therewith granted thy request; cedar and fir thou shalt have to thy heart's content. My workmen shall convey them from Lebanon to the sea; on the sea I will embark them in rafts for whatever port thou shalt name; and when I have landed them there, it shall be thy part to carry them away. And meanwhile, thou shalt supply the needs of my own household. So Hiram gave Solomon cedar and fir wood to his heart's content, while Solomon provided Hiram with forty thousand quarters of wheat to feed his household, and forty quarters of pure oil;² such was the payment he made each year. Solomon had the gift of wisdom the Lord had promised him; he kept peace with Hiram, and a treaty was made between them.

And now Solomon picked out Israelites for his workmen, levying thirty thousand of them to that end; and he used to send them to Lebanon for a month at a time by turns, so that each man should spend two out of every three months at home; it was Adoniram who was in charge of the levy. Seventy thousand men king Solomon had

¹ This is presumably the sense of the Hebrew text; the Latin has 'from the river of the land of the Philistines to the border of Egypt'. ² According to the Septuagint Greek, forty thousand quarters of oil.

to carry loads for him, and eighty thousand
 16 to cut wood on the mountain-side, not
 counting the overseers who were in charge
 of the work done, three thousand three
 hundred overseers to give the workmen
 17 their orders. And the king bade them
 bring great stones, costly stones, to be the
 foundations of his temple, and to hew
 18 them into shape. This work of hewing was
 shared between Solomon's masons and
 Hiram's; and the men of Gibeon, too, pre-
 pared wood and stone for the building of
 the house.

6 It was in the four hundred and
 eightieth year after the Israelites left
 Egypt, in the second month (Zio, as it is
 called) of the fourth year of Solomon's
 reign in Israel, that the building of the
 2 Lord's house began.¹ This house built by
 Solomon in the Lord's honour was sixty
 cubits long, twenty wide, and thirty high;
 3 in front of the temple was a porch whose
 length, like the width of the temple itself,
 was twenty cubits, but it was only ten
 4 cubits wide. Slanting windows he made
 to light his temple, and about its walls he
 5 built storied galleries, that ran all round
 the sides of the temple and its shrine with
 6 pent-houses round about them; the lowest
 of these galleries was five, the middle six,
 and the highest seven cubits broad; and
 they rested on beams close to the outside
 of the building all about, they were not
 7 attached to the temple walls. All the time
 the temple was a-building, the stones used
 were ready hewn and shaped, so that there
 was no ringing of hammer or axe or iron
 tool in the house itself, while it was being
 8 built. There was a door in the middle of
 the pent-house on the southern side of the
 building; from this a spiral staircase led to
 the first floor, and another to the top floor.
 9 When he had finished building the walls
 of the house, Solomon covered it in with
 10 cedar rafters; then, over the whole of it, he
 built an added storey five cubits high, and
 roofed the house with planks of cedar.
 11 This was a message the Lord sent to
 12 Solomon: So thou art building me a house?
 Follow, then, my commandments, execute
 my decrees, hold fast to all the laws I have

given thee, and by these guide thy steps.
 So I will grant thee fulfilment of the pro-
 mise I made to thy father David; I will
 come and live among the sons of Israel, and
 not forsake my people any more.

So Solomon pressed on with the build-
 ing of the house, until all was finished. Its
 walls within were cedar-panelled, from the
 floor to the top of the walls, where the
 rafters sprang, no panel but was of cedar;
 only the floor was covered with planks of
 fir. The furthest part of the temple was
 cedar-panelled to a height of twenty cubits
 from top to bottom; it was this inmost
 recess that he made into a shrine, a place
 all holiness, and before the doors of this
 shrine the remaining forty cubits of length
 made up the temple proper. All was cedar
 panelling, rounded and fitted with the
 craftsman's utmost skill, embossed with
 carving, cedar everywhere, and no stone
 in the walls allowed to shew itself. And
 there in the midst, in the inmost part of
 the building, stood the shrine in which the
 ark of the Lord was to rest; twenty cubits
 in length, width, and height, and covered
 with plates of pure gold; plated, too, was
 the cedar altar. Then he covered all the
 rest of the building, the ante-room of the
 shrine, with plates of pure gold, fastened
 with golden nails. Nothing in the temple
 but was sheathed in gold, the altar that
 stood before the shrine with the rest.

Within the shrine stood two cherubim,
 made of olive-wood, ten cubits high; each
 of these had wings of five cubits' breadth,
 so that there was ten cubits' distance be-
 tween the tips of them. The second cherub
 matched the first in height, no difference
 of size or of workmanship between them.
 Ten cubits high they stood, there in the
 midst of the inner shrine, either touching
 the wall with one wing and its fellow's
 wing with the other. The cherubim, too,
 he plated with gold.

All the walls of the temple were adorned
 with bands of carved and embossed work,
 cherubim and palm-trees and other pat-
 terns, standing out in high relief; the floor,
 within the sanctuary and without, he
 covered with gold. At the entrance to the
 shrine he made doors of olive-wood, be-

¹ The estimate of 480 years is uncertain; the Septuagint Greek gives 440. The name Zio, like Bul in 6. 38 and Ethanin in 8. 2, belongs to an old reckoning which disappears at the time of the Captivity, and is replaced by a new set of names afterwards.

32 tween five-sided pilasters; doors of olive-
wood, carved with figures of cherubim and
palm-trees, and other sculpture in high
relief; doors and cherubim and palm-trees
38 and all the rest were covered with gold. At
the entrance to the temple were square
34 posts of olive-wood; and the door on either
side was of fir-wood; either door was
double, but the two halves were connected,
35 so that they opened together. Cherubim,
and palm-trees, and other sculpture stood
out in high relief, and he covered all with
36 gold plates squared by rule. He also built
an inner courtyard, whose walls had three
courses of dressed stone and one of cedar-
wood.¹

37 So, in the month of Zio of the fourth
year of his reign, the foundations of the
38 building were laid; and it was finished, in
all its parts and with all its appurtenances,
in the eighth month (Bul, as it is called) of
his eleventh year; so that it was seven years
in building.

7 Then, for thirteen years, Solomon
was engaged in building a palace for
himself; so long was it before all was
finished. It was then that he set up the
building known as the Forest of Lebanon.
This was a hundred cubits long, fifty
cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, con-
taining four galleries that ran between
3 pillars cut from the trunks of cedars; he
roofed it in, too, with cedar rafters, sup-
ported by forty-five pillars. The galleries
were divided by rows of fifteen pillars
4 placed at fixed intervals so as to face one
5 another, with equal spaces between pillar
and pillar; and these supported square
beams of cedar that matched one another.
6 There was a pillared hall fifty cubits long
and thirty wide, and a second hall in front
of it, with pillars to support the architrave.
7 And there was a hall containing his
judgement-seat, panelled in cedar from
8 floor to ceiling; within it was a private
apartment which he used when he was
administering justice. The house he built
for Pharaoh's daughter that he had married

was of the same workmanship as this
hall.

All was built of costly stone, cut to exact
9 shape and measure within and without,
from top to bottom of the walls, from the
entrance up to the great courtyard; the
10 foundations, too, were of costly stones,
some ten, some eight cubits long; nor were
11 the stones above less in measurement, with
cedar panels to match them. The great
12 courtyard, which was round, had three
courses of dressed stone and one of planed
cedar-wood; thus the court around the
palace porch was to match the inner court
of the temple.

There was a craftsman named Hiram,
13 living at Tyre, that king Solomon sent for;
his father had been a Tyrian, but his
14 mother, now a widow, belonged to the
tribe of Nephthali. A craftsman in bronze,
wise, adroit and skilful at doing a brazier's
work; and to do such work king Solomon
had now summoned him. Two brazen
15 pillars he made, eighteen cubits in height
and twelve in girth, and cast the two
16 capitals of bronze that were to rest on
them, each five cubits high, with a pattern
17 of net-work and of chains cunningly en-
laced. There were seven rows of chain-
work on either capital, all cast in metal.
The pillars, too, had their capitals covered
18 with two rows of pomegranates, all round
the net-work; both pillars alike. On the
19 base of either capital there was a chain of
lily-work, four cubits long;² it was the
20 remaining part of the capitals, above, that
had the net-work pattern, which went the
full round of the pillar; on this second part
of them, too, were the rows of pome-
granates, two hundred in number. He set
21 up the two pillars before the porch of the
temple, calling the one on the right Jachin
and the other Booz.³ Above the pillars he
22 did work in lily pattern, and so the making
of the pillars was finished.

He cast, too, a great round basin of
23 molten work, ten cubits from brim to brim,
five cubits high, and with a girth of thirty
cubits. Under the rim ran a moulding ten
24

¹ In this description, as in that of the tabernacle, the meaning of the Hebrew text is sometimes far from clear, and the Latin version is sometimes in doubtful correspondence with it. Nor is the meaning of the Latin always beyond dispute: but the sense given above seems the most probable. ² 'On the base'; literally, 'in the porch', which is evidently meaningless. It seems probable that the word so rendered by all the translators should be interpreted 'on their fronts' (cf. the Hebrew text of Ps. 72. 4). ³ The two names seem to denote God-given fixity and God-given strength respectively; the exact form of them is uncertain.

cubits long; two rows of fluted moulding,
 25 all cast in metal. The basin stood on the
 figures of twelve oxen, three facing north,
 three west, three south, three east, so
 26 resting on them that their hind quarters,
 turned inwards, could not be seen. The
 basin was three inches thick, and its brim
 curved as the brim of a cup does, or a lily-
 leaf; it held sixty-four tuns.
 27 He also made ten brazen stands for
 smaller basins, four cubits long, four cubits
 28 wide, and three cubits high. Even these
 stands were of embossed work; there was
 29 moulding between the shafts; moulding,
 too, between the upper and the lower rims,
 of lions and bulls and cherubim, and be-
 tween the shafts above them the same
 pattern; and under the lions and oxen hung
 30 thongs, as it were, of bronze. Each stand
 had four wheels, with axles of bronze; and
 on each of its four corners it had a bracket
 of molten work, to take the basin, four
 brackets facing one another at opposite
 31 corners. These supported a rest on which
 the extremity of the basin was to stand;
 a round rest which measured a cubit
 across, or a cubit and a half with the basin.
 At the corners round it there were en-
 graved columns, and the space between
 them was filled by other columns, square,
 32 not round. The four wheels were at the
 four corners of the stand, each pair con-
 nected under the stand itself; every wheel
 33 was a cubit and a half in height; such
 wheels were they as might be found in a
 chariot, axles and spokes and rims and
 34 naves all of molten work, just as the four
 brackets, springing from the corners of
 each stand, were of molten work and part
 of the stand itself. At the top of each stand
 35 was a round rim, half a cubit across, care-
 fully made so that the foot of the basin
 could rest upon it; a rim covered with en-
 graving, that had embossed work springing
 36 from it. The rings of which I have spoken
 were of bronze, and around these, and at
 the corners about them, were cherubim
 and lions and palm-trees, standing out like
 statues, as if they had been added on, in-
 37 stead of being cast with the rest. Thus he
 made the ten stands, all alike in the manner
 of their casting, in their measurements,
 38 and in their figured work. Then he made

the ten bronze basins, each holding three
 hundred gallons, four cubits across, and
 set one basin on each stand. Five of the
 39 stands were on the right side of the temple,
 five on the left, and the great basin itself on
 the right, towards the south-east.¹

Pot and shovel and bucket Hiram made, 40
 all that king Solomon needed for the ser-
 vice of the Lord's temple. He made the 41
 two pillars, and the chain-work for their
 capitals, and the net-work to cover the
 chain-work, and four hundred pome- 42
 granates to go with the net-work, two
 rows of them for each piece of net-work,
 to adorn the capitals of the pillars, ten 43
 stands, and a basin for each stand, the 44
 single great basin, and the twelve oxen
 that supported it, and pot and shovel and 45
 bucket besides. All the appurtenances of
 the Lord's temple which Hiram made for
 Solomon were of burnished bronze, and 46
 the king had them cast in the clay soil of
 the Jordan valley, between Sooth and 47
 Sarthan; a great multitude of them, such
 a multitude that he did not reckon the 48
 weight of all the bronze he used.

Other appurtenances, too, of the Lord's 48
 house must Solomon make; the golden 49
 altar, and the golden table upon which the
 hallowed loaves were set out, the golden 49
 lamp-stands, five on the right and five on
 the left, in front of the shrine, all of pure 50
 gold, the lily-work, and the golden lamps
 that rested in them; the golden tongs, and 50
 pot and fork and bowl and saucer and
 censer, all of pure gold. Of gold, too, were 51
 the door-hinges, both for the inner sanc-
 tuary and for the temple building. Thus 51
 Solomon completed all the work needed
 for the service of the Lord's house; and he
 brought into it all the silver and gold and
 other ware that his father David had con-
 secrated, laying them up among its
 treasures.

8 Then all the elders of Israel, the
 chiefs of the tribes, and the heads of
 clans, met in Jerusalem to help king Sol-
 omon bring the ark home; the ark then
 rested in the Keep of David, which we call
 Sion. It was on the great feast day of the
 seventh month (Ethanim, as it is called)
 that king Solomon sent out this summons

¹ Here again, in verses 1-39, both the Hebrew text and the Latin versions are very obscure, and the meaning intended by either can only be a matter of conjecture.

3 to the whole of Israel, and the elders, one
and all, came in answer to it. The priests
4 took up the ark, and soon ark and taber-
nacle and all the tabernacle's appur-
tenances were borne aloft, with priests and
5 Levites to carry them. King Solomon
walked before the ark, and with him all the
throng of Israelites that had assembled;
no reckoning made, no count taken, of the
sheep and oxen they offered up as victims.
6 So the ark that bears witness of the Lord's
covenant was borne by the priests to the
place designed for it, there in the temple's
inner shrine, where the cherubim spread
7 their wings; spread them over the very
place where the ark rested, to protect it and
8 protect the poles that bore it. These poles
juted out indeed, so that the ends of them
could be seen by one standing before the
shrine, beyond the limits of the inner
sanctuary; but never again were they seen
in the open; they have remained in the
9 temple to this day. And nothing was in
the ark except the two stone tablets Moses
laid up there on mount Horeb, when the
Lord made his covenant with the sons of
Israel after their escape from Egypt.

10 As soon as the priests had left the inner
sanctuary, the whole of the Lord's house
11 was wreathed in cloud; lost in that cloud,
the priests could not wait upon the Lord
with his accustomed service; his own glory
12 was there, filling his own house. Where the
cloud is, cried Solomon, the Lord has
13 promised to be; it is true, then, the house
I have built is to be thy dwelling, thy
14 throne for ever immovable. With that, the
king turned to bless the whole assembly of
Israel; all Israel, that stood to receive his
15 blessing. Blessed be the Lord God of
Israel, he said, who has now fulfilled in act
the promise he made to my father David.
16 So many years since he had rescued his
people from Egypt, and never a city
among all the tribes of Israel had he chosen
to be the site of his dwelling-place or the
shrine of his name; but a man he did choose
17 out, to rule his people, king David. And
when he, my father, would have built a
house in honour of the Lord God of Israel,
18 the Lord told him that he had done well to
conceive such a purpose in his heart; But
19 it is not for thee, he said, to build me a
house. A house shall be built in my
honour, but by thy son, the heir of thy

body. That promise of his the Lord has 20
fulfilled; I have come forward in my
father's place, to sit upon the throne of
Israel, as the Lord promised I should; it
has been mine to build a house to the
honour of the Lord, Israel's God, and to
21 find a home for this ark, witness of the
covenant made with our fathers when they
escaped from Egypt.

Then Solomon stood before the Lord's 22
altar in full view of all Israel, and lifted his
hands to heaven; and thus he prayed:
Lord God of Israel, thou reignest without
23 rival in heaven and earth, making good thy
merciful promises to all who follow thee
with undivided hearts. And thou hast not
24 disappointed thy servant, my father Da-
vid; thy act matches thy word; this day,
who doubts it? Do not forget, Lord God
of Israel, that other promise of thine to
25 David, that he should always have an heir
to sit on the throne of Israel, would but his
sons guide their steps, like David himself,
as in thy presence; let that promise, too, 26
Lord God of Israel, be ratified!

Folly it were to think that God has a 27
dwelling-place on earth. If the very
heavens, and the heavens that are above
the heavens, cannot contain thee, what
welcome can it offer thee, this house which
I have built? Yet, O Lord my God, do not
28 let this prayer go all unheeded, that sues
for thy favour; listen to the cry of entreaty
thy servant makes before thee this day!
This I ask, that thy eyes should be ever
29 watching, night and day, over this temple
of thine, the chosen sanctuary of thy name;
be this the meeting-place where thou wilt
listen to thy servant's prayer. Whatever 30
requests I or thy people Israel make shall
find audience here; thou wilt listen from
thy dwelling-place in heaven, and listen-
ing, wilt forgive.

Has a man wronged his neighbour, and 31
is he bidden to clear himself of the charge
by an oath? Then, if he comes to this
house of thine, to swear the lie before thy
altar, thou, in heaven, wilt be listening, and
32 ready to strike the blow; thine to do justice
between thy servants, passing sentence on
the guilty and avenging the wrong, acquit-
ting the innocent and granting him due
redress.

Are thy people of Israel condemned to 33
flee before their enemies, in punishment of

the sins they will surely commit? Then, if they come here repentant, and acknowledging thy power, pray to thee and plead with thee in this temple of thine, do thou, in heaven, listen to them, and forgive the sins of thy people Israel, and restore them to the land which thou gavest to their fathers.

Does the sky bar its gates against them, and give no rain, in punishment for their sins? Then, if they come here acknowledging thee with prayer and repentance, and turn away, in their sore need, from their sins, do thou, in heaven, listen, and grant thy servants the people of Israel forgiveness; teach them to guide their steps aright, and send rain on the land thou hast given them for their home.

Is there famine in the land, or pestilence, blight or rust, locust or mildew? Does some enemy press hard on it, besieging our city gates? Many are the forms of plague and sickness, of curse and ban, that may fall upon all Israel without distinction. But each heart knows the wound that galls it; and if any one man stretches out his hand to thee in this temple, thou, in heaven, thy dwelling-place, wilt listen and relent. Thou knowest the hearts of all human kind, and wilt send to each man, according to the dispositions of his heart, the lot his deeds deserve; so will men learn to fear thee, long as they live to enjoy the land thou gavest to our fathers.

Nay, is it some stranger, with no part in thy people Israel, who yet comes here from distant lands for love of thy renown? For indeed there will be talk of thy renown, of the constraining force thy power displays, all the world over. When such a man comes to pray in this temple, thou, in heaven, in thy secure dwelling-place, wilt listen to the alien's prayer and wilt answer it. So all the world shall learn to fear thy name, no less than Israel itself; shall doubt no more that this temple I have built claims thy protection.

Sometimes thy people will go out to levy war upon their enemies, here and there at thy bidding. Then, as they fall to prayer, let them but turn in the direction of the city thou hast chosen, the temple I have built there in thy honour, and thou, in heaven, wilt listen to their prayer for aid, wilt maintain their cause.

But what, if they have offended thee by their faults? No man but is guilty of some fault; it may be thou wilt give them up, in thy anger, into the power of their enemies, and as prisoners they will endure exile in neighbouring countries, or countries far away. But ere long, in their banishment, they will come back to thee with repentant hearts, crying out, poor exiles, We are sinners, we have done amiss, rebels all! In that alien land, the land of their captivity, they will come back to thee with all the purpose of their heart and soul. Then, if they turn in prayer towards the land thou gavest to their fathers, the city of thy choice, and the temple I have built there in thy honour, thou, in heaven, on thy peaceful throne, wilt once more listen to their prayer for aid, wilt maintain their cause still. Thou wilt relent towards thy people, though they have sinned against thee, wilt pardon the wrong their transgressions have done thee, wilt melt the hearts of their captors into pity. Are they not thy own people, thy coveted possession, the men thou didst rescue from Egypt's furnace of iron? Ever let thy eyes be watchful, to look down upon me, thy servant, and upon thy people, when they cry for aid; give all their requests a hearing. Hast thou not set them apart, among all the peoples of the world, to be thy coveted possession? Was not this thy promise, given through thy servant Moses when thou didst rescue our fathers from Egypt. O Lord our God?

So prayed king Solomon, so he pleaded with the Lord; and when he had finished, he rose up from before the Lord's altar, where he had knelt on the ground with his hands outstretched towards heaven, and standing there, gave his blessing aloud to the whole assembly of Israel. Blessed be the Lord, he said, that he has given his people of Israel the repose he promised them; of all the hopes his word through Moses gave us, never one has been left unfulfilled. May the Lord our God be with us still, as he was with our fathers, never forsaking us, never casting us away; may he turn our hearts towards himself, ready to follow every path he has shewn us, keep every command, observance and decree he bade our fathers keep. May this prayer I have uttered before him plead with the

Lord our God day and night, to win redress, for me, and for his people Israel, as the time shall need it; proving to the whole world that the Lord alone is God, there can be no other. Wholly be our hearts given to the Lord our God, ready (as we are ready this day) to live by his laws, and keep true to his commandments.

Then the king and all Israel with him immolated their victims in the Lord's presence; twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep were slaughtered as Solomon's welcome-offering to the Lord. Thus the king and the men of Israel dedicated the temple. That day, the king must needs hallow the middle part of the court before the Lord's house, burning there the burnt-sacrifice, and the bloodless offerings, and the fat taken from the welcome-victims; there was no room for these on the brazen altar that stood there in the Lord's presence. High festival king Solomon kept at this time before the Lord our God, and with him a great multitude from the whole land of Israel, that stretched from the pass of Emath down to the River of Egypt. Fourteen days it lasted, a whole week and then a second week;¹ and at last, when the eighth day came, the king sent the people home. So back they went to their dwelling-places, rejoicing with full hearts over all the mercies the Lord had shewn to his servant David, and to his own people of Israel.

9 When Solomon had finished building temple and palace, and achieved all his purpose, the Lord appeared to him a second time, as he had appeared to him once at Gabaon. I have listened to thy prayer, the Lord told him, to the suit thou hast preferred before me; and this temple thou hast built I myself have hallowed, to be the everlasting shrine of my name; never a day but my eyes shall be watching, my heart attentive here. Do thou guide thy steps, like thy father, as in my presence, with an undivided heart and steadfastly; do thou fulfil all that I command, hold true to my observances and my decrees; and I will grant to thy line dominion over Israel eternally. Such was my pro-

mise to thy father David, that he should always have an heir to sit on the throne of Israel. But if you and your children are content to turn your backs on me, following me no more, neglecting the commands and observances I have enjoined on you, betaking yourselves to the service and worship of alien gods, then I will sweep Israel away from the land I gave them, and this temple which I have hallowed as the shrine of my name, shall be thrust away out of my sight. Israel shall become a proverb and a by-word among all the nations, and this house shall be the monument of its fall. The passer-by will stand wondering, and hiss in derision; What means it, he will ask, that the Lord has treated this land, this house so cruelly? And the answer will come, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who rescued their fathers from the land of Egypt, and betook themselves to the worship and service of alien gods; that is why the Lord brought all this ruin upon them.

It was twenty years after Solomon had finished the two buildings, temple and palace, that Hiram, king of Tyre, who had sent him the cedar and the fir-wood and the gold he needed for his undertaking, received twenty townships from him, belonging to the land of Galilee. And when he came on a visit from Tyre to see the townships Solomon had allotted to him, he liked them but little; What, brother, he cried, were these the only cities thou couldst spare me? And he gave that region the name of Chabul,² which it bears to this day. It was twenty thousand talents' weight of gold that Hiram sent to king Solomon.

As for the reasons why king Solomon made such heavy disbursements, they were these; he must build the temple, and the palace, and Mello, and Jerusalem wall, and Hesper, and Mageddo, and Gazer. Gazer had been taken and burnt by the invading army of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; its inhabitants, who were Chanaanites, he put to the sword, and later gave it by way of dowry when his daughter married king Solomon. It was for Solomon, therefore, to rebuild it, together with Lower Bethoron,

¹ It is probable that one week was devoted to keeping the feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23. 34). ² The precise meaning of the word Chabul cannot be determined. Some have supposed a popular derivation which gave it the sense of 'worthless'.

18 and Baalath, and Palmyra out in the
 19 desert. And in general he fortified the
 unwall'd towns in his dominions; he must
 have cities, too, in which his chariots and
 horsemen could be quartered. Much else,
 too, he had the whim to build in Jerusalem,
 and on Lebanon, and in all parts of his
 20 kingdom. (Many of the former inhabitants
 still remained, not of Israelite stock,
 Amorrhites, Hethites, Pherezites, Hev-
 21 ites, and Jebusites; and these descendants
 of the races which Israel could never ex-
 terminate, king Solomon made into bond-
 22 servants, as they are to this day. Among
 the Israelites, he would make no man his
 slave; it was from these that he drew his
 warriors and his courtiers, his princes and
 his captains, the commanders of his
 23 chariots and horsemen. Five hundred and
 fifty overseers king Solomon had, to hold
 24 the people to their appointed tasks.) And
 no sooner had Pharaoh's daughter removed
 from the Keep of David to her new palace,
 than Solomon set about building up
 Mello.

25 Three times a year Solomon offered
 burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offerings on
 the altar he had made in the Lord's
 honour, and burned incense in the Lord's
 presence; and he kept the temple in
 repair.¹

26 King Solomon also built a fleet at
 Asion-Gaber, near Ailath on the shore of
 27 the Red Sea, in the territory of Edom. In
 this fleet, Hiram sent men of his own,
 mariners that had long experience of the
 sea, to serve with king Solomon's men.
 28 They sailed as far as Ophir, and thence
 brought back to Solomon four hundred
 and twenty talents' weight of gold.

10 And now Solomon was visited by
 the queen of Saba. She had heard
 by report of the wisdom with which the
 Lord's favour had endowed him, and came
 to make trial of his powers with knotty
 2 questions. Magnificent was the retinue
 with which she entered Jerusalem; spices
 and abundant gold and precious stones
 were the lading of her camels. And when
 she met king Solomon, she told him all the

thoughts that exercised her mind; every
 3 doubt he resolved, no question of hers but
 found an answer. And when she saw how
 4 wise a man he was, saw, too, the house he
 had built, the food that was on his table,
 5 the lodging of his servants, the order and
 splendour of his court, how the wine went
 round, and what burnt-sacrifice he offered
 in the Lord's temple;² she stood breathless
 in wonder. And she said to the king, It
 6 was no false tale I heard in my own coun-
 try, of all thou dost and of all the wisdom
 that is thine. I could not believe what they
 told me, without coming and seeing it for
 myself; and now I find that half of it was
 lost in the telling; here is greater wisdom,
 greater prosperity than all the tales that
 8 reached me. Happy thy folk, happy these
 servants of thine who wait ever upon thy
 presence and listen to thy wise words.
 9 Blessed be the Lord thy God, who, in his
 eternal love for Israel, has brought thee,
 his favourite, to the throne, given thee a
 king's power to do justice and to make
 award!

A hundred and twenty talents' weight
 10 of gold she gave to king Solomon, with
 many spices and precious stones; never
 did such abundance of spices come to Is-
 rael as those which the queen of Saba gave.
 (Though indeed Hiram's fleet, when it
 11 brought back the gold from Ophir, brought
 rich store of sandal-wood, as well as pre-
 cious stones; and of this sandal-wood king
 12 Solomon made pedestals for temple and
 palace, harp and zither for his musicians;
 finer sandal-wood never reached us, no,
 nor was ever seen.) Solomon, in his turn,
 11 gave the queen of Saba all she desired and
 asked for; gave her much, too, unasked, in
 the royal munificence that was his. And
 so she went back to her own country, with
 all her retinue.

The weight of gold that reached Solo-
 1 mon every year was six hundred and
 sixty-six talents, not counting what was
 11 brought him by his revenue officers, mer-
 chants and pedlars, from the kings of
 Arabia, and from his own commissioners.
 11 Two hundred shields king Solomon made
 of the purest gold, allowing six hundred

¹ 'Kept the temple in repair': literally, in the Latin, 'finished it'. But it seems impossible to give any good reason why the finishing of the temple should be mentioned here as if it were a new event; and the verb used in the Hebrew text has the root sense of 'making safe'.
² 'What burnt-sacrifice he offered in the Lord's temple'; or perhaps, 'his stairway to the Lord's temple'

sicles of gold to the plating of each; three hundred bucklers, too, of assayed gold, with three (hundred) minas of gold to cover each; and all these the king put in the building that was called the Forest of Lebanon. He also made a great throne of ivory, and lined it with gold unalloyed; six steps led up to it, and at the back the upper part of it was rounded. The seat itself had two supporters, with a lion standing by each, and on each step there was a lion at either side; no other kingdom could shew such workmanship. Of gold were all the goblets from which king Solomon drank, of purest gold all the furniture in the building called the Forest of Lebanon; no silver was used, for indeed in King Solomon's day silver was little thought of. And every three years the king's fleet and Hiram's would sail to Tharsis, whence they came back laden with gold and silver; with ivory, too, and apes, and peacocks for their freight.

So, both in riches and in wisdom, Solomon outvied all the kings of the world; and from every part of the world men craved his audience, to make proof for themselves of the wisdom God had put in his heart. And all these brought him gifts, so that gold and silver ware, presents of clothes and of armour, spices too, and horses and mules, came in year by year. Of chariots and horsemen king Solomon mustered a great force, fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen; of these, some were in the fortified towns, and some at the king's side in Jerusalem. Silver he made as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedars plentiful as the sycamores that grow in the plains. And horses were brought to Solomon from Egypt and from Coa,² where his agents bought them and sent them to him for a fixed sum. Six hundred pieces of silver was the cost of a chariot brought from Egypt, and fifty of a horse; the kings of the Hethites and of Syria, too, sold him horses at the same price.

11 But king Solomon gave his heart to many women of alien birth, not only to Pharaoh's daughter, but to Moab-

ites and Ammonites, Edomites and Sidonians and Hethites. It was of such races that the Lord had warned Israel, You must not mate with them, or let them mate with your daughters; no question but they will beguile your hearts into the worship of their own gods. Hotly he loved and close he clung to them; seven hundred wives, each with a queen's rights, and three hundred concubines besides; what marvel if they beguiled his heart? So, an old man now, he was enticed by women into the worship of alien gods, and his heart was not true to the Lord, his own God, like his father David's before him. To Ashtarh, goddess of the Sidonians, Solomon bowed down, and to Moloch, the false god of Ammon, and set the Lord's will at defiance, instead of shewing his father's loyalty. To Chamos, the false god of Moab, and to Moloch, the false god of Ammon, Solomon built shrines, there on the mountain-side in full view of Jerusalem, and humoured thus all those foreign wives of his, that must burn incense, each to her own god, and offer victims.

So the Lord was angry with Solomon for playing him false, when he, the Lord God of Israel, had twice appeared to him, and warned him against this very sin of alien worship; a warning that went unremembered. Since this is thy mind, he told Solomon, to disregard my covenant and the bidding I gave thee, I will not scruple to tear the kingdom from thy grasp, and give it to one of thy own servants. Only, for the love of thy father David, I will not do it in thy life-time; it is thy son that shall lose his kingdom. Nor will I take away the whole of it; one tribe he shall have left to him, for the sake of my servant David, and Jerusalem, the city of my choice.

And the Lord gave Solomon an enemy to contend with, Adad the Idumean, of the royal dynasty of Edom. This man had made his escape, at the time when David invaded Idumea, and Joab, the commander of his army, was seeing to the burial of all its male inhabitants, who had been put to the sword. Joab, with all the fighting men of Israel, had spent six

¹ The word 'hundred' seems to appear in the Latin by inadvertence. ² The sense of the Hebrew text here is uncertain: some would understand the word 'Coa' as a common noun, not as a proper name; perhaps 'droves' of horses.

months there, exterminating every male
 17 survivor of the Edomite race, and mean-
 while Adad, still in early boyhood, took
 refuge in Egypt, under the charge of cer-
 18 tain Edomites, that had been his father's
 servants. It was from Median they began
 their journey, and when they reached
 Pharan they found adherents there; with
 these, they made their way into Egypt and
 had recourse to king Pharao, who gave
 Adad a house of his own, with an allowance
 19 of food and lands to cultivate. Great
 favour Adad won with king Pharao, who
 gave him his own sister-in-law, the sister
 20 of queen Taphnes, for his wife; by her he
 had a son, Genubath, whom Taphnes
 brought up at Pharao's palace, so that he
 lived at court among Pharao's own chil-
 dren.
 21 When news reached Adad, there in
 Egypt, that David had been laid to rest
 with his fathers, and that Joab, too, the
 commander of his army, was dead, he
 asked Pharao's leave to go back to his own
 22 country. Why, Pharao asked, what is
 lacking to thee here, that thou shouldst be
 pining for thy home? Nothing, said he,
 23 but give me leave for all that. (Meanwhile,
 God gave Solomon another enemy to con-
 tend with, Razon, son of Eliada, that ran
 away from his master, Adazerer king of
 24 Soba, and levied war on him. When David
 conquered Soba, Razon became leader of
 a robber band, that went and settled in
 Damascus, where they made him king;
 25 and all through Solomon's reign he was
 the enemy of Israel.) Such was the cause
 of Adad's rebellion and his ill will against
 Israel, and he set up a kingdom in Syria.¹
 26 There was a servant, too, of king Solo-
 mon's that turned against him, Jeroboam
 son of Nabat, an Ephraimite that lived at
 Sareda with his widowed mother, Sarva.
 27 And this is the story of his rebellion against
 his master. At the time when Solomon
 was building Mello, and filling up the gap
 his father had left in the walls of David's
 28 Keep, this Jeroboam was a warrior at the
 height of his strength, and Solomon
 marked him out for a young man gifted and

active, so he put him in charge of the
 labour that was exacted from the northern
 tribes.² And now, as Jeroboam was leaving 29
 Jerusalem, he met the prophet Ahias, of
 Silo, that was clad in a new cloak, out in
 the open country, where none else was by.
 And Ahias, tearing the new cloak he wore 30
 into twelve pieces, bade Jeroboam take ten 31
 of them; This message, said he, the Lord
 God of Israel sends thee, I mean to wrest
 the kingship from the power of Solomon,
 and make over ten tribes to thee. One 32
 tribe shall remain his, for the sake of my
 servant David, and of Jerusalem, among
 all the cities of Israel the city of my choice.
 He has forsaken me, to worship Astarthe, 33
 goddess of the Sidonians, Chamos, god of
 Moab, and Moloch, god of Ammon; he
 has not followed the path I bade him
 follow, by doing my will and keeping
 command and decree of mine, like his
 father David before him. Not from his 34
 hand will I take the kingdom away, nor all
 of it; while he lives, I will grant him rule
 over it, for love of my chosen servant
 David, that kept command and decree of
 mine faithfully; but his son shall lose it. 35
 Ten tribes I will give to thee, and to his
 son one tribe only, so that my servant
 David may still have his lamp alight in my
 presence, there in Jerusalem, the favoured
 sanctuary of my name. On thee my choice 36
 shall fall; thou shalt have power to thy
 heart's content, the king of Israel. And if 37
 thou wilt attend to the charge I lay upon
 thee, following the ways I bid thee follow
 and doing my will, keeping command and
 decree of mine as my servant David once
 did, then I will be with thee, and grant
 thee a dynasty abiding as David's was.
 I will make Israel over to thee; such sorrow 38
 I will bring on the race of David, but not
 for ever.

Solomon would fain have put Jeroboam
 to death, but he was up and gone; he took
 refuge with Sesac king of Egypt, and re-
 mained there till Solomon's death. As for
 the rest of Solomon's life and doings, and
 the stories told of his wisdom, they are all
 to be found in the Annals of king Solomon.

¹ In verses 23-25 it seems possible there has been some confusion in the text. The sentences printed in brackets, which interrupt the story of Adad, are omitted by the best manuscripts of the Greek Septuagint, which also represent Adad as ruling, not in Syria, but in his own country of Edom. Later, however, we find kings of Syria bearing the title 'son of Adad' (15. 18 below and elsewhere). ² The labour that was exacted from the northern tribes; literally, 'the tribute of all the house of Joseph'. It seems fairly certain that 'Joseph' is used, here as elsewhere, to designate the ten tribes which separated from Juda.

42 He was forty years on the throne, with his capital at Jerusalem, but with all Israel for his subjects; and when he was laid to rest with his fathers, they buried him, David's heir, in David's Keep. And he was succeeded by his son Roboam.

12 This Roboam betook himself to Sichern; at Sichern the whole of Israel had assembled to crown him king. 2 But meanwhile Jeroboam, son of Nabat, who had fled to Egypt to be out of king Solomon's reach, had come back home upon hearing the news of his death; and he, too, was summoned to meet them. He, and all Israel with him, came to make a request of Roboam; Thy father, they said, made us bear a bitter yoke. That cruel sway of his, that hard yoke, do thou mitigate, and we will be thy servants on that condition. Give me two days, said he, and then come back to hear my answer. So, when the people had left him, king Roboam asked advice first of the older men that had been courtiers in the life-time of his father, king Solomon; what answer should he make to the people? Why, they told him, if thou dost defer to them and do their will, granting this request of theirs and speaking graciously to them, they will never cease giving thee loyal service. But he left their advice unheeded, and took counsel instead with the younger men who had grown up with him; How think you, he asked, I should make answer to the people's request, that I would lighten the yoke my father laid on them? And these, men of his own upbringing, gave him advice in their turn. Do they complain that thy father laid a heavy yoke on them, and ask for relief? Then tell them there is more strength in thy little finger than in all the breadth of thy father's back; if his yoke fell heavy on them, thine shall be heavier still; if thy father's weapon was the lash, thine shall be the scorpion.¹

12 So the third day came, and Jeroboam, with all the people at his back, kept the tryst which the king had made with them for the third day following. And the king, instead of heeding the advice which the older men had given, spoke to the people harshly, with such words as the younger men had prescribed to him. If my father's

yoke fell heavy on you, he told them, mine shall be heavier still; if his weapon was the lash, mine shall be the scorpion. Thus the king refused to fall in with his people's will; the Lord had left him to his own devices, in fulfilment of the promise Ahias the Silonite made, in his name, to Jeroboam son of Nabat. And when the people found that the king would not listen to them, they were quick with their answer. David is none of ours, they cried; not for us the son of Jesse; go back, men of Israel, to your homes! Let David look to the affairs of his own tribe! And with that, the people dispersed to their homes; none but the Israelites living in the cities of Juda would acknowledge Roboam as king.

And now, when Adoram, who had charge of the levy, came to them in the king's name, the Israelites stoned him to death; whereupon Roboam mounted his chariot and betook himself, with all speed, to Jerusalem. From that day to this, the men of Israel have refused allegiance to the dynasty of David. Hearing of Jeroboam's return, they met and summoned him to be present; and so they made him king of all Israel, leaving none to take part with David's line except the one tribe of Juda. Roboam, indeed, upon reaching Jerusalem, mustered the whole tribe of Juda, including Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand choice warriors, to make war on the men of Israel; their cry was that Roboam, Solomon's heir, must be restored to his kingdom. But the Lord sent word to the prophet Semeias, Here is a message for Roboam, son of Solomon, king of Juda, and for the men of Juda and Benjamin, the loyal remnant of the people. You are not to march out, the Lord says, and make war upon the sons of Israel, your own brethren; go home, every man of you; all this is my doing. So they obeyed the Lord's will, and gave up their journey at his bidding.

As for Jeroboam, he fortified Sichern, in the hill-country of Ephraim, to be his capital; then he went on to fortify Phaniel. And it came into his mind, The kingdom will go back to the dynasty of David if these subjects of mine are allowed to go and sacrifice in the Lord's house at Jerusalem. Their loyalties will go out again to their old

¹ 'Scorpion' was probably a name given to some instrument of punishment then in use.

master, king Roboam of Juda; they will kill me, and return to his allegiance. And this was the plan he devised; he made two golden calves, and said to the men of Israel, Here are your gods; the same gods that rescued you from the land of Egypt; no need to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem any more. One of the calves he set up at Bethel, and the other at Dan. Here was great sin caused; all the way to Dan men would go on pilgrimage, to worship a calf. Jeroboam made shrines, too, on the hill-tops, and chose men to be priests here and there and everywhere among the people, men that were not of Levi's race. And he appointed a feast-day of his own, on the fifteenth day of the month, to match the feast-day kept in Juda, but it was in the eighth month. He too, in Bethel, would mount the steps of the altar and do sacrifice, but to calf-gods of his own making. And at Bethel he established the priests that served the hill-shrines he had made.

On the fifteenth day, then, of the eighth month, his self-devised feast-day for the sons of Israel, Jeroboam went up to the altar he had built in Bethel, and began, standing there, to offer incense.

13 At that very moment, as Jeroboam stood at the altar and cast the incense down, a prophet came to Bethel, sent by the Lord from Juda; and in the Lord's name he cried aloud against the altar, Listen, thou altar, listen to a message from the Lord. I see a prince that is to come, born of David's race, Josias by name, that shall sacrifice on thee the very priests who now feed thee with incense; the bones of dead men shall be thy sacrifice. And he offered them proof, there and then; Here is a sign, he told them, to prove that this message comes from the Lord; see if this altar does not fall apart, and spill the ashes it holds! So cried the prophet against the altar at Bethel; and the king, hearing it, lifted his hand from the altar, pointed to the prophet and cried, Seize him! With that, his outstretched hand withered up; no more could he bring it back to his side; and meanwhile, the altar fell apart, spilling its ashes; the very sign which the Lord had inspired his prophet to foretell. Plead with the Lord thy God, the king said to him, and pray for me, that

I may have the use of my hand again. So the prophet entreated God's mercy for him, and his hand was restored to him, as sound as before. And now the king would have the prophet come home with him to take food, and to be rewarded with gifts, but he answered, Thou mightest offer me half thy kingdom before I would come with thee, before a crust of bread or a drop of water should pass my lips. Such is the charge the Lord's word laid upon me; I must neither eat nor drink, nor go home by the way I came hither. So he set out home by another road, not retracing the journey by which he had come to Bethel.

There was an old seer dwelling at Bethel, whose sons came and told him what deeds the prophet of God had done in the town that day; told what words had passed, too, between him and the king. Whereupon their father asked what road he had taken, this prophet from Juda; and when he had found out this from his sons, he bade them saddle the ass for him. Saddle it they did, and he mounted, and went out in search of the prophet, whom he found sitting under an oak-tree. Asking whether he were the prophet from Juda, and learning that he was, he bade him come home and share his meal. But the other said, I must not turn back and go with thee, must not take food or drink here; when the Lord spoke to me, it was part of his message that I must neither eat nor drink at Bethel, nor leave it by the way I entered it. But he would take no denial. I too, said he, am a prophet like thyself, and an angel has brought me a message from the Lord that I am to take thee home and give thee food and drink. With such words the prophet was beguiled, and went back to eat and drink with him.

Even as they sat at table, the Lord's word came to the seer that had detained him. A message from the Lord, cried he to the prophet from Juda. Thou hast disobeyed him; he, the Lord thy God, gave thee a strict injunction, and thou hast not kept it. Thou hast turned back, there to eat and drink where he bade thee leave food and drink untasted. For thy punishment, thy body shall not be laid to rest in the burying-place of thy fathers.

When their meal was done, he saddled his own ass for the prophet, his guest. And

he, setting out on his journey, met with a lion, that slew him. There lay his body on the open road, with the ass close by; the lion, too, remained standing there beside
 25 its prey. Passers-by told how they had seen it, a lion standing beside a dead man's body that lay in the road, when they reached the township where the old seer
 26 lived, and when it came to his ears, he bethought him of his guest; It must be the prophet, said he, that was disobedient to the Lord's command; the Lord has suffered this lion to maul and kill him, in fulfilment of the divine threat that was
 27 made to him. Then he bade his sons saddle
 28 him an ass; and when it was saddled, he set out on his journey, and found the body lying there by the road with ass and lion standing over it; never a morsel of its prey had the lion eaten, and to the ass it did no
 29 harm. So the old seer took up the prophet's body and put it on the ass, and returned with it to his own city, to mourn
 30 over the dead. In his own tomb he laid the corpse down, and they mourned for him,
 31 crying out, Alas, brother, alas the day! And after they had finished mourning, he said to his sons, When I die, bury me in this tomb where God's prophet rests, laying
 32 my bones beside his. It will come true past all doubt, the threat which he uttered in the Lord's name against the altar at Bethel, and the hill-shrines in the cities of Samaria.

33 All this notwithstanding, Jeroboam would not amend his sinful ways; still he appointed priests here and there and everywhere among the people, consecrating the first comer to minister at his hill-shrines. So it was that the race of Jeroboam became tainted with guilt, doomed to perish and to leave no trace behind it.

14 And now Jeroboam's son Abia fell sick. Whereupon Jeroboam said to his wife, Here is a journey needs to be made; but first disguise thyself, so that none may know thou art the wife of Jeroboam. It is to Silo thou must go, where Ahias lives, the prophet who foretold that
 3 I should be king of this realm; to him betake thyself, hearing ten loaves with

thee, and some pastry, and a pot of honey; from him thou wilt learn what is to become of the boy. So Jeroboam's wife did his bidding; to Silo she made her way, and found Ahias' house. Ahias had no sight left now, so dim were his eyes grown with old age; but the Lord made it known to
 5 him that Jeroboam's wife was coming to ask him about her son, that had fallen sick, and told him what words he must use to her. She, as she entered, would have given herself out to be other than she was; but
 6 Ahias, as soon as he heard the fall of her feet on the threshold, cried out, Come in, wife of Jeroboam; why dost thou feign thyself to be another? I am charged with bitter tidings for thee.

Go and give Jeroboam this message from the Lord God of Israel: Was it for this I chose thee out among the common folk, and gave thee command of my people Israel, tearing David's kingdom asunder to
 8 enthrone thee? My servant David was not such a man as thou art. He kept my commandments, obeying me with all his heart, and doing my will. And thou? Thou hast
 9 done more amiss than any who went before thee, making thyself molten images of alien gods; me thou hast defied, me thou hast rejected. And I, in return, mean to
 10 bring ruin on all Jeroboam's race, smiting every man that belongs to it, bondman or free man, throughout all Israel; I mean to sweep away the last remnants of his race, like the dung that must be swept away till
 11 all is clean. Die they in the city, they shall be food for the dogs; die they in the open country, they shall be food for all the birds of heaven; it is the Lord's decree. Up, then, betake thyself home, and as thy feet
 12 cross the threshold of the city, thy son will die. Lament and burial he shall have from the people of Israel; in him alone, of all
 13 Jeroboam's race, some loyalty to the God of Israel is found, and he alone, of all Jeroboam's race, shall be carried to the grave. This day, even as I speak, the Lord
 14 has marked out for the throne of Israel one who shall destroy the race of Jeroboam. And as for Israel itself, it shall tremble
 15 under the hand of the Lord God, as a reed trembles in the water; he will root them out from the fair land which he gave to

¹ 'Bondman or free man'; literally, 'shut up or last'. The same Hebrew idiom is used here as in Deut. 12. 36.

their fathers, and scatter them beyond the Great River, men that defined the Lord with forest-shrines of their own fashioning.

- 16 And if the Lord abandons Israel thus, it is for the guilt of Jeroboam, that sinned, and taught Israel to sin.
- 17 So Jeroboam's wife left him, and made her way back to Thersa, where her feet no sooner crossed the threshold than her son died. Burial he had, and all Israel mourned for him, as the prophet Ahias had promised in the Lord's name. What else Jeroboam did, how he fought and how he reigned, is to be found written in the
- 20 Annals of the kings of Israel. When his reign had lasted twenty-two years, he was laid to rest with his fathers, and the throne passed to his son Nadab.
- 21 Meanwhile king Solomon's son Roboam was reigning in Juda. He was forty-one years old when he came to the throne, and for seventeen years he reigned as king at Jerusalem, the city which the Lord chose out of all the cities of Israel to be the sanctuary of his name. His mother was an
- 22 Ammonitess called Naama. In his reign the men of Juda earned the Lord's displeasure by sinning against him more defiantly than their fathers ever had before
- 23 them. They, like the men of Israel, raised altar and image and shrine, on every high hill and under every spreading tree; and
- 24 these shrines had their prostitutes; they flourished again, all the unnatural deeds of the heathen, whom the Lord dispossessed at Israel's coming. In Roboam's
- 25 fifth year, Sesac king of Egypt marched on Jerusalem, and took away all the treasures from temple and palace, plundering every-
- 26 where; took away, too, the shields of gold which Solomon had fashioned. In place
- 27 of these, Roboam made shields of bronze, which he entrusted to the captains of his shield-bearers and palace guards; when he
- 28 made a progress into the Lord's house, they were carried by the officers that marched before him, and afterwards taken
- 29 back to the shield-bearers' armoury. What else Roboam did, all the history of his reign, is to be found in the Annals of the
- 30 kings of Juda. All through his reign there was war between him and Jeroboam. So
- 31 Roboam, son of the Ammonitess Naama,

was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place; and the throne passed to his son Abiam.

15 Abiam, coming to the throne of Juda in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam, reigned three years at Jerusalem. (His mother was called Maacha, daughter of Abessalom.)¹ Everywhere he followed the sinful example his father had set him, unworthy heir of David, that ever kept faith with the Lord his God. Yet, for David's sake, the Lord suffered him to keep the lamp of the royal dynasty burning at Jerusalem; a son he must have to follow him, for the city's preservation. Such reward David had for doing the Lord's will, nor ever swerving, while life lasted, from his decrees, except in the matter of Urias the Hethite. While Roboam lived, he was at war with Jeroboam, and there was war, too, between Jeroboam and Abiam. What else Abiam did, all the history of his reign, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda. So Abiam was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Asa.

Asa, coming to the throne of Juda in the twentieth year of Jeroboam, reigned as king at Jerusalem for forty-one years. His mother was called Maacha, daughter of Abessalom. And Asa did the Lord's will, like king David, his ancestor, ridding the land of shrine-prostitutes, and sweeping away all the filth of idolatry his fathers had brought in with them. He even deprived his mother Maacha of her queenly rank, for her worship of Priapus and for dedicating a forest shrine to him; the grotto she had made he overthrew, broke the image and burnt the fragments of it and cast the ashes into the river Cedron. He did not abolish the hill-shrines; but all his days his heart was true to the Lord; and he enriched the Lord's house with gold and silver and other offerings for its use, some dedicated by his father and some in performance of his own vows.

This Asa and Baasa king of Israel were at war continually. Baasa would not be content with his own Israelite territory; he invaded Juda and began making a for-

¹ The note in brackets seems to have been included here by mistake; cf. verse 10 below. According to II Par. 13. 2 Abiam's mother was Michaiia, daughter of Uriel.

18 tified city of Rama, so as to deny Asa's subjects free passage. Whereupon Asa took out all the silver and gold that was left in the treasure-chambers of temple and palace; this was to be conveyed by his messengers to Damascus, to Benadad, son of Tabremon, son of Hezion, king of Syria. There is an alliance between us, he said, inherited from thy father and mine; witness these gifts of silver and gold I send thee. Do thou annul the treaty thou hast made with Baasa, king of Israel, and help me drive him out of my country. Benadad, falling in with the request, sent out his generals with orders to attack the cities of Israel; Ahion they overcame, and Dan, and Abel Beth-Maacha, and all Cenneroth, till Nephthali had no land remaining. So Baasa, when the news reached him, went back to Thersa, leaving the defences of Rama half finished; and the men of Juda, summoned by a royal decree which admitted of no denial, carried off all the stones and woodwork he had erected there; Asa made use of it to fortify Gabaa in Benjamin, and Maspha. What else Asa did, the power he wielded, all his history, and the record of the cities he built, are to be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda. At last old age came upon him, and with old age, disease attacked his feet. So he was laid to rest with his fathers, in the Keep of his ancestor David, and the throne passed to his son Josaphat.

25 It was in the second year of Asa that Jeroboam's son Nadab came to the throne of Israel, and his reign over Israel lasted 26 two years; he defied the Lord's will, following the evil example of his father, that 27 sinned and taught Israel to sin. Then, while he was laying siege to the Philistine city of Gebbethon, at the head of the Israelite army, Baasa son of Ahias, a man of Issachar, conspired against him and killed him there. So, in the third year of Asa, 28 Baasa succeeded Nadab as king. And he, on coming to the throne, put all Jeroboam's kindred to death; not a man did he spare, so that the whole race perished, as the Lord's servant, Ahias the Silonite, had 29 prophesied in his name. So deep was Jeroboam's guilt, that sinned and taught

Israel to sin; so was he punished for defying the Lord God of Israel. What else 31 Nadab did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

It was this Baasa that was at war with 32 Asa continually; Baasa, son of Ahias, who came to the throne in Asa's third year, and for twenty-four years reigned over Israel at Thersa. He too defied the Lord's will, 34 and followed the sinful ways by which Jeroboam taught Israel to sin.

16 To this Baasa the Lord sent a message by Jehu, son of Hanani: Was it for this I raised thee up out of the dust, and made thee ruler of my people Israel, that thou shouldst follow the ways of Jeroboam, teaching my people Israel to sin, and by their sins to defy my anger? See if I do not sweep away every trace of Baasa and Baasa's line, treating thy race as I treated the race of Jeroboam son of Nabat. Die they in the city, they shall be food for the dogs, die they in the open country, they shall be food for all the birds of heaven. What else Baasa did, all his history and the record of all his battles, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel. So he was laid to rest with his fathers, with Thersa for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Ela. (It was through the prophet Jehu, son of Hanani, that the Lord pronounced sentence upon Baasa and his line, and on all the provocations by which he had earned the Lord's displeasure, following the example of Jeroboam's race; and Baasa, for that reason, put the prophet Jehu to death.¹)

It was in the twenty-sixth year of Asa 8 that Baasa's son Ela came to the throne of Israel; and when he had reigned two years at Thersa, his own servant Zambri, that led half his cavalry, rebelled against him. Ela was at Thersa, drinking himself drunk at the house of Arsa, that was prefect of the city, when Zambri rushed in and gave him a mortal blow, taking the throne for himself, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa's reign over Juda. Once he was king, and settled on the throne, he struck down 11 all Baasa's descendants, leaving no male

¹ 'And Baasa, for that reason, put the prophet Jehu to death'; both in the Hebrew text and in the Septuagint Greek we read 'And because he killed him', that is, presumably, because Baasa killed Nadab. The Latin gives a preferable sense.

among them alive, his kinsfolk, too, and his friends. When Zambri thus made an end of Baasa's race, the sentence which the Lord had passed on Baasa through the prophet Jehu was carried out; they must atone for their guilt, Baasa and his son Ela, that sinned and taught Israel to sin, defying the Lord God of Israel with their false worship. What else Ela did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

So, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa, Zambri reigned in Thersa for seven days. The army of Israel were then laying siege to the Philistine city of Gebbethon; and when news reached them of Zambri's conspiracy and the king's death, they chose, by common consent, a king of their own. This was Amri, who was then in command of the Israelite forces, and was present there in the camp. So Amri with all his men left Gebbethon and laid siege to Thersa; and Zambri, seeing that the city must needs fall, retired into the palace and burned it over his own head. So he died, in all the guilt of defying the Lord by following the example of Jeroboam; in all the guilt, too, he had brought on Israel by teaching them to sin. What else Zambri did, the story of his plot and of his tyranny, are to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

Thereupon the Israelite people divided itself into two factions; half of them espoused the cause of Thebni, son of Gineth, and would have made a king of him, the other half followed Amri. But Amri's party gained the victory over Thebni's; so Thebni came to his death, and Amri to a throne. It was in the thirty-first year of Asa that Amri began his reign over Israel, which lasted twelve years. For the first six, his capital was at Thersa; then, for two talents of silver, he bought the hill of Samaria from Somer, and built on it a city which he called Samaria, after Somer's name. This Amri defied the Lord's will more recklessly than any king before him, following the wicked ways of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin, and provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with his false worship. What else Amri did, the record of all the battles he fought, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

So Amri was laid to rest with his fathers, with Samaria for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Achab.

It was in the thirty-eighth year of Asa that Achab, son of Amri, came to the throne of Israel; and for twenty-two years he reigned over Israel at Samaria. This Achab, son of Amri, defied the Lord's will as no other had done before him; not content with following the evil example of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, he married Jezebel, daughter of the Sidonian king Ethbaal, and thenceforward enslaved himself to Baal's worship. To Baal he built a temple; to Baal he raised an altar, in Samaria; planted, too, a sacred wood, and did more to earn the Lord's displeasure than any king of Israel in earlier times.

It was in his days that Hiel, a man of Bethel, rebuilt Jericho; the foundation of it cost him his eldest son Abiram, and the gates of it his youngest son Segub; such was the doom pronounced by Josue, son of Nun, in the Lord's name.¹

17 And now word came to Achab from Elias, the man of Thesbe, that dwelt in Galaad, As the Lord I serve is a living God, in these years that are coming neither dew nor rain shall fall, without word of mine to command it. Upon this, Elias himself had a message from the Lord, Withdraw thyself, and make thy way eastwards; thou shalt find a hiding-place in the valley of the Kerith, that flows to meet the Jordan. There the river shall provide drink for thee, and the ravens, at my command, shall feed thee. Withdraw himself he did, as the Lord bade him, and made his way to the river Kerith, that flows to meet the Jordan; there he took up his abode. Morn and eve the ravens brought him bread, morn and eve they brought him meat, and of the river's water he drank, till, after a while, the land was parched, and the river dried up.

Then the Lord said to him, Bestir thyself, and make thy way to Sarephtha, a town in Sidon, where thou shalt make thy dwelling, at my command, a widow there will support thee. So he rose up and went to Sarephtha, and he had but reached the city gate when he met a woman gathering fire-wood; whereupon he called out to her,

¹ Jos. 6. 26.

asking her to give him a cup of water to
 11 drink. And as she went to fetch it, he cried
 after her, And when thou dost bring it,
 12 bring me, too, a mouthful of bread. Why,
 she told him, as surely as the Lord thou
 servest is a living God, I have no food
 except a handful of flour at the bottom of
 a jar, and a drop of oil left in a cruet. Even
 now I am gathering a stick or two, to serve
 13 my son and me for our last meal. Have no
 fear, Elias said; go home on this errand of
 thine; only use the flour to make me a little
 girdle-cake first, and bring it me here;
 cook what is left for thyself and thy son.
 14 I his message the Lord God of Israel has
 - for thee: There shall be no lack of flour in
 the jar, nor shall the oil waste in the cruet,
 till the Lord sends rain on this parched
 15 earth. At that, she went and did Elias'
 bidding, and there was a meal for him and
 for her and for all her household; and from
 16 that day onwards there was still flour in the
 jar, still oil left in the cruet, as the Lord's
 message through Elias had promised her.
 17 Afterwards, the housewife's son fell
 sick; and so violently did his disease take
 hold of him that at last he breathed no
 18 longer. Upon this, the woman said to
 Elias, Servant of God, why didst thou
 meddle with me? Didst thou come here
 to confront me, after all, with the record
 1 of my sins, and hand over my son to death?
 2 Give me thy son, said Elias, and took the
 boy from her bosom; then carried him up
 to the room where he himself lodged, and
 3 laid him down on the bed. O Lord my
 God, said he, must thou bring trouble even
 upon this widow, who is all my support, by
 4 taking her son's life away? Then, three
 times, he measured his whole length upon
 the child's body, crying out to the Lord,
 5 O Lord my God, send back life into the
 boy's limbs. So Elias prayed, and the
 6 Lord granted his prayer; the boy's life
 returned to him, and he revived. And
 7 when Elias took him down from the upper
 room into the house below, gave him back
 8 to his mother and shewed her that her son
 lived, the woman said to Elias, This proves
 9 to me that thou art God's servant indeed,
 and his promise on thy lips is true.

18 It was long before the Lord's word
 came to Elias; but at last, when
 two years had gone by, he said, Go and

confront Achab; it is time I should send
 rain on this parched earth. So Elias went
 2 out to confront Achab. Sore famine there
 was in Samaria; and Achab had called his
 3 steward Abdias to his aid. This Abdias was
 one that held the Lord in great reverence;
 and when Jezabel killed the Lord's proph-
 4 ets, he rescued a hundred of them, by
 hiding them in two caves, fifty in each, and
 supplying them with food and water. To
 5 him Achab said, Go through the whole
 land in search of grass wherever it may be
 found, by spring or mountain torrent, to
 keep the horses and the mules alive, or we
 shall lose all the beasts. So they divided
 6 up the country into circuits and separated,
 Achab taking one way and Abdias the
 other; and it was Abdias that fell in with
 7 Elias in the course of his journey. Why,
 said he, bowing to the earth as he recog-
 nized him, it is my lord Elias! None other,
 8 said he; go and tell thy master that Elias
 is here.

Ah, my lord, answered Abdias, what
 9 wrong have I done thee, that thou wouldst
 hand me over to Achab to be slain? As the
 10 Lord thy God is a living God, there is
 never race or realm to which my master has
 not sent in search of thee; and as each
 answered, Not here, he would take an oath
 of them, race by race and realm by realm,
 that thou wert not to be found. Go and tell
 11 thy master, sayest thou, that Elias is here;
 and what will be the issue of it? Why, when
 12 I have left thee, the spirit of the Lord will
 carry thee off I know not where; my errand
 done, and thou nowhere to be found,
 Achab will put me to death; and am not I,
 thy servant, one that has feared the Lord
 since he was a child? Hast thou never had
 13 tidings, good master, of what I did when
 Jezabel was slaying the Lord's prophets;
 how I rescued a hundred of them, by
 hiding them in two caves, fifty in each, and
 supplying them with food and water? Why
 14 wouldst thou bid me court death by telling
 my master, Elias is here? Nay, answered
 15 Elias, as the Lord I serve is a living God,
 I mean to confront Achab this day.

So Abdias went to find Achab, and gave
 16 him the message. Whereupon Achab came
 to meet Elias; and his greeting was, So it
 17 is thou, the man that gives Israel no rest?
 Nay, answered he, if Israel finds no rest,
 18 the fault lies not with me, but with thee

and with thy father's race, that have neglected the Lord's command, and betaken yourselves to the gods of the country-side.

19 But there is work to do; send out couriers, and gather me all Israel on mount Carmel, with Baal's four hundred and fifty prophets, and those four hundred, prophets of the forest-shrines, that feed on Jezabel's bounty. So Achab sent word to all the men of Israel, and gathered the prophets together, there on mount Carmel.

21 And now Elias appeared before the whole of Israel, and thus reproached them, Will you never cease to waver between two loyalties? If the Lord is God, then take his part; if Baal is God, then take his. No word did the people give him in answer, and Elias began speaking to them again; Here am I, he said, the only prophet of the Lord left, while Baal has four hundred and

22 fifty. Bring us two bulls; let them choose which they will, cut it up into pieces, and set these upon fire-wood, without kindling it. I will prepare the other bull, and I too will set it on fire-wood still unkindled.

24 Then call upon the names of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord I serve; and the God who sends fire in answer shall be acknowledged as God. Well said, cried all the people, well said!

25 Thereupon Elias bade them choose their bull, and offer sacrifice first, since theirs was the greater number; let them call upon the names of their gods as they would, but kindle no fire. And they, accepting one of the bulls he offered them, prepared it for sacrifice; all day long they cried out on the name of Baal, Lord Baal, hear us; but never a sound came, and there was none to answer, dance as they would

27 on the altar they had built there. When mid-day came, Elias fell to mocking them; Cry louder, he said, a God Baal is, past doubt, but it may be he is detained in talk, or lodging abroad, or on a journey; or he has fallen asleep, and needs awakening.

28 Cry louder they did, cutting themselves with knives and lancets, till they were all bathed in blood; but mid-day passed, and they were still prophesying; and now it was time for the evening sacrifice to be offered, but still no sound came; there was none to answer them or listen to their supplications.

30 Then Elias bade the people come near;

and when they were standing close to him, he began repairing the altar of the Lord, that was broken down. Twelve stones he took, one for each tribe that sprang from the sons of Jacob, to whom the divine voice gave the surname of Israel; and with these stones he built up the altar again, calling on the Lord's name as he did it. Then he made a trench round the altar, of some two furrows' breadth; piled the wood high, cut the bull into joints, and laid these on the wood. Now, he said, fill four buckets with water, and pour it over victim and wood alike. And again he bade them do it, and when they had finished, a third time. When they had poured it out a third time, the water was running all round the altar, and the trench he had dug for it was full.

The time was now come for offering the evening burnt-sacrifice; and as the prophet Elias went to the altar, thus he prayed. Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, give proof this day that thou art the Lord God, and I am thy servant, and all I have done was done at thy command. Audience, Lord, give audience! Prove to all the people that thou art the Lord God, and art calling their hearts back to thee! With that, the divine fire fell, consuming victim and wood and stones and dust, and swallowing up the very water in the trench. At the sight, the whole people fell face to earth, and raised a cry, It is the Lord is God, it is the Lord is God! Seize the prophets of Baal, Elias told them, and do not let one of them slip through your hands. Seize them they did, and Elias took them down to the valley of Cison, where he put them to death.

Then Elias said to Achab, Go back now, eat and drink; I hear a noise like a storm of rain. So Achab went back to eat and drink, while Elias climbed the heights of mount Carmel, and there sat, his face bowed to the ground between his knees. And he bade his servant go to the hill-top and look out seawards; so he went and looked, but came back with word that he had seen nothing. Seven times he must go back on the same errand; and at the seventh time, a little cloud shewed, no bigger than a man's foot-print, rising up out of the sea. Go back, Elias said, and bid Achab mount his chariot and return home, before the rain overtakes him. This

way and that he turned; and now the whole sky was dark, and clouds came, and a wind with the clouds, and a great storm of rain began. So Achab mounted his chariot and betook himself to Jezrahel; as for Elias, the power of the Lord came upon him, so that he girded his cloak about him and ran all the way to Jezrahel at Achab's bridle.

19 But when Achab told Jezebel of what Elias had done, how he had put all her prophets to the sword, she sent Elias a message, The gods punish me as I deserve, and more, if by this time tomorrow I have not sent thee the way yonder prophets went. Whereupon he took fright, and set out upon a journey of his own devising; made his way to Bersabee in Juda, and left his servant to wait there, while he himself went on, a whole day's journey, into the desert. Betaking himself there, and sitting down under a juniper tree, he prayed to have done with life. I can bear no more, Lord, he said; put an end to my life; I have no better right to live than my fathers. With that, he lay down and fell asleep under the juniper tree; but all at once an angel of the Lord roused him, bidding him awake and eat. Then he found, close to where his head lay, a girdle-cake and a pitcher of water; so he ate and drank and lay down to sleep again. But once more the angel of the Lord roused him; Awake and eat, said he, thou hast a journey before thee that will tax thy strength. So he rose up, and ate and drank; strengthened by that food he went on for forty days and forty nights, till he reached God's own mountain, Horeb.

There he made his lodging in a cave; and all at once the Lord's word came to him, Elias, what dost thou here? Why, he answered, I am all jealousy for the honour of the Lord God of hosts; see how the sons of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and put thy prophets to the sword! Of these, I only am left, and now my life, too, is forfeit. Then word came to him to go out and stand there in the Lord's presence; the Lord God himself would pass by. A wind there was, rude and boisterous, that shook the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind, an earthquake,

but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire, the whisper of a gentle breeze. Elias, when he heard it, wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out to stand at the cave door. There a voice came to him, Elias, what dost thou here? I am all jealousy, said he, for the honour of the Lord God of hosts; see how the sons of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and put thy prophets to the sword! Of these, I only am left, and now my life, too, is forfeit.

Then the Lord said to him, Retrace thy journey through the desert all the way to Damascus, and there anoint Hazael to be king of Syria. Over Israel, too, thou shalt anoint a king, Jehu the son of Namsi. And for thyself, thou shalt anoint a new prophet, Eliseus, the son of Saphat, from Abel-Meula, to take thy place. Those who escape the sword of Hazael shall be slain by Jehu, and those who escape the sword of Jehu shall be slain by Eliseus. Yet I mean to leave myself seven thousand men out of all Israel; knees that have never bowed to Baal, lips that have never kissed hand to do him worship.

Even as he went on his journey, Elias found Eliseus, that was son of Saphat, ploughing with twelve pairs of oxen. He was with the last pair of all; and Elias, upon reaching him, threw his own cloak about the man's shoulders. There and then he left his oxen behind, and ran after Elias; Give me leave, he said, to embrace father and mother in parting. Back home with thee, said Elias; I have but fulfilled my errand. Back then Eliseus went, and chose out a pair of oxen, which he slaughtered, and cooked there with the plough for fire-wood. Such was the feast he made for the folk with him; then he rose up and left them, to follow Elias and be his servant.

20 After this, Benadad king of Syria mustered his whole army, with thirty-two princes at its head, mustered all his horses and chariots, and would take Samaria by siege. Achab, king of Israel, was within the city; and to him Benadad sent messengers demanding the surrender of his silver and gold, his wives, too, and

4 all the likeliest of his sons. My lord king,
 answered Achab, I accept thy terms; all
 5 that I have is at thy disposal. But now the
 messengers came back to him with a fresh
 demand from Benadad, Silver and gold,
 wives and sons, thou must hand over to
 6 me; and meanwhile, at this time to-
 morrow, envoys of mine shall visit thee,
 to search thy palace and thy courtiers'
 houses; to these thou must give up all they
 have a mind to carry away with them.

7 Thereupon the king of Israel sum-
 moned all the elders of his land; Mark
 well, he said, how craftily this man deals
 with us; this is my reward for consenting
 to give up wives and sons, silver and gold,
 8 at his demand. Elders and people had but
 one thought; there must be no listening to
 9 Benadad, no granting his will. Achab,
 then, thus answered Benadad's messen-
 gers. Tell my lord the king, I am thy
 servant, and ready to carry out that first
 demand of thine; but this I cannot grant.

10 And he, when the answer was reported to
 him, sent them back with this message,
 May the gods punish me as I deserve, and
 more than I deserve, if I do not beat
 Samaria to dust! I have more than enough
 warriors here at my back to carry it away
 11 in handfuls. To that, the king of Israel
 made reply, Boast he may who ungirds,
 12 not he who girds for battle. This taunt
 came to the ears of Benadad when he sat
 drinking with his princes in his royal
 pavilions. Besiege me the city, he told his
 men, and besiege it they did.

13 And now a prophet came with a message
 from the Lord to Achab, king of Israel:
 Thou canst see for thyself what a great
 multitude of warriors is here; over all that
 multitude I mean to give thee victory this
 day, and prove to thee that I am the Lord.
 14 Victory? said Achab. And who shall win
 it for us? Whereupon the prophet gave
 him this answer from the Lord, It shall be
 the lackeys the chiefs have brought with
 them. And when Achab asked who should
 15 lead them, he told him, Thou thyself. So
 he took count of the lackeys the chiefs had
 in their retinue, and found there were two
 hundred and thirty-two of these; then he
 took count of his army, the whole army of
 16 Israel, seven thousand strong. When it was
 high noon, they sallied out from the city,
 while Benadad still drank deep in his

pavilion, with the princes that had come
 to aid him; and the lackeys marched at
 17 their head. Benadad, when his scouts told
 him that a sally was being made from
 Samaria, gave orders that the men should
 18 be taken alive, came they out peaceably or
 for battle. So on they went, the lackeys in
 19 the van, and the rest of the army at their
 heels, and none but slew the first enemy he
 20 met; so that the Syrians were routed, and
 Israel went in pursuit of them. Benadad
 king of Syria escaped on horse-back among
 his cavalry, and still horse and chariot fell
 21 before the king of Israel's sally, till he won
 a great victory over the men of Syria. But
 22 the prophet sought him out again and
 warned him, Go back and strengthen thy
 forces; take good heed what thou art
 doing; in this next year the king of Syria
 will be marching against thee.

In Syria, the king's advisers told him:
 23 If the Israelites have defeated us, that is
 because their gods are gods of the hills;
 best to offer them battle on the low-lying
 ground, where we shall have them at our
 mercy. Meanwhile, something remains to
 24 be done; remove the princes, one and all,
 from their posts, and appoint commanders
 of thy own in place of them. Then fill up
 25 the gaps in the ranks of thy army, muster
 as many horses and chariots as thou hadst
 of old, and we will fight them in the plains;
 see if we do not get the mastery of them.
 Benadad was won over by their advice, and
 took it; when a year had passed, he mar-
 26 shalled the Syrian forces and led them out
 to Aphec, where he offered Israel battle.
 The men of Israel marshalled their forces
 27 too, provided themselves with food for the
 march and went out to meet the enemy.
 Where they lay encamped opposite, they
 seemed like two little herds of goats, while
 the Syrians swarmed over the country-
 side.

To the king of Israel God sent out one
 28 of his servants with this message: Thus
 says the Lord, Thinks Syria that I am God
 of the hills, and not of the valleys too?
 Over all this great array I will give thee
 victory; such proof you shall have that I
 am the Lord. So, for seven days, the
 29 armies stood threatening one another, and
 on the seventh battle was joined; on that
 one day the men of Israel routed a hundred
 thousand Syrians that fought on foot.

30 Those who survived took refuge in the city of Aphec, where the wall fell on them, twenty-seven thousand in number. As for Benadad, when he made his way into the city he took refuge in an inner room; and there his courtiers told him, This is the tale we have heard about the kings of Israel, that they are merciful men. Let us put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes on our heads, and give ourselves up to the king of Israel; it may be he will spare our lives.

32 So, with sackcloth on their loins and ropes on their heads, they betook themselves to the king of Israel; Thy servant Benadad, they told him, pleads for his life. And Achab answered, Lives he yet, he is my brother. Whereupon, seizing from his lips that word of welcome augury, they cried, Benadad! He is thy brother! So Achab bade them fetch him; and when Benadad came out, would have him mount his own chariot. And now Benadad promised, I will give thee back the cities my father took from thine, and thou shalt have streets in Damascus, as my father had in Samaria, and I will go home at peace with thee. So Achab made peace with him, and let him go his way.

35 But now the Lord sent his inspiration to a disciple in the schools of the prophets. He bade one of his fellow disciples strike him a blow, and when he refused, told him, Thou shalt be punished for disobeying the Lord's voice thus. Thou shalt be mauled by a lion, said he; and they had barely parted when his fellow disciple met a lion, and was mauled by it. Meanwhile, his fellow disciple sought out another; Strike me a blow, he asked of him, and strike he did, leaving a wound on him. So the prophet went out to meet the king on the open road, first smearing his face and eyes with dust; and as the king passed, he cried out to him, My lord, a word with thee! I was lately in the thick of the battle, and one brought a fugitive to me, bidding me mount guard over him; did he slip through my hands, it was my life for his, or else I must pay a talent of silver. And then, as I looked this way and that in the press, all at once he was gone. Why then, said the king of Israel, thou must pay the forfeit that was named. With that, he wiped the dust from his face, so that the king of Israel knew him for one of the

prophets; and he gave him this message 43
from the Lord, And thou, hast thou not let a man worthy of death slip through thy hands? Thy life shall pay for his life, thy people for his people. A sullen man was 43
the king of Israel and an ill man to cross when he reached his home in Samaria.

21 Now turn we to the vineyard at Jezrahel, which belonged to Naboth the Jezrahelite, close to Achab's palace, that was King of Samaria. Give me that vineyard of thine, Achab said to Naboth, so near adjoining my house, to make a herb-garden of it. In its place, I will give thee a better vineyard of my own, or its worth in money, if that likes thee better. The Lord be merciful to me, Naboth answered; should I give thee the land that was my fathers' patrimony? And at that, Achab went home sullen and ill to cross, only because Naboth had refused to give up his fathers' patrimony. Down on his bed he lay, face to wall, and would take no food. So his wife Jezabel came in to see him, and know what ailed him, that he should refuse to eat; and he told her the story, how he had offered Naboth the Jezrahelite a sum of money for his vineyard, or a better vineyard, if he would, in place of it, and Naboth had refused to give the vineyard up. A fine king thou art, she said, as ever ruled in Israel! Up with thee, and eat, set thy heart at rest; I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezrahelite.

Then she wrote a letter in Achab's name, sealing it with his own seal, and despatched it to the elders and chief men that were Naboth's fellow-citizens. The tenour of it was this; They were to proclaim a solemn fast, and where the greatest of the townspeople sat, there must be a seat for Naboth. Then two rogues must be suborned to bear false witness against him, accusing him of blasphemous speech about God and the king; and so they were to have him out, and stone him to death. So the elders and chief men, Naboth's fellow-citizens, obeyed the instructions Jezabel's letter had given them; they proclaimed a fast, and would have Naboth sit among the greatest of the townspeople; and there, opposite him, sat two rogues, whom they had brought in to that end. These, like the

slanderers they were, accused Naboth of cursing God and the king; whereupon he was led out beyond the city walls, and stoned to death. Then a message was sent to Jezebel, telling her how Naboth had died by stoning; and no sooner had she heard of his death, than she bade the king bestir himself. Take for thy own, she said, the vineyard which Naboth the Jezrahelite would not sell thee; Naboth is dead, and can thwart thy will no longer. And away went Achab to take possession of Naboth's vineyard; Naboth was dead.

Thereupon the word of the Lord came to Elias the Thesbite, Up, and go to meet Achab, king of Israel, that dwells in Samaria; thou wilt find him now in the vineyard of Naboth; he has gone to take possession of it. And this message thou wilt give him from the Lord: Wouldst thou slay, and dispossess the slain? Then tell him, Thus says the Lord, Here, where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, they shall lick thine.

Here is one comes to seek me out, was Achab's greeting, that is no friend of mine. Seek thee out I must, said he, to tell thee thou art a slave. Thou hast given thyself up to such doings as are hateful in the Lord's sight. And hateful is the ruin I mean to bring on thee, sweeping away every trace of thee; every male of Achab's house shall die, be he bondman or free man in the realm of Israel. No better shall thy race fare than Jeroboam's, that was son of Nabat, or Baasa's, that was son of Ahia; thou too hast earned my displeasure, thou too hast taught Israel to sin. And of Jezebel the Lord said, Here, in the purlieus of Jezrahel, the dogs shall have Jezebel for their food. As for Achab, die he in the city, he shall be food for the dogs, die he in the open country, he shall be food for all the birds of heaven.

Never was such another as Achab, that gave himself up to doings hateful in the Lord's sight, his wife Jezebel prompting him; very foully he did, in paying worship to the false gods of those Amorrhites whom the Lord dispossessed to make room for Israel. Yet Achab, when he heard Elias' warning, tore his garments and clothed himself in sackcloth, fasted and

made sackcloth his bed, and went ever with head bowed, till the Lord sent this word to Elias the Thesbite: Achab, as thou seest, humbles his pride before me. Humbled for my sake, he shall have this reward; the doom shall not fall in his days. I will wait till his son is on the throne, and then bring calamity upon all his race.

22 The peace between Syria and Israel lasted three years. In the third year, during a visit from king Josaphat, of Juda, the king of Israel said to his courtiers, Here is Ramoth-Galaad, a city (as you all know) that belongs to us; and yet we leave it in the king of Syria's hands! Then he turned to Josaphat and asked, Shall I have thy aid in attacking Ramoth-Galaad? Why, said he, thou and I are at one; my army, my horses, they are all thine. But Josaphat would have Achab consult the Lord first. So Achab sent for his prophets, some four hundred in number, and asked whether he should attack Ramoth-Galaad or let it be? Go to the attack, they said; the Lord means to make the king's grace master of it. But still Josaphat asked whether there was no prophet of the Lord to be found, so that they could make enquiry through him.¹ Why yes, the king of Israel told him, there is one man through whom we might ask for the Lord's counsel, Michaeas the son of Jemla, yet is he no friend of mine; still he will be prophesying that ill fortune is to befall me, never good. Nay, my lord king, said Josaphat, think better of it. So Achab summoned one of his chamberlains, and bade him fetch Michaeas the son of Jemla with all speed.

There sat the king of Israel and Josaphat king of Juda, each on his throne, in all their royal state, in an open space by the gate of Samaria; and there in their presence all the prophets said their say. One of them, Sedecias the son of Chanaana, had provided himself with a pair of horns fashioned in iron; With these, he said, thou shalt toss Syria about, till thou hast made an end of it. And all the prophets had the same word for him; Go and attack Ramoth-Galaad, they told him, and a blessing on thy journey! The Lord means

¹ It is possible to understand the Hebrew text as implying that Josaphat asked if there was not another prophet of the Lord, the four hundred equally claiming that title.

13 to make the king's grace master of it. So the messenger who went to summon Michaeas told him, Here are all the prophets bidding the king good speed, like one man; do thou join thy voice to theirs, and prophesy good fortune. Nay, said Michaeas, as the Lord is a living God, the word I speak shall be the word he gives me.

15 So he came into the king's presence, and when he was asked whether it were better to attack Ramoth-Galaad, or to let it be, he answered, Go to the attack, and a blessing on thy journey! The Lord means to make the king's grace master of it.¹ What! cried Achab, must I never cease adjuring thee in the Lord's name to tell me only the truth? Listen then, said he; I had a vision of all Israel as sheep, that strayed because they had no shepherd, and the Lord's word came, They have no master now; let them disperse to their home in peace. (It is as I told thee, Achab said to Josaphat; still he prophesies ill fortune, never good.)
 19 Then Michaeas went on, Here is a message to thee from the Lord. I had a vision of the Lord sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven waiting on his pleasure, to right and left. And the Lord said, Who is to beguile Achab, king of Israel, so that he will march to Ramoth-Galaad, and there meet his fall? One said this, one that; till at last a spirit came forward and stood in the Lord's presence, offering to beguile Achab. And how wilt thou beguile him?
 22 the Lord asked. I will go abroad, said he, and on the lips of all his prophets I will make myself an influence to deceive. Deceive them thou shalt, the Lord said, and have thy way with them; go abroad, then, and carry out thy errand. And now, see what a lying influence the Lord has spread among these prophets of thine! For indeed the Lord has determined on thy ruin.

4 At that, Sedecias son of Chanaana went up and gave Michaeas a blow on the cheek; Has the spirit of the Lord passed me by, he asked, and spoken to none but thee?²
 5 And Michaeas only answered, Thou shalt

live to see the day when thou must needs take refuge in an inner room, to hide there.³ Then the king of Israel said, Take Michaeas hence, and put him in the charge of Amon, the city governor, and of Joas, son of Amelech. And give them this royal command of mine, that they are to imprison him, and give him scant allowance of food and drink till I come back safe and sound. Come thou back safe and sound, Michaeas said, and mine was no message from the Lord. Witness my words, all you that stand here!

So the king of Israel, and Josaphat king of Juda, marched out to attack Ramoth-Galaad. And Achab would have Josaphat go to battle in full armour and all his royal array, while he himself went to battle in disguise. Meanwhile, to all the thirty-two commanders who now marshalled his chariots, the king of Syria had given the same orders: Press for no other mark, high or low, but the king of Israel himself. And these, upon sight of Josaphat, supposed that they had the king of Israel here; it was against him, then, that they directed their onslaught; but when he cried aloud, they knew that this was not the king of Israel, and so let him be. It was an archer who bent his bow and let fly a shaft at hazard that gave Achab a chance wound; it fell between lungs and gullet, and Achab bade his charioteer wheel about, and carry him away from the fight, so grievous his wound was. All that day the battle raged, and still the king of Israel stood upright in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and did not die till evening, though the blood from his wound flowed ever into the body of his chariot. Then, before sunset, a herald raised a cry all through the ranks, bidding every man return to his own region and city. So the king died, and was carried back to Samaria, where they buried him; and there the dogs licked his blood, for they washed his chariot and his chariot-reins in the pool at Samaria; and so the threat which the Lord had uttered was fulfilled.⁴

¹ It is generally thought that Michaeas' first answer was given in an ironical tone, and understood by Achab in that sense. ² According to the Hebrew text, Sedecias asks, 'Which way did the spirit of the Lord go?'; according to the Septuagint Greek, 'What spirit of the Lord was this?' ³ 'Thou shalt live to see the day'; or possibly, 'thou shalt see (the answer to thy question) on the day'. ⁴ 'And his chariot-reins'; the traditional rendering of the Hebrew text is, 'And they washed his armour', but it is possible to understand the words as meaning 'and the harlots washed in it'. This latter sense is supported by the Septuagint Greek, which includes the same words above in 21. 19.

39 What else Achab did, all his history, and
the record of the ivory palace he raised and
the cities he built, is to be found in the
40 Annals of the kings of Israel. Achab, then,
was laid to rest with his fathers, and the
throne passed to his son Ochozias.

41 This Josaphat, son of Asa, had become
king of Juda in the fourth year of Achab;
42 he was thirty-five years old when he came
to the throne, and his reign in Jerusalem
lasted twenty-five years. His mother's
43 name was Azuba, daughter of Salai. He
followed the example of his father Asa, and
never swerved aside from the Lord's will;
44 though indeed he did not abolish the hill-
shrines; men still offered sacrifice and in-
45 cense on the mountain-tops. With the king
of Israel, he lived on terms of peace. What
46 else Josaphat did, the record of his high
exploits and of the battles he fought, is to
be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda.
47 He it was that rid the land of all the shrine-
48 prostitutes his father Asa had left. Since

there was no king in Edom at this time to
bar his way, Josaphat would build a fleet 49
in the southern sea to sail out and fetch
gold from Ophir, but sail they might not,
for they were all wrecked, there at Asion-
Gaber. (Achab's son Ochozias had re- 50
quested at this time that mariners from his
own country might sail with Josaphat's,
but Josaphat would not consent.) So Josa- 51
phat was laid to rest with his fathers, with
the Keep of his ancestor David for his
resting-place, and the throne passed to his
son Joram.

Ochozias, son of Achab, was crowned 52
king of Israel at Samaria in the seventeenth
year of Josaphat, and his reign over Israel
lasted two years. He defied the Lord's 53
will, following the example of his own
father and mother, and of Jeroboam, that
taught Israel to sin. To Baal's service he 54
gave himself and Baal's worship, and
earned, as his father had earned, the dis-
55 pleasure of the Lord God of Israel.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF KINGS

IT was after Achab's death that the Moabites threw off their allegiance to Israel.

2 It went ill with Ochozias; he had a fall from the window of his upper room at Samaria. And he sent messengers to consult Beelzebub, the god they worship at Accaron, whether he might hope to recover
3 from his sickness. But an angel of the Lord bade Elias go to meet these messengers from Samaria on their way, and ask them, Has Israel no God of its own, that you should go and consult Beelzebub,
4 the god of Accaron? Here, then, is the Lord's message to Ochozias, Never shalt thou leave the bed thou liest on; thou art doomed to die. So Elias went on his
5 errand; and Ochozias' messengers returned to their master. When he asked why
6 they had returned, they told him how one had met them and bidden them go back to the king who sent them; of the Lord's message, too, that rebuked him for sending to consult Beelzebub, god of Accaron, as if Israel had no God of its own, and
7 doomed him to die where he lay. Then he would know what was the look of the man who had met them and so spoken.
8 A shaggy fellow, they told him, with a skin girt about his loins. And he said, It was Elias the Thesbite.

9 Thereupon the king sent a captain at the head of fifty men to find him. And this captain, climbing the mountain on which the prophet then dwelt, bade him come
10 down in the king's name. If prophet I am, Elias answered, let fire come down from heaven to consume thee and thy men with thee; and with that, came fire from heaven,
11 and he and his fifty were consumed. So the king sent another captain with fifty men more, and he too would have
12 the prophet come down in the king's name. If prophet I am, said he, let fire come down from heaven to consume thee and thy men with thee; and once more, captain and men
13 were consumed by fire. But when a third captain was sent out with his men, he came and knelt before Elias in entreaty; My lord

prophet, he said, have some regard to my life, and the lives of these that follow me.

Two other captains the fire from heaven
14 has consumed, and fifty men with either of them; on my life, I pray thee, have pity.

Then the angel of the Lord said to Elias,
15 Go down with them; thou hast nothing to fear. So he set out to accompany the man into the royal presence. And he told the
16 king, Thou, who hast sent to consult Beelzebub, Accaron's god, as though God in Israel there were none, shalt never leave the bed thou liest on; thou art doomed to die. And die he did, as Elias had foretold
17 in the Lord's name, with never a son to follow him; the throne passed to his brother Joram. This was in the second year of
18 Josaphat's son, Joram, king of Juda. What else Ochozias did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

2 And now the time had come when the Lord would have Elias carried up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elias was but then leaving Galgal, with Eliseus in his company; and he said to Eliseus, Pray stay
2 on here awhile; the Lord has an errand for me at Bethel. As the Lord is a living God,
3 said he, and thou a living soul, I will not part from thee. So together they journeyed to Bethel, where there was a school
4 of prophets. And here the disciples greeted Eliseus by asking, Has it been made known to thee that the Lord means, this day, to carry off thy master? I, too,
5 know it, he answered; say no more. Stay on here, Elias told him; the Lord has an
6 errand for me at Jericho. As the Lord is a living God, said he, and thy soul a living soul, I will not part from thee. So together they reached Jericho, and here, too,
7 the disciples of the prophets asked Eliseus whether he knew his master was to be carried away from him. I, too, know it, he
8 answered; say no more. Here, too, Elias would have him stay on; for himself, the
9 Lord had an errand for him at the Jordan; but still he said, As the Lord is a living
10 God, and thy soul a living soul, I will not

part from thee. So they went still in company; fifty of the prophets' disciples followed them, and stood watching, far away.

They came to a halt, those two, at Jordan bank. And there Elias, taking off his mantle and folding it together, struck the waters of Jordan with it. Whereupon they parted, this way and that, allowing those two to pass over dry-shod. When they had crossed, Elias said to Eliseus, Make what request of me thou wilt, before I am carried away from thee. And he answered, I would have a double portion of the spirit thou leavest behind thee.¹ It is no light request thou hast made, said he. If I am carried away in full view of thee, it means thy request is granted; if not, it is refused. And they were still going on, and talking as they went, when all at once, between them, a flaming chariot appeared, drawn by flaming horses, and Elias went up on a whirlwind into heaven. Eliseus watched it, crying out, My father, my father, Israel's chariot and charioteer! But now he had sight of him no longer. He caught at his own clothes, and tore them across; then he took up the mantle of Elias, that had fallen from him; and when he reached Jordan bank again, with this mantle that had fallen from Elias he struck the waters; but they did not part. Alas, cried he, where is he now, the God of Elias? With that, he struck the waters again, and they parted this way and that, for Eliseus to cross over.

When they saw that, the disciples from Jericho that stood watching cried out, The spirit Elias had has come down to rest on Eliseus! And so, meeting him, they fell down face to earth; Lord prophet, they said, we can muster fifty strong men of our company to go out and look for this master of thine; it may be the Spirit of the Lord has carried him off and left him on some hill-top or in some cleft of the valleys. He would not have them send, but they were urgent with him, till at last he relented and gave them leave. So the fifty men were sent, and for three days they searched in vain. When they came back (for he was still waiting at Jericho), all he said was, Did I not warn you not to send?

Then he went back to Bethel, and as he climbed up along the road, he was mocked by some young boys from the city; Up with thee, bald-pate, they cried, up with thee, bald-pate! And he, turning to look, called down the Lord's curse on them. Thereupon, out came two bears from the forest, and forty-two of the boys were torn in pieces. From Bethel he went on to mount Carmel, and afterwards made his way back to Samaria.

The citizens there had a complaint to bring before Eliseus; This city, my lord, has a fair site, as thou canst see for thyself, but the water is foul, and the soil barren. Bring me a new jar, said he, filled with salt. And when this was brought, he went out to the spring from which the water came and cast the salt in. Here, he said, is a promise the Lord makes to you: I have healed this water, it shall bring death and dearth no longer. And from that day to this the water has been pure, in fulfilment of Eliseus' promise.

Then he went back to Bethel, and as he climbed up along the road, he was mocked by some young boys from the city; Up with thee, bald-pate, they cried, up with thee, bald-pate! And he, turning to look, called down the Lord's curse on them. Thereupon, out came two bears from the forest, and forty-two of the boys were torn in pieces. From Bethel he went on to mount Carmel, and afterwards made his way back to Samaria.

3 It was in the eighteenth year of king Josaphat that Joram, son of Achab, began his reign over Israel at Samaria; it lasted twelve years. He too defied the Lord's will, but not so openly as his father and mother before him; the images his father had raised to Baal he abolished, but he clung to the sins of Jeroboam, that taught Israel to sin, and could not bring himself to leave them.

The king of Moab, Mesa, had great flocks in his possession, and used to pay a tribute of a hundred thousand lambs, and as many rams unshorn; but when Achab died, he renounced his agreement with the kings of Israel. Whereupon king Joram lost no time in marching out from Samaria, mustering his whole forces, and sending a message to Josaphat, king of Juda, bidding him come out and bear arms against the rebel king of Moab. I will march with thee, he answered; mine is thine, men and horses of mine are at thy disposal; what shall be our line of march? Through the desert of Edom, answered he; and march they did, the three kings of Israel, Juda and Edom, by so indirect a

¹ 'The spirit thou leavest behind thee'; literally, 'thy spirit', but it seems probable that the reference is to Deut. 21. 17, where it is laid down that the first-born son is to inherit twice as much as his brothers. Eliseus is only asking that he may be the principal heir of Elias' prophetic gifts.

journey as took them seven days to accomplish, till the supply of water failed for man and beast. Alas, alas, the king of Israel cried, that the Lord should have gathered us here, kings three, to fall into the hands of Moab!

But Josaphat said, Is there no prophet of the Lord here, through whom we might win the divine favour? At that, one of Joram's men said, Eliseus the son of Saphat is close by, that was body-servant once to Elias. He is a man that has the power of the Lord with him, said Josaphat. So to Eliseus the three kings of Israel, Juda and Edom betook themselves. And thus he greeted the king of Israel, What makest thou with me? To those other prophets betake thyself, whom thy father and thy mother knew. Tell me this, said Joram; why has the Lord gathered us here, kings three, to fall into the hands of Moab? And Eliseus told him, As the Lord of hosts, the God I serve, is a living God, neither heed nor hearing thou shouldst have had from me, but for that reverence I bear for Josaphat, king of Juda. Bring a minstrel here. So a minstrel came, and while he played on his harp, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Eliseus, and he cried, A message from the Lord; Dig channels here, channels there, in this dry river-bed. Thus says the Lord, Never a sign shall there be of wind or rain, but this river-bed shall fill with water, for you and yours and for your beasts to drink. And the Lord will not be content with that; he means to give you victory over Moab. Every fortress and every cherished city of theirs you must overthrow, cut down every fruit-tree, stop up every well, strew all their best plough-land with boulders.

And so, next morning, at the time when sacrifice is offered, in came the water, flowing from Edom; water filled all the plain. And now the Moabites, who had heard that the kings were marching against them, called to arms every man that could wear a sword-belt, and stood ready to defend their frontier. They awoke that morning to find sunrise reflected in the water, so that it seemed, from their side of

the valley, red as blood. Bloodshed! they cried; the kings have fallen out with one another and come to blows; men of Moab, there lies the spoil! So they made straight for the Israelite camp; where the Israelites stood to their arms and overpowered them, so that they turned to flee. And now the victors, with Moab at their mercy, overthrew the cities, smothered their best plough-land, every man throwing his stone, stopped up the wells, and cut down the fruit-trees. Only the City of Brick Walls was left, and even this, beleaguered by slingers, was in great part destroyed.

The king of Moab, seeing that his cause was lost, tried to break through, at the head of seven hundred warriors, and attack the king of Edom. When this would not serve, he took his own first-born son, the heir to the throne, and offered him up as a sacrifice on the walls. At this, great ruth came upon the men of Israel, so that they let him be, and went back to their own country.¹

4 There was a woman once that appealed to Eliseus for aid; her husband had been among the disciples of the prophets. Master, she said, thou knewest my husband for a faithful servant of thine, and one that feared the Lord. Now he is dead, and here is a creditor of mine that will come and take away my two sons, to be his bondsmen. What wouldst thou have me do for thee? asked Eliseus. How much hast thou by thee? My lord, she answered, I have nothing left in my house at all but a drop of oil to anoint myself with. Go then, said he, and borrow empty jars from all thy neighbours, and do not stint thyself. Then go home, and lock the door on thyself and thy two sons within; fill all these jars with the oil, and set them aside when they are full. So the woman went, and locked the door on herself and her two sons, and they began holding out the jars for her, while she filled them. When she had filled them, and, asking one of her sons for a fresh jar, was told that he had no more, the oil gave out. So she came and told her story to the servant of God, and he said, Go and sell the oil, and pay thy creditor;

¹ 'Great ruth came upon the men of Israel'; this is certainly the sense of the Septuagint Greek, and the term used generally refers to divine anger. It seems not impossible that some words of the original story have dropped out.

what is left shall provide thee and thy sons with a living.

- 8 At another time, Eliseus chanced to be passing through Sunam, and here there was a woman of rank that bade him to a meal, and would take no denial. He must needs go that way often, and ever this woman entertained him, till at last she said to her husband, I find him to be a servant of God, and a holy one, this man that passes our way so often. It would be well if we kept a little room for his use, with bed and table and chair and lamp-stand in it, so that he may pass his time there whenever he visits us. And so, one day, when he had turned in to this room of his, to rest there, he bade his servant Giezi fetch the woman of Sunam; and she, thus summoned, stood awaiting his audience.¹ And Eliseus sent her, through his servant, this message, In all things thou hast bestowed thy constant care on us; what wouldst thou have me do for thee in return? Is there any business of thine, over which thou wouldst have me say a word for thee to the king, or to the commander of his army? And her answer was, Nay, my place is with my own folk.
- 14 And now, as he wondered what he could do for her, Giezi told him, No need to ask; she has no son, and her husband is an old man. So Eliseus would have her brought to him, and as she stood there in the doorway, When this time of year comes round again, he told her, at this very hour, live thou till then,² thou shalt conceive a son. Nay, my lord, she said, wouldst thou, a prophet, trifle thus with thy handmaid?
- 17 But at that very season of the year, and at the very time Eliseus had foretold, she conceived, and bore a son.
- 18 The child grew to boyhood, and one day, when he had gone out to be with his father where they were reaping the corn, he told his father, My head aches, my head aches sorely. His father bade one of the servants carry him back to his mother; carry him back he did, and brought him to his mother, and she nursed him on her lap till noon came, but at noon he died. Thereupon she carried him up and laid him on the prophet's own bed, and shut the door on him; then went out and called her husband, and asked to have one of the servants

with her, and an ass; she must go and see the prophet with all speed, and with all speed return. Why, said he, what means this journey of thine? This is no feast of the new moon, no sabbath day. But she answered, Go I must. Then she saddled the ass, and bade the servant lead on, and that in haste; let him lose no time over the journey, and wait ever on her bidding.

So out she went, and found the servant of God on mount Carmel. And he, when he saw her approaching, said to his servant Giezi, That is the woman from Sunam; go to meet her, and ask her if all is well with her, all well, too, with her husband and her son. All is well, she said; but when she reached the servant of God, there on the mountain, she clasped him by the knees. Giezi would have pulled her away, but the servant of God said, Let her alone, here is great anguish of spirit, and I none the wiser; the Lord told me nothing of it. Then she said, My lord, did I not ask to have a son, imploring thee not to cheat me of my hopes? Whereupon he said to Giezi, Gird thyself, and take this staff of mine with thee; go at once, greeting none and returning no greeting by the way, till thou reachest the boy; and lay down my staff on his face. As thou livest, the woman said, and servest a living Lord, I will not part from thee. So he rose up and went with her.

Giezi had gone on before him, and put down the staff on the boy's face; but no sound came, no sign of life, so he went back to meet his master with the news, The boy did not stir. Then Eliseus went into the house, where the boy lay dead in his bed, and there he shut himself in with the boy, and prayed to the Lord. So, rising from his prayer, he laid himself down on the dead body, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands, bending down close, till the boy's flesh grew warm. Then he went away, and walked to the end of the house and back, and now when he mounted the bed and lay down, the boy yawned seven times, and opened his eyes. Then Eliseus sent Giezi to fetch the woman of Sunam, and when she answered the summons, bade her take her son into her arms. So she came up, and fell at his feet, bowing down

¹ Literally, 'stood in his presence', but it seems clear from the context that the woman was in a different room, receiving messages only through Giezi, down to verse 15.

² See note on Gen. 18. 10.

to the earth; then she took up her son and went out, and Eliseus made his way to Galgal.

There was once a famine in the country, at a time when Eliseus had some of the young prophets staying with him. And he bade one of his servants put on the greatest pot they had, and cook broth for these disciples of his. The man who had gone out afield to gather wild herbs for them found a creeping plant in the woods, from which he filled his lap with wild gourds; and these, when he came home, he shredded into the pot of broth, never enquiring what they were. When the time came for his guests to have their meal, the broth was poured out; but no sooner had they tasted it than they cried out, Death it were, lord prophet, to taste this broth of thine; drink it they might not. Thereupon he would have some flour brought him; brought it was, and when he threw it into the pot and had broth poured out for the company, all bitterness had left it.

Once, too, a man came from Baal-Salisa, bringing with him twenty barley loaves, his first-fruit offering, and nothing besides except some fresh grain in his wallet. Eliseus would have a meal set before the company, and when his servant asked how this would suffice for a hundred mouths, he said again, Set it before the company for their meal; they shall eat, the Lord says, and leave some over. And when he set it before them, eat they did and leave they did; so the Lord's promise was fulfilled.

5 At this time the armies of the king of Syria were commanded by a certain Naaman; a great captain, high in his master's favour; brave, too, and a man of wealth, but a leper. Naaman's wife had a servant, a young Israelite maid that had been captured by Syrian freebooters; and this maid said to her mistress, If only my lord would betake himself to the prophet in Samaria! He would have cured him soon enough of his leprosy. Upon this, Naaman went to his master, and told him what the Israelite maid had said; and the king of Syria promised to send him with a letter to the king of Israel. So he set out with thirty talents of silver, and six thousand gold pieces, and ten suits of clothing. And the letter he carried to the king of

Israel ran thus, Know by these presents that I am sending my servant Naaman to thee, to be cured of his leprosy. Upon reading this letter, the king of Israel tore his garments about him, and asked, Am I God, with power to kill men and bring them to life again, that he should send a leper to me to be cured? Mark well how eager he is to pick a quarrel with me!

But God's servant Eliseus, when he was told what ado the king of Israel had made over it, sent a message to him, Why rend those garments of thine? Send the man to me, and he shall learn that there is a prophet still left in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots, and stood at the door of Eliseus' house; where Eliseus sent word out to him, Go and bathe seven times in the Jordan, if thou wouldst have health restored to thy flesh, and be clean. At this, Naaman was for going back home; Why, he said angrily, I thought he would come out to meet me, and stand here invoking the name of his God; that he would touch the sore with his hand, and cure me. Has not Damascus its rivers, Abana and Pharpar, such water as is not to be found in Israel? Why may I not bathe and find healing there? But, as he turned indignantly to go away, his servants came and pleaded with him; Good father, they said, if the prophet had enjoined some great task on thee, thou wouldst surely have performed it; all the more readily thou shouldst obey him when he says, Wash and thou shalt be clean. So down he went, and washed in the Jordan seven times, as the servant of God had bidden him. And with that, his flesh healed up, and became like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. So, coming back with all his retinue, he stood there in the presence of God's servant; I have learned, he said, past doubt, that there is no God to be found in all the world, save here in Israel.

And now, he said, pray accept a gift from thy servant, to prove his gratitude! As the Lord I serve is a living God, Eliseus answered, I will accept nothing from thee; nor would any pleading bring him to consent. At last Naaman said, Have thy way, then, lord prophet, but grant me a gift instead. Let me take away with me part of the soil of Israel, as much as two mules can

carry; my burnt-sacrifice, my offerings henceforward are for the Lord only, and for no alien god. Yet one fault pray the Lord to pardon in me thy servant. My master will still be going up to offer worship in the temple of Remmon, leaning on my arm for support. At such times, if I do reverence, as my master does reverence, in Remmon's temple, the Lord grant me his pardon! Go on thy way, said Eliseus, and peace go with thee. So there, on a spring day, they parted.¹

But to Giezi, the prophet's servant, the thought came, Here is this Syrian, this Naaman, with all his gifts, and my master has sent him away no poorer than he came. As the Lord is a living God, I mean to run after him and bring back some trifle with me. So after Naaman Giezi went; and Naaman, when he saw him running up, dismounted from his chariot and went to meet him; Is all well? he asked. All is well, said the other, but my master has sent me with a message to thee: Here are two young prophets but now come to visit me, from the hill-country of Ephraim; to these thou mayest well give a talent of silver, and two suits of clothing. Better two talents, Naaman said, and would take no denial. So two of his servants must shoulder a sack that held a talent of silver and a suit of clothes each of them, and carry these in front of Giezi. Evening had fallen when he reached home, took their load from them to lay it up in the house, and sent them away on their journey; then he went in to wait on his master. And when Eliseus asked whence he came, he said, Nay, my lord, I took no journey. What, said Eliseus, was not this heart of mine there to witness it, when yonder fellow turned back from his chariot to meet thee? And wouldst thou, at such a time, enrich thyself with a talent of silver here, a suit of clothes there, to buy thee oliveyard and vineyard, sheep and ox, man-servant and maid-servant? To thee, and to thy race for ever, Naaman's leprosy shall cling. And Giezi went out from his presence, a leper as white as snow.

6 There was a time when his disciples complained to Eliseus that they had no room to live there in his company; and they asked leave to take the road for Jor-

The Fate of Giezi; Miracles of Eliseus

dan, cut down, each of them, his load of timber from the forest, and build themselves a house there. Then, when he had given them leave, one of them said to him, Master, do thou come with us. Come with you I will said he, and bore them company. So they reached the Jordan, and began felling wood. It chanced that one of them, in felling a beam, let his axe-head fall into the river; and at that he cried aloud, Alas, alas, master! It was a borrowed axe, too! Where fell it? the prophet asked; and when the place was shewn to him, he cut a stick and threw it in there; whereupon the iron floated to the surface. It is there to thy hand, said he, and the disciple put out his hand and took it.

When the king of Syria went to battle with Israel, he would hold a council of war, and name some place where he would lay an ambush; and ever word came from Eliseus to the king of Israel, Beware how thou marchest by such and such a place: the Syrians are lying in wait there. Then the king of Israel would send and make sure of the place the prophet had told him of; and so he avoided danger, not once but many times. At this, the king of Syria's mind much misgave him; and at last he summoned his council and asked, was there no learning the name of this traitor that revealed his plans to the king of Israel? Whereupon one of his courtiers told him, Nay, my lord king, it is the Israelite prophet, Eliseus, that discloses to him the secrets of thy council-chamber. Why then, the king said, go and find out where he is, so that I can send and take him prisoner. And when news came that Eliseus was in Dothain, he sent horses and chariots and the pick of his army there, to surround the city at dead of night.

The prophet had a servant that was early abroad next day, and found the whole city beleaguered by armed men and horses and chariots; and as he brought the news, he cried out, Alas, alas, master, what shift will serve us now? Do not be afraid, said he; we have more on our side than they on theirs. Open his eyes, Lord, Eliseus prayed; give him clear sight. Thereupon the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and clear sight came to him; all at once he saw the whole mountain-side beset with

¹ See note on Gen. 35. 16, where the words in the Hebrew text are the same as here.

flaming horses and chariots, there about
 18 Eliseus. Then, as the enemy closed in upon
 him, Eliseus prayed to the Lord anew,
 asking that this whole multitude might be
 smitten with blindness; and sightless the
 19 Lord smote them, at Eliseus' prayer. Eli-
 seus would have it that they had taken the
 wrong road and reached the wrong city;
 Come with me, he said, and I will shew
 you the man you are looking for. So he led
 20 them to Samaria; and once they were
 there, he prayed anew, that their eyes
 might be opened, and clear sight given
 them. In Samaria, then, they found them-
 21 selves, once their eyes were opened; and
 the king of Israel, upon sight of them,
 asked Eliseus, My father, shall I strike
 22 them down? Strike them down (said he)
 thou shalt not; they were not captured by
 sword or bow of thine, and wouldst thou
 slay them? Set food and drink before
 them, and let them go home to their
 23 master. So a great banquet was made for
 them, and when they had eaten and drunk
 their fill, back to their master he sent them.
 And Israel was rid, for a while, of free-
 booters from Syria.

24 Some time after this, Benadad, king of
 Syria, mustered all his forces, and went to
 25 the siege of Samaria. And Samaria was
 famine-stricken; so long beleaguered, that
 men would pay eighty pieces of silver for
 an ass's head, or five for a pint of dove's
 26 droppings. And one day, as the king was
 making the round of the battlements, a
 woman cried out to him, Help me, my lord
 27 king! Help from the Lord is none, said
 he, and what means of help have I, in
 threshing-floor or wine-press? What
 wouldst thou have of me? And she told
 28 him, This woman who is with me bade me
 kill my son, to be food for us that day; hers
 29 should be our food the next. And then,
 my son's flesh already cooked and eaten,
 when I bade her kill hers next day, she kept
 30 him in hiding. Upon hearing this tale, the
 king tore his garments across; and as he
 made his way along the battlements the
 people, one and all, could see how his shirt
 31 underneath was of sackcloth. May the
 Lord punish me as I deserve, said he, and

more than I deserve, if I leave Eliseus the
 son of Saphat a head on his body by night-
 fall!

So he sent a man on before him, to find 32
 Eliseus where he sat at home, in conclave
 with the elders of the people. To these,
 before ever the messenger reached him,
 Eliseus said, You must know that my head
 is in danger. The murderer is on his way,
 sent by the murderer's son. When he
 comes in, look to it that you keep the door-
 way barred; I hear his master's tread not
 far behind him. Even as he spoke to them 33
 thus, in came the messenger that had set
 out to find him. And this was the king's
 word, See what ruin the Lord has brought
 on me! Folly it were to expect relief from
 the Lord any longer.²

7 Thereupon Eliseus announced a
 message from the Lord; Thus says
 the Lord, by this time to-morrow a silver
 piece will be buying a peck of wheat, or
 two pecks of barley, in the market-place at
 the gate of Samaria. The king had one of 2
 his lords with him, to support him with his
 arm as he went; and this man mocked at
 the prophet's words. Perhaps the Lord
 means to open the flood-gates of heaven,
 said he; then it might be as thou sayest.
 And Eliseus answered, The sight of it thou
 shalt have, but not the eating of it.

Now turn we to four lepers, who were 3
 standing there in the open space round the
 city gate. They were saying to one another,
 This is no place to wait for death. Enter 4
 we the city, we starve; abide we here, we
 shall die none the less. Come, let us give
 ourselves up to the Syrian army; it may be
 they will spare our lives; if they kill us, it
 is but another form of death. So, when 5
 night fell, they ventured out, to make for
 the Syrian camp; and as they reached the
 edge of it, never a man was to be seen. That 6
 night, the Lord had made a noise heard in
 the camp of Syria like the stir of chariots
 and horses, and a great host of men; and
 the word went round, The Hethite chiefs,
 the Egyptians are upon us! The king of 7
 Israel has hired them to attack us! And
 with that the Syrians took to their heels,

¹ 'They were not captured by sword or bow of thine'; in the Hebrew text, 'Thy own sword and bow has captured them'. ² The situation is not altogether clear; it is generally supposed that Joram had repented of his oath, and came to recall the messenger from his purpose of murdering Eliseus. Some think that we should read 'king' instead of 'messenger' in verse 33, the two words being much alike in Hebrew.

and fled away in the darkness, leaving tents and horses and asses behind them, there in the camp; fled for their lives. So these lepers, still at the very edge of the camp, went into one of the tents, ate and drank there, carried off silver and gold and clothing and went off to hide it; came back to another tent, plundered that too, and hid away their plunder. Then one said to another, This is ill done; we are bearers of good news to-day. If we keep it secret, and wait till morning to spread it, that were shame to us. Back go we, and tell our tale in the king's court.

When they reached the city gate, and made it known how they had been to the Syrian camp, and found never a man there, only horses and asses that stood tethered beside pitched tents, the porters went off to the king's palace, and there spread the story about. The king himself rose, and held a midnight council. This is the trick, said he, the Syrians are playing us; they know we are hard put to it by famine, and they think to lure us out by leaving their camp and hiding in the open country; so they hope to capture us alive, and make their way into the city. But one of his counsellors said, There are still half a dozen horses left in the city; so few among so many of us; all the rest have been slaughtered for food. Yet with these we may send out riders to report. So two horses were fetched, and on these men were sent to search the camp of Syria. All the way to Jordan they followed in the enemy's track, and still all the road was strewn with garments and weapons which the Syrians had thrown away in the flight; and they brought back the report of it to the king.

So the whole city went out and plundered the Syrian camp; and it was a silver piece for a peck of wheat, a silver piece for two pecks of barley, as the Lord had foretold. As for that courtier who had walked beside the king to support him, he was put in charge of the market-place; and such was the crowd at the gate entrance that he was trampled to death, as the servant of God had foretold when the king came to visit him. It was nothing but truth Eliseus had told the king, By this time to-morrow a silver piece will be buying a peck of wheat, or two pecks of barley, in the market-place

at the gate of Samaria. Perhaps the Lord means to open the flood-gates of heaven, this courtier said; then it might be as thou sayest. And Eliseus told him he should have the sight of it but not the eating of it; which prophecy was fulfilled in its turn, when he sat in the gateway there and the folk trampled him to death.

Now turn we to the mother of that boy whom Eliseus raised to life. Eliseus had said to her, Up, go on thy travels, thou and all thy household with thee, and there dwell where dwell thou canst; the Lord has a drought in store for us, which will fall upon this land for seven years together. She lost no time in carrying out the prophet's command, went abroad with all her household, and for a long time dwelt in the Philistine country; then, when the seven years were over, she came back from the Philistine country, and sought an audience with the king, to reclaim her house and lands. The king, at that very time, was in talk with Giezi, the prophet's servant, and had bidden him tell the story of all Eliseus' marvellous deeds; and Giezi was even then describing how the dead boy had been raised to life, when in came the boy's own mother, appealing to the king to restore her house and lands. My lord king, said Giezi, this is the very woman, and this is that son of hers, whom Eliseus restored to life. So the king, when he had questioned the woman and had the story from her, charged one of his own chamberlains to see that she came into her own, and recovered the revenues the lands had brought in ever since she left the country.

Eliseus was on a visit to Damascus when Benadad, king of Syria, fell sick. And when he heard that the servant of God was there, the king bade Hazael take gifts with him and go to meet the prophet; Bid him enquire of the Lord, he said, whether I shall recover from this sickness of mine or not. So Hazael went to meet him, and gifts went too, all the best Damascus had to offer, forty camels' burden of them. And when he had made his way to Eliseus' presence, and told how Benadad king of Syria had sent to know whether he would recover from his sickness, Eliseus said, Go and assure him of health restored; but for all

that, the Lord has revealed to me that he is doomed to die. Hazael, as he stood there talking to him, was in great confusion, so that his face blushed red; but the servant of God fell a-weeping. Why weeps my lord? asked Hazael; and his answer was, I weep for all the calamity I know thou art to bring on the sons of Israel. Their cities thou wilt burn down, their young men thou wilt slay in battle; dash little children to the ground, and rip open the pregnant womb. Nay, said Hazael, not for a low-born wretch like thy servant here such great exploits as these! Thou art to be king of Syria, Eliseus answered; the Lord has revealed it to me. So he parted from Eliseus and went back to his master. What said Eliseus? asked he, and Hazael gave him the message that he should recover his health; but next day he took a piece of cloth, soaked it in water, and held it over Benadad's face till he was stifled; and thus he succeeded to the throne.

It was in the fifth year of Joram, Achab's son, king of Israel (and Josaphat, king of Juda), that Josaphat's son Joram became king of Juda; he was thirty-two years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted eight years. And he followed the example of the Israelite kings, just as Achab's line did; he himself had married a daughter of Achab's. So he defied the Lord's will; but the Lord would not bring ruin upon Juda; had he not promised his servant David to keep the lamp of his line unquenched for ever? It was in Joram's days that the Edomites renounced their allegiance to Juda and set up a king of their own choice. Joram indeed attacked Scira with his whole force of chariots, and when the Edomites surrounded him, he broke through them with a night assault, broke through the commanders of the chariots and drove the foot-soldiers back to their tents; but Edom has never been subject to Juda from that day to this. Lobna, too, revolted at the same time. What else Joram did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda. So he was laid to rest with his fathers, and shared their burying-place in the Keep of

David; and the throne passed to his son Ochozias.

This Ochozias, son of king Joram of Juda, came to the throne in the twelfth year of Achab's son Joram, king of Israel; he was twenty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned at Jerusalem but one year; his mother was Athalia, descended from Amri, king of Israel. He, too, followed the example of Achab's line, and defied the Lord's will; to Achab's house he was close allied.² And with Joram, Achab's son, he went to fight against Hazael, king of Syria, at Ramoth-Galaad. Joram was wounded in this engagement with the Syrians, and went back to Jezrahel to recover his health. And when Joram, Achab's son, lay sick at Jezrahel, recovering from the wound he had received in fighting against Hazael at Ramoth-Galaad, Ochozias son of Joram king of Juda came there to visit him.

Thereupon the prophet Eliseus sent one of his disciples on an errand. Gird up thy tunic, said he, and make thy way to Ramoth-Galaad, with this phial of oil in thy hand. Once there, thou wilt find Jehu the son of Josaphat, son of Namsi, sitting among his brother-captains; bid him rise up, and take him with thee into an inner room. Then, holding up the phial of oil and pouring it out over his head, tell him, Thus says the Lord; herewith I anoint thee king of Israel. Then fling the door open and begone; I would not have thee linger there. So the young prophet made his way to Ramoth-Galaad, and, reaching it, found the captains of the army met in conclave. He asked to have speech with the commander; and when Jehu asked which of them all he meant, he said, With thee, my lord. Thereupon Jehu rose up, and went into the inner room; where the prophet forthwith poured the oil over his head. This is my message, said he, from the Lord God of Israel; Herewith I anoint thee king over Israel, the Lord's people. Thou art to overthrow the dynasty of King Achab that was thy master; so it is that I mean to take vengeance for all those

¹ The words printed in brackets are perhaps due to some fault in the text. Nor is it easy to see why king Joram of Juda came to the throne in the fifth year of his namesake, who had already been reigning seven years when Josaphat died (see III Kg. 22. 42; IV Kg. 3. 1), unless king Josaphat, two years before his own death, allowed his son the royal title. ² 'Close allied'; literally, 'son-in-law'. But he was already, it seems, descended from Amri (verse 26), so the word may have a more general significance.

prophets of mine, all those true servants of
 8 the Lord, that were slain by Jezebel. All
 Achab's race I mean to destroy, sparing no
 male issue of his, free man or bondman in
 9 the realm of Israel; it shall have no better
 fortune than the race of Jeroboam, son of
 Nabat, or the race of Baasa, son of Ahia.
 10 As for Jezebel, she shall lie unburied in the
 purlieu of Jezrahel, for the dogs to eat.
 And with that he threw the door open, and
 was gone.

11 Is all well? Jehu's fellow officers asked,
 as he went back to them. What was this
 madman's errand? Know the man, said
 12 he, and you know his ranting talk. That
 will not serve, they answered; tell us what
 he said. Then he told them all that had
 passed, and how the Lord had assured him
 that he was the anointed king of Israel.
 13 And they, without more ado, flung down
 their cloaks at his feet, to pay him all the
 honours of a throne; and loud the trumpets
 sounded to proclaim that Jehu was
 king.

14 Thus Jehu, son of Josaphat, son of
 Namsi, entered into a conspiracy against
 Joram. (Joram himself had been in command
 of the Israelite army that held Ramoth-
 Galaad against king Hazael of Syria,
 15 but had now gone to Jezrahel to recover
 from the wounds Hazael's men had given
 him.) As you love me, Jehu said, let no
 one make his escape from the city, or
 16 news of this will reach Jezrahel. Then he
 mounted his chariot and set out for Jezrahel,
 where Joram lay sick, with Ochozias,
 king of Juda, come to visit him. And now
 the watchman that stood on the tower of
 Jezrahel espied Jehu's company, and he
 cried out, I see a troop of men coming. So
 Joram would have a chariot sent out to
 meet them, with the message, Is all well?
 18 But when the driver of the chariot met him,
 and asked, Is all peaceful? Jehu said, Talk
 not of peace;¹ pass on behind me and
 follow. And the watchman cried, The
 messenger reached them, but never returns.
 19 Then a second chariot was sent out;
 once more the king asked whether all was
 peaceful, and once more the answer was,
 Talk not of peace; pass on behind me and

follow. So the watchman cried out, The
 messenger reached them, but never returns.
 And he who comes yonder drives
 as Jehu the son of Namsi drives; it is head-
 long speed with him.

Harness my chariot, said Joram. Har-
 21 nessed it was, and side by side in their
 chariots these two kings went out, Joram
 king of Israel and Ochozias, king of Juda,
 to meet Jehu. And when they met him, it
 was on the land that once belonged to
 Naboth, the man of Jezrahel.

Joram greeted him by asking, Is all well,
 Jehu? And he answered, Can aught be
 well, so long as thy faithless mother Jezebel
 will be at her sorceries still? At that,
 22 Joram wheeled about and fled, crying
 aloud, Treason, Ochozias, treason! But
 Jehu grasped his bow and bent it; right
 between the shoulder-blades the arrow
 struck Joram, and pierced through his
 heart, and he fell down in his chariot where
 he stood. Then Jehu said to his squire
 23 Badacer, Take up his body, and throw it
 down on the land that was once Naboth
 the Jezrahelite's. I remember well, when
 thou and I were sitting in our chariot to-
 gether, in attendance on his father Achab,
 how the Lord pronounced doom upon
 him: I swear that I will avenge the murder
 24 of Naboth and his children, that was done
 in my sight yesterday, avenge it on the very
 ground where thou standest. Take it up
 and cast it down there; let the Lord's word
 be fulfilled.

As for Ochozias, king of Juda, he fled at
 the sight, past the lodge of the royal garden;
 but Jehu followed, crying, Shoot him
 down too where he drives! And shoot him
 they did, on the hill where Gaver stands,
 by Jeblaam. He escaped at last to Mag-
 geddo, but there he died. On his own
 chariot his servants laid him down, and so
 bore him back to Jerusalem, to bury him
 where his fathers were buried, in David's
 25 Keep. It was during the eleventh year of
 Joram, Achab's son, king of Israel, that
 Ochozias held the throne of Juda.

Meanwhile, Jehu drove on to Jezrahel.
 26 As for Jezebel, when she heard of his
 coming, darken she must her eye-brows,

¹ 'Peace' throughout the Old Testament usually means 'prosperity'. Here the messenger's greeting assumes that there is news from the army at Ramoth-Galaad, and asks whether it is good news or bad. The same formula is used in verses 11, 17, 18, 19, 22 and 31 of this chapter; here and in verse 19 the literal rendering of the words, 'Is all peaceful?', has been used, so as to lead up to Jehu's answer, 'What hast thou to do with peace?'

and braid her hair; then she looked down
 31 from her window as Jehu passed the gate,
 crying out: Is all well? There was one
 32 Zambri, that murdered his master. Jehu
 looked up at the window, and asked who
 this was. Thereupon two or three of the
 33 eunuchs leaned out to greet him.¹ Throw
 her down, said he, and throw her down
 they did; blood spattered the wall, and the
 34 horses trampled her under foot. And he,
 going into the palace to eat and drink there,
 gave the word, Go find the accursed
 woman's body, and give it burial; she was
 35 a king's daughter. But when they went to
 bury her, nothing could they find but skull
 and feet and the tips of her fingers. When
 36 they went back to him with the news, he
 said, This is what the Lord foretold
 through his servant Elias the Thesbite.
 Jezebel, he said, shall be food for dogs in
 37 the purlieu of this city; in the purlieu of
 the city her corpse shall lie like dung on the
 ground, for the passers-by to wonder
 whether this is indeed Jezebel.

10 Over in Samaria, Ahab had still
 seventy male descendants to his
 name. So Jehu dispatched a letter to the
 chiefs and elders there, and to those who
 had the young princes in their charge; these
 were the terms of it: Here is work to be
 2 done when this letter reaches you. You
 have the royal family among you; chariots
 and horses, strongholds and weapons of
 3 war, are at your disposal. Why then, you
 must pick out the likeliest among the
 princes, whichever enjoys your favour
 most, and put him on his father's throne;
 then take up arms in the royal cause, and
 do battle.

At this, they were thrown into con-
 4 sternation; here were two kings swept
 away by Jehu's onset, and what resistance
 could they hope to offer him? So all of
 5 them, guardians of the princes, chieftains
 and elders, sent word to Jehu, We are thy
 servants, awaiting thy commands; it is not
 for us to set up a king; do what is thy
 6 pleasure. And this was the second letter
 he sent them, If you are loyal lieges of
 mine, cut off the heads of the princes, and
 bring them to me at Jezrahel this time

to-morrow. These leading men of the city
 had the seventy princes in their keeping,
 and when the letter reached them, they
 7 killed all seventy, and sent back their heads
 in baskets to Jehu at Jezrahel. He, when
 8 news came to him that the princes' heads
 had been brought there, would have them
 left in two heaps at the city gate till morn-
 9 ing, then, at dawn, he went out and con-
 fronted the people. You are without bias,
 he said to them; tell me, if I conspired
 against my master, who is to blame for the
 death of all these?² You see for yourselves
 that no word of the Lord's curse upon the
 house of Ahab has missed the mark; what
 the Lord prophesied through his servant
 Elias, he has here fulfilled. Then Jehu put
 11 to death all that was left of Ahab's race in
 Jezrahel, with all that had been nobles,
 courtiers and priests in his reign, till no
 trace of him was left.

Then he made his way to Samaria; and
 12 when he reached the shepherds' lodging by
 the road side, he fell in with some of
 13 Ochozias' kindred, that had been king of
 Juda. And when he asked who they were,
 and they told him kinsmen of Ochozias,
 that were on their way to greet the sons and
 14 brothers of the king, he gave orders for
 their arrest. So they were seized as pris-
 oners, forty-two of them in all, and their
 throats were cut over the pool by the shep-
 herds' lodging; not one of them was left
 alive.

Passing on thence, he met Jonadab, son
 15 of Rechab, coming to greet him, and gave
 him welcome. Is thy heart true to me, he
 asked, as mine to thee? And when he
 learned that it was so, Give me thy hand,
 and lifted him up, by his outstretched
 hand, into the chariot. Come with me, he
 16 said, and witness my zeal in the Lord's
 cause. So, in his own chariot, he brought
 Jonadab to Samaria. And all of Ahab's
 17 household that were left in Samaria he
 destroyed to a man, so fulfilling that curse
 which the Lord pronounced through Elias.

Next, Jehu called a general assembly of
 18 the people, and told them, It was but scant
 worship Ahab paid to Baal; Jehu means
 to pay him greater worship yet. Summon
 19 me all Baal's prophets, all his worshippers,

¹ According to the Hebrew text, Jehu's question was, 'Who is with me? Who?' ² 'You are without

'bias'; the words would more naturally be rendered, 'You are innocent', but it is difficult to see how there could have been any question as to the innocence of the Jezrahelites in the events here described.

all his priests; at this great sacrifice I mean to offer Baal, none must be absent; it is death to the man whose place is found empty. All this was but a design Jehu had in hand, for destroying Baal's worshippers.

20 So he would have a solemn feast proclaimed in Baal's honour, and this summons of his went out all through the confines of Israel; all Baal's worshippers came in answer to it, not a man was left behind. And all made their way into Baal's temple, till it was full from end to end. Then Jehu bade the wardrobe-keepers bring out garments for all Baal's votaries, and when these had been brought, he and Jonadab the son of Rechab went into Baal's temple, and bade the worshippers look well to it that none of the Lord's servants were among them, only the followers of Baal.

24 And where they had entered, there was offering and burnt-sacrifice to be made. Without, Jehu had posted eighty men, telling them, If you let any of my quarry slip through your hands, it shall be life for life. And now, when the burnt-sacrifice was done, he gave orders to his bodyguard and his officers to go in and make an end of them; not one must escape. So these, his bodyguard and his captains, put them to the sword. Then they went to the Keep of Beth-baal,¹ and took out Baal's statue from the temple, to burn it, and crush it to pieces. As for Baal's temple, they pulled it down, and made it a house of easement, as it is to this day.

28 Thus Jehu abolished the worship of Baal in Israel. Yet he would not forgo the sins of Jeroboam son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin; at Bethel and at Dan the golden calves had their worship still. For thy zeal in doing my will, the Lord told him, for carrying out my just decrees against the line of Achab, I will let thy heirs keep the throne of Israel up to the fourth generation; and still this Jehu was too careless to follow the law of Israel's God with his whole heart, by abandoning the sins of Jeroboam, that taught Israel to sin! It was in his days that the Lord began to grow weary of Israel; and Hazael struck at all their frontiers, where these lay east of the Jordan, Galaad, and Gad, and

Jehu destroys the Worshippers of Baal

Ruben, and Manasses, and Aroer on the river Arnon, the whole territory of Galaad and Basan. What else Jehu did, all his history and the record of his great deeds, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel. And at last he was laid to rest with his fathers at Samaria, and the throne passed to his son Joachaz; he had reigned over Israel, there in Samaria, for twenty-eight years.

11 Upon the death of Ochozias, his mother Athalia put all the princes of the royal house to death, except Ochozias' son Joas, who was saved by his aunt Josaba, daughter to king Joram. When the princes were slain, she stole him away, with his nurse, out of the bed-room, and kept him in hiding so that Athalia could not make away with him. For six whole years she kept him by her secretly in the Lord's house, while Athalia governed the country as queen. In the seventh year, Joiada sent for the commanders of the army and the royal bodyguard, took them into the temple and there made a compact with them, with the Lord's own house to be witness of their oath; then he shewed them the young prince. And with that, he gave them their directions. A third of your number, this sabbath day, will be keeping guard over the palace; some will be at the Sur gate, some at the gate by the armourers' lodging, and you have to guard, too, the house of Messa.² The other two thirds, that are relieved of duty that day, must come and keep guard over the king's person, in the Lord's house. Hedge him about well, with your swords drawn; do not let anyone enter the temple precincts with his life; wherever the king goes, attend him closely.

All the directions which the high priest Joiada gave them these commanders faithfully carried out; mustered their men, alike those who mounted guard and those who were relieved of duty on the sabbath, and presented themselves before Joiada, who supplied them with the spears and other weapons king David had bequeathed to the Lord's house; to right and to left of altar and temple stood armed men ready

¹ Literally, 'the citadel (or city) of the house of Baal', a turn of phrase to which it is hard to attach any significance. ² 'The house of Messa'; the meaning of this is quite uncertain, and the whole account, in the original, is somewhat obscure.

12 to protect the king. Then he brought the young prince out, and gave the royal crown and a copy of the law into his keeping. So was he crowned and anointed, while all clapped their hands and cried aloud, Long
13 live the king! Meanwhile, the stir which the soldiers made in going about their errand reached the ears of Athalia; and she made her way into the temple, there where
14 all the crowds were gathered, to find the king standing on a dais, as the king should, with singers and trumpeters at his side, while all the folk rejoiced, and the trumpets sounded. Well might she rend her clothes,
15 and cry out, Treason, treason! Thereupon Joiada gave word to the commanders of the army that she must be taken out beyond the temple precincts, and if anyone tried to follow, he should be put to the sword; she must not be slain in the Lord's house,
16 he told them. So they made her prisoner, and as she passed along the horse-way that leads to the palace, she was slain.

17 After this, Joiada would have a covenant made, that bound king and people to the Lord, as the Lord's own people; bound
18 king and people to one another. And the whole populace went into Baal's temple, where they pulled down his altars and broke his images for good and all; they killed Mathan, too, Baal's priest, there at the altar. Then the high priest set guards
19 over the Lord's temple, and presently he summoned the officers of the guard, with the Cerethite and Phelethite auxiliaries, and the whole populace with them; and together they brought the king back from the Lord's house, by way of the armourers' gate, into the palace, and he took his seat
20 on the royal throne. All through the land were great rejoicings, and the city had rest, now that Athalia lay dead, there in the
21 palace. Thus Joas came to his throne, a boy of seven years.

12 Joas began his reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and for forty years he reigned as king at Jerusalem. His mother's name was Sebia, a woman of Bersabee. As long as the high priest Joiada was his adviser, he obeyed the Lord's will; only he did not abolish the hill-shrines, men still sacrificed and burned incense on the mountain-tops.

4 This Joas made a proclamation to the

priests; Here are gifts being brought to the temple all the while by pious folk that worship there, one paying a ransom for his life, another contributing as his devotion moves him. Such money the priests may
5 take for their own, according to their rank; but they must be answerable for repairing the Lord's house, if they find anything that needs to be made good. The twenty-third
6 year of King Joas came, and still the priests had done nothing to repair the temple. Whereupon king Joas summoned Joiada
7 and the other priests; What means it, he asked, that you have not made good the temple's needs? Henceforth there must be
8 no more taking money according to your rank; it must all be given up to the repairing of the temple. It was ordered,
9 then, that the priests should no longer receive the gifts, and no longer be answerable for the repairs; instead, the high
10 priest Joiada had a chest made, with a hole in the top of it, and put it close to the altar at the right hand side of the temple entrance; into this the priests who keep the door put
11 all the money that was brought there.

Whenever the chest seemed to be over
12 full, one of the king's secretaries betook himself to the temple, with the high priest, and together they emptied out and counted the money that was to be found there. This, when its value had been duly
13 reckoned, they paid over to the master-builders, who distributed it to the carpenters and masons that worked in the Lord's house and carried out the repairs.
14 The stone-cutters, too, must be paid, and wood and stone must be bought ready for fashioning. Thus the repairing of the Lord's house would not go short for the money which the work needed. The money
15 was not to be used for making pitcher or fork, censer or trumpet, or any other piece of gold or silver ware for the Lord's house; all the offerings given to the temple were
16 paid out to the workmen that were repairing the temple; nor was any account asked of those who handled this money and distributed it to the workmen, they were trusted with the handling of it. Mean-
17 while the fines paid for fault or wrong done were not put into the treasury, since these belonged to the priests as of right.

It was at this time that Hazael, king of Syria, marched on the town of Geth and

took it by storm; then wheeled about and threatened to march on Jerusalem itself.

18 Nor might Joas preserve the city from attack, till he had collected all the offerings dedicated in the temple by himself, or by Josaphat, Joram and Ochozias, that were kings of Juda before him, all the silver, too, that was to be found there or in the royal palace, and sent them to Hazael, king
19 of Syria. What else Joas did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of
20 Juda. It was his own servants that set a conspiracy on foot against him, and slew him in the house at Mello, where the road
21 goes down to Sella; Josachar son of Semath and Jozabad son of Somer, his own attendants, gave him his death-blow. He was laid to rest with his fathers in the Keep of David, and the throne passed to his son Amasias.

13 It was in the twenty-third year of Joas, son of Ochozias, king of Juda, that Joachaz, Jehu's son, came to the throne of Israel, and reigned as king in
2 Samaria for seventeen years. He defied the Lord's will, following the sinful example of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin, and never departing from it.
3 His anger thus provoked, the Lord left Israel at the mercy of Hazael, king of Syria,
4 and his son Benadad, without respite; till at last Joachaz besought the Lord's favour. (This prayer the Lord answered, seeing Israel hard pressed by the Syrian king's
5 inroads upon them; and he gave them a champion to set them free from the Syrian yoke. Then once more the men of Israel
6 could dwell in their old homes; but even so they did not forgo the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin; they clung to them still, and still the forest-shrine had its place in Samaria.)
7 In the time of Joachaz, nothing was left of the army but fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot-soldiers; such havoc the king of Syria had made among them, sweeping them away like chaff on the threshing-floor. What else Joachaz did, all his history, and the record of his great
8 deeds, is to be found in the Annals of the
9 kings of Israel. He was laid to rest with his

fathers, with Samaria for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Joas.

This Joas, the son of Joachaz, came to
10 the throne of Israel in the thirty-seventh year of Joas king of Juda; and his reign in Samaria lasted sixteen years. He defied
11 the Lord's will, and would not abandon the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin; he clung to them yet.
12 What else Joas did, all his history, and the record of his great deeds, and his war with Amasias king of Juda, is to be found in the
13 Annals of the kings of Israel. He was laid to rest with his fathers, and the throne
14 passed to his son Jeroboam. (Joas was buried in Samaria, with the other Israelitic kings.)

And now Eliseus lay sick in his mortal
14 illness, and Joas, who was then king of Israel, went to visit him; My father, my father, he said weeping, Israel's chariot and charioteer! Eliseus bade him fetch
15 bow and arrows, and when bow and arrows were brought, he would have the king of
16 Israel hold the bow in readiness. The bow was stretched, and Eliseus put his own hands over the king's hands; Now, said he,
17 open the window that looks east, and he opened it; Shoot, and he shot. Yonder shaft, Eliseus told him, betokens the divine deliverance, deliverance from the
18 power of Syria. It is for thee to defeat the Syrians utterly, there at Aphec. Then he
19 would have Joas take up his arrows, and when he had done so, bade him shoot, there on the ground. Shoot he did three
20 times, and then held his hand. Whereupon the prophet said to him angrily, Five times
21 thou shouldst have let fly, or six, or seven, to defeat the Syrians utterly; this signifies three defeats and no more.

In the year of Eliseus' death and burial,
22 the country was being ravaged by freebooters from Moab. Some of these appearing suddenly when a dead man was being carried out to his funeral, the bearers
23 took fright, and threw the corpse into the first grave they could find; it was that of Eliseus. And no sooner had it touched the prophet's bones, than the dead man came
24 to life again, and rose to his feet.

¹ The words in brackets may refer to some victories of Joachaz elsewhere unrecorded. But in view of verses 22-25 below, it seems more probable that the sacred author is anticipating events here, and the answer to Joachaz's prayer only came after his death.

12 All through the life-time of Joachaz,
king Hazael of Syria had pressed Israel
13 hard; but now the Lord relented and came
to their aid once more. Faithful to his
covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
he would not make an end of them and cast
14 them off utterly as yet. So, when Hazael
died, and his son Benadad succeeded him
15 as king of Syria, Joas was able to retake
those cities which his father Joachaz had
lost to Benadad's father Hazael, and by
right of conquest; three times Joas was
victorious, and restored the lost cities to
Israel.

14 It was in the second year of Joas,
son of Joachaz, king of Israel, that
the throne of Joas, king of Juda, passed to
2 his son Amasias. This Amasias was twenty-
five years old when he came to the throne,
and his reign at Jerusalem lasted twenty-
nine years; his mother's name was Joadan,
3 a woman of Jerusalem. He obeyed the
Lord's will, not perfectly like his ancestor
David, but in the manner of his father,
king Joas; he too left the hill-shrines stand-
4 ing, so that men still sacrificed and burned
incense on the mountain-tops. Once he
5 was king, he put his father's murderers
to death, but spared their children, in
6 obedience to the law of Moses; whose
terms are, A father must not die for his
son's guilt, or a son for his father's; no
guilt but his own shall bring a man to
7 death.¹ He also fought a battle against the
Edomites in the Valley of the Salt-mines,
killing ten thousand of them, and gaining
possession of a rock-fortress, which he
called by its present name of Jecthel.

8 Then he sent a challenge to Joas, son of
Joachaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel; Come,
9 let us have a trial of strength! And this
answer Joas, king of Israel, sent to Ama-
sias, king of Juda: Said Lebanon thistle to
Lebanon cedar, Let my son have thy
daughter to wife. But down came wild
beasts from Lebanon forest, and all the
thistle got was, he was trodden underfoot.
10 Thou hast struck a shrewd blow at Edom,
and now thy heart is puffed up with pride;
keep thyself at home, content with the
renown thou hast, do not invite disaster,
11 to thy own and Juda's ruin. But Amasias

would have his way, so these two kings,
Joas of Israel and Amasias of Juda, met at
a town in Juda called Bethsames; and there
12 the men of Juda were routed by the Is-
raelites, and scattered to their homes in
flight. Thus Amasias, son of Joas, son of
13 Ochozias, King of Juda, was captured by
Joas king of Israel at Bethsames, and taken
back to his own city of Jerusalem; where
Joas made a gap in the walls four hundred
cubits long, from the gate of Ephraim to
the Corner gate, carried off all the gold and
14 silver and other ware that was to be found
in the temple or palace, took hostages
besides, and made his way back to Sa-
maria.

(What else Joas did, and the record of
15 his great victory over Amasias king of
Juda, is to be found in the Annals of the
kings of Israel. He was laid to rest with
16 his fathers, with Samaria for his burying-
place, and the throne passed to his son
Jeroboam.)² Amasias, son of the Joas that
17 was king of Juda, survived Joachaz's son,
Joas of Israel, by fifteen years; what else
18 he did is to be found in the Annals of the
kings of Juda. A conspiracy was made
19 against him at Jerusalem, and when he
escaped to Lachis they sent in pursuit of
him and put him to death there; afterwards
20 his body was brought back to Jerusalem in
a horse-litter, and there buried with his
fathers in David's Keep. Thereupon the
21 whole people of Juda chose Azarias, a boy
sixteen years old, to succeed his father
Amasias; he it was carried out the designs
22 of his dead father by fortifying the harbour
of Aelath and restoring it to the possession
of Juda.

It was in the fifteenth year of Amasias,
23 son of king Joas of Juda, that Jeroboam,
son of king Joas of Israel, began his reign
in Samaria; it lasted forty-one years. He
24 defied the Lord's will, and would not forgo
the sins of Nabat's son Jeroboam, that
taught Israel to sin. He it was restored to
25 Israel its old territory, all the way from the
pass of Emath in the North to the Dead
Sea. So the Lord had foretold through a
servant of his, the prophet Jonas, son of
Amathi, from Geth-Opfer: the Lord has
26 not been blind to the affliction, past all
endurance, that has fallen on Israel, bond-

¹ Deut. 24. 16.
and 13 of chapter 13.

² Verses 15 and 16 have already appeared, with slight variations, as verses 12

man and free man alike perishing with none to succour them. So the Lord resolved not to let Israel's name vanish from the world; he would grant them redress through Jeroboam the son of Joas. What else Jeroboam did, all his history, and the record of his great deeds, how he fought and how he restored to Israel all of Damascus and Emath that once belonged to the Jewish kingdom, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.¹ So Jeroboam was laid to rest with his fathers, the royal race of Israel, and his throne passed to his son Zacharias.

15 It was in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam that Azarias succeeded his father Amasias on the throne of Juda. He was then sixteen years old, and for fifty years he reigned at Jerusalem; his mother's name was Jechelia, a woman of Jerusalem. He obeyed the Lord's will, following in all things the example of his father Amasias, but did not destroy the hill-shrines; men still sacrificed and burned incense on the mountain tops. On him the Lord's hand fell, and he ended his days as a leper, dwelling apart in a house of his own, while his son Joatham had charge of the palace, and heard the complaints of his subjects. What else Azarias did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda. So he was laid to rest with his fathers; among his ancestors, in the Keep of David, they buried him; and Joatham came to the throne.

¹⁶ It was in Azarias' thirty-eighth year that Jeroboam's son Zacharias began his reign in Samaria; it lasted six months. He defied the Lord's will, like his fathers before him, and would not forgo the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin. But soon a conspiracy was made against him by Sellum, son of Jabes, who attacked and killed him in the open street, and took the throne for himself.² What else Zacharias did is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel. Long before, in Jehu's time, the Lord had promised, Thy heirs shall keep

the throne of Israel till the fourth generation; and so it proved. For one month this Sellum reigned as king at Samaria, in the thirty-ninth year of Azarias; then he was killed and superseded by Menahem, son of Gadi, who marched on Samaria from Thersa; what else Sellum did, all the history of his secret conspiracy, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel. (From Thersa),³ Menahem brought destruction on Thapsa, and all its inhabitants, and all their country-side, because they would not open the gates to him; ripped up the wombs, too, of the women that were pregnant.

It was in Azarias' thirty-ninth year that Menahem, son of Gadi, began his reign of ten years at Samaria; he defied the Lord's will, and would not forgo the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin. All through his reign the country suffered invasion by Phul, king of Assyria, and Menahem paid him a thousand talents of silver, to win support for his claim to the throne. To find this tribute for the Assyrian king, Menahem imposed a tax of fifty silver pieces on all the rich and powerful men in his kingdom. Thus the Assyrian king was induced to go home and rid the country of his presence. What else Menahem did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel; he was laid to rest with his fathers, and succeeded by his son Phaceia. It was in the fiftieth year of Azarias that this Phaceia, son of Menahem, began his reign of two years at Samaria; he defied the Lord's will, and would not forgo the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin. A conspiracy was made against him by one of his own commanders, Phacee son of Romelia, who attacked and slew him in his castle keep (close by Argob and Arie), with fifty Galaadites, and so became king in his place.⁴ What else Phaceia did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

It was in the fifty-second year of Azarias that Phacee, son of Romelia, came to the

¹ 'The Jewish kingdom'; literally, 'Juda', but the sacred text seems to refer to the undivided kingdom of Solomon, not to the tribal area which was called 'Juda' after the separation of the two kingdoms under Roboam.

² In the open street; the words used in the Hebrew text are of doubtful interpretation. The Septuagint interpreters seem to have rendered a text which read 'at Jebelaam'.
³ From Thersa is a phrase difficult to explain, and perhaps corrupt; Thersa was to the north and east, Thapsa to the south and west, of Samaria.

⁴ Nothing is known of Argob and Arie. The Latin disagrees with the Hebrew text in representing them as places, not persons; also with the Septuagint Greek in representing the fifty Galaadites as Phaceia's supporters, not his assailants.

throne at Samaria; he reigned over Israel
 28 twenty years, and defied the Lord's will,
 never forgoing the sins of Jeroboam, son
 29 of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin. During
 the reign of Phacee, the Assyrian king
 Theglath-Phalasar invaded Israel, taking
 Aion, Abel-Beth-Maacha, Janoc, Cedec
 and Asor, with Galaad and Galilee and the
 whole territory of Nephthali, and carrying
 30 off their inhabitants into Assyria. As for
 Phacee, he was caught unawares and slain
 by a conspirator, Osee son of Ela, who
 succeeded him on the throne in the twenti-
 31 eth year of Joatham, son of Ozias. What
 else Phacee did, all his history, is to be
 found in the Annals of the kings of Israel.

It was in the second year of Phacee, son
 of Romelia, that Joatham, son of Ozias,
 33 came to the throne of Juda. He was
 twenty-five years old when he came to the
 throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted
 sixteen years; his mother's name was
 34 Jerusa, daughter of Sadoc. He obeyed the
 Lord's will, following in all things the
 35 example of his father Ozias; but did not
 abolish the hill-shrines; men still sacrificed
 and offered incense on the mountain-tops.
 He it was built the high gate that leads into
 36 the Lord's house. What else Joatham did,
 all his history, is to be found in the Annals
 37 of the kings of Juda. This was the time at
 which the Lord began subjecting Juda to
 attack from Rasin, king of Syria, and
 38 Phacee, son of Romelia. So Joatham was
 laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep
 of David for his burying-place, and the
 throne passed to his son Achaz.

16 It was in the seventeenth year of
 Phacee, son of Romelia, that
 Achaz, son of Joatham, came to the throne
 2 of Juda. He was twenty years old when he
 began his reign, which lasted at Jerusalem
 for sixteen years. This Achaz did not obey
 the Lord's will like his ancestor David
 3 before him; he followed the example of the
 Israelite kings, even consecrating his son
 by passage through the fire, after the
 idolatrous wont of those nations which the
 Lord drove out to make room for Israel.

Never a high hill or a mountain-slope or
 4 a leafy wood but Achaz must do sacrifice
 and offer incense there.

And now Rasin king of Syria and Phacee
 5 son of Romelia marched on Jerusalem and
 besieged Achaz there, but could not get
 the mastery of him. (It was then that
 6 Rasin recovered Ailam for Syria, by
 driving the men of Juda out from it; but
 the Edomites came and took possession of
 it, and it remains theirs to this day.)
 Thereupon Achaz sent a message to the
 7 Assyrian king, Theglath-Phalasar; Bring
 aid, master, to thy servant, father, to thy
 son; rescue me from the assault of Syria
 and Israel; gifts, too, he sent him, col-
 8 lecting all the silver and gold that was to
 be found in temple or palace. Nor was the
 9 king of Assyria unwilling; he marched on
 Damascus and laid it waste, carrying off
 the inhabitants to Cyrene and putting
 Rasin to death.²

When king Achaz went to meet
 10 Theglath-Phalasar at Damascus, he saw
 there an altar, of which he sent a likeness
 with a full account of all its workmanship,
 to the high priest Urias; and Urias built an
 11 altar in accordance with all the directions
 Achaz had sent him from Damascus, to
 greet his return. Returned from Dama-
 12 scus, Achaz went to see it and did
 reverence to it;³ then went up to make
 burnt-sacrifice and meal-offering; poured
 13 libations, and shed the blood of his
 welcome-offerings there. Then he
 14 removed the brazen altar, that stood ever in
 the Lord's presence opposite the taber-
 nacle, away from its place between the new
 altar and the temple, to the north side of
 the new altar. And king Achaz bade the
 15 high priest Urias bring to this greater altar
 the morning burnt-sacrifice and the meal-
 offering at nightfall; here king and people
 would present burnt-sacrifice and meal-
 offering and libations, here the blood of
 the burnt-sacrifice and all other offerings
 was to be spilt; as for the altar of bronze,
 it should await the king's good pleasure.
 And the high priest Urias carried out all
 16 his bidding.

¹ Ailam is no doubt a mistake, in the copying of the Latin version, for Aelath (see 14. 22 above). ² But the Edomites came; another tradition of the Hebrew text has 'And the Syrians came', the two names being much alike in Hebrew. But it seems more likely that we ought to read 'Edom' instead of 'Syria' in the earlier part of the verse; it is hard to see how Syria had any claim on a port lying in the Gulf of Akabah. ³ 'Cyrene' here is evidently some place in Assyria, 'Kir' in Hebrew. ⁴ And did reverence to it; these words are not found in the Hebrew text, or in the Greek Septuagint.

17 King Achaz also took away the moulded stands and the smaller basins that rested on them; took away the oxen that supported the great basin and let it rest on a stone pavement instead; altered, too, the sabbath porch he had built in the temple, and the outer part of the royal entry.¹ Of all these changes in the temple building the king of Assyria was the cause.

19 What else Achaz did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of 20 Juda. So he was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Ezechias.

17 It was in the twelfth year of Achaz that Osee, son of Ela, began his 2 reign at Samaria; it lasted nine years. He too defied the Lord's will, yet not so wantonly as the other kings of Israel before 3 him. This king was attacked by Salmanasar, king of the Assyrians, and made his 4 vassal, and forced to pay tribute. Afterwards, the Assyrian king found out that he had sent an embassy to Sua, king of Egypt, hoping thus to rebel, and to be rid of his yearly tribute; whereupon he seized him, put him in chains, and imprisoned him. 5 Then he overran the whole country with his troops, and marched against Samaria, which for three whole years he kept beleaguered. At last, in the ninth year of 6 Osee, Samaria was taken, and all the Israelites carried off to the Assyrian country; where they were settled in Hala, in Habor, by the river of Gozan, and among the cities of Media.

7 Such was their doom, who had no sooner escaped from Egypt and from the power of Pharaoh, than they wronged the God who had rescued them by worshipping alien 8 gods instead. Afterwards, they took their forms of worship from the very nations the Lord had driven out to make room for them, or from kings who imitated their 9 ways. With false inventions these Israelites offended the Lord that was their own God, making themselves mountain shrines in all their townships from lonely hamlet to 10 walled city.² No high hill, no leafy wood,

but had its images and its sacred trees; and 11 there they burnt incense on their altars, imitating the nations God had dispossessed before their onslaught. Foul deeds were done, to challenge the Lord's anger, shameless rites practised, such as the Lord 12 had forbidden expressly.

The Lord did not leave himself without 13 witness; by prophet and seer he warned them, Come back from these graceless ways, follow precept and observance of mine; as the law bids you, that I enjoined on your fathers; as the prophets bade you, my servants that spoke in my name. But 14 they gave him never a hearing; strained at his yoke; they would be like their fathers, obstinately defying the Lord their God. The usages he had taught them, the cove- 15 nant he had made with their fathers, the warnings he had given them by his prophets, all lightly cast aside, to false rites they betook themselves, and learned false ways; imitated the forbidden example of the heathen round about them. Forgotten, 16 all the commandments of the Lord their God; they must have two golden calves, they must have sacred trees, they must worship all the host of heaven, and become Baal's servants; consecrate their sons and 17 daughters by passage through the fire, take their orders from wizard and soothsayer: enslave themselves to defiance of the Lord's will, and provoke his vengeance. So it was that the Lord, in anger, banished 18 Israel from his presence, and the tribe of Juda stood alone (not that even these kept the commandments of the Lord their God; these too strayed into false paths, of Israel's making). All Israel's race, then, the 19 Lord cast off; humbled them, and left them at the spoiler's mercy; was ready, at last, to banish them from his presence altogether. So it was decreed, from the 20 time when the Israelites first cut themselves off from David's line, and made Jeroboam, son of Nabat, their king; Jeroboam it was that drove men away from the Lord's worship, and taught them to commit heinous sin. To his evil example the 21 men of Israel clung, and would never forgo it, until at last the Lord banished them 22

¹ The word here translated 'porch' is of uncertain significance. It is not clear whether the alterations (no doubt all involving the removal of valuable metal) were made so as to provide further blackmail for the Assyrian king, or so as to prevent his eye falling on any valuable objects, if he should visit Jerusalem.
² 'Lonely hamlet'; literally, 'the tower of the watchmen'.

from his presence, as all his prophets had foretold in his name, and they were carried off from their own country into Assyria, where they remain to this day.

24 And now the Assyrian king brought men from Babylon, and Cutha, and Avah, and Emath, and Sepharvaim, and settled these, instead of the Israelites, in the cities that belonged to Samaria. So they took possession of it, and made their homes in its cities, but at their first coming they paid the Lord no reverence, and thereupon he sent a plague of lions, that preyed upon them. News of this came to the Assyrian king, and a warning with it: The nations thou hast removed, and settled down in the cities of Samaria, have never learned how the God of that land would be worshipped; and he, the Lord, has sent a plague of lions among them. Must they die for want of knowledge how their new God is to be worshipped? So the Assyrian king gave orders that one of the priests carried away thence should be restored to his home; should go to live among them, and teach them how to worship the Lord.

28 So one of the exiled priests from Samaria came to live at Bethel, and teach them he did; but still each nation would fashion the image of its own god, and they set up these images in the hill-shrines they had made, one in this city and another in that. The men of Babylon must have Socoth-Benoth, and the Chutaeans Nergel, and the Emathites Asima, and the Hevites Nabahaz and Tharthac; while the men of Sepharvaim offered their own children to the gods of Sepharvaim, Adramelech and Anamelech.

32 And in spite of it, they worshipped the Lord. They found priests among the dregs of the people, fit to serve hill-shrines, and in the hill-shrines they installed them; but though they worshipped the Lord, they still paid court to their own gods with the usages of their own folk, learned before ever they came to Samaria. And so it is to this day; the old habits still cling. This is not to fear the Lord, this is not to keep observance and decree, law and command, as the sons of Jacob should; Jacob, to whom the Lord gave his name of Israel.

35 With them he made a covenant; and by that covenant they were to give alien gods

neither fear nor reverence, neither worship nor sacrifice. To the Lord your God, he told them, the God who rescued you from Egypt with such signal proofs of his constraining power, all fear, all worship, all sacrifice belongs; his the observances, his the decrees, his the law of tabled precepts, that you must keep ever in mind, obey ever in act; no alien god must you fear. Never let his covenant go unremembered; the worship you deny to alien gods give to him only; then he will deliver you from the power of your enemies. To all this they paid no heed; old custom was still the rule they lived by. Here then, were nations that worshipped the Lord, yet obeyed their own false gods still; their sons, their grandsons did no better; and such is the rule they follow down to this day.

18 In the third year of Osee, son of Ela, king Achaz of Juda was succeeded by his son Ezechias. This king was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted twenty-nine years. Here was one that obeyed the Lord's will no less than his father David before him; scattered the hill-shrines, overthrew the images, cut down the sacred trees; broke in pieces, too, the brazen serpent Moses had made, because the Israelites, till his day, used to offer incense to it; the name given to it was Nohestan.¹ In the Lord God of Israel he put all his trust; never was a king of Juda to rival him before or after; in the paths the Lord had traced he followed still, holding ever close to him, keeping ever the commands he had given through Moses. What wonder if the Lord was with him, if he was well advised in all he did? Against the king of Assyria he rose in rebellion, and denied him tribute; and harried the Philistine townships as far as Gaza, from lonely hamlet to walled city.

It was in the fourth year of Ezechias, and the seventh year after Osee son of Ela came to the throne of Israel, that Salmanasar, king of Assyria, marched on Samaria and laid siege to it. And at the end of three years he took it; it was in the sixth year of Ezechias and the ninth of Osee that Samaria was captured, and all the Israelites carried off to Assyria, where they were

¹ 'Given to it', probably by popular usage, not by Ezechias himself.

settled in Hala and Habor by the streams of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

12 And this, because they paid no heed to the Lord's bidding; false to his covenant, they left the commands he had given through his servant Moses unheard and unheeded.

13 Then, in the fourteenth year of Ezechias, the Assyrian king Sennacherib marched on the fortified cities of Juda and took them; whereupon king Ezechias sent word to the king of Assyria, then at Lachis: I have been to blame; withdraw thy troops, and I will pay whatever ransom thou dost demand. So the king of Assyria imposed on Ezechias king of Juda a tribute of three hundred talents of silver, and three hundred of gold. All the silver that was to be found in temple or treasury Ezechias gave him; broke up, too, the temple doors, with the golden plates he himself had nailed to them, and gave these to the king of Assyria.

17 After this the Assyrian king, who was still at Lachis, sent Tharthan, Rabsaris and Rabsaces at the head of a strong force to Jerusalem, where king Ezechias was. They marched up to the city, and halted by the aqueduct that fed the upper pool, on the way that brings you to the Fuller's Field.

18 Their demand was to see the king, but they were met by Eliacim, son of Helcias, the controller of the royal household, and Sobna, the secretary, and Joahe, son of Asaph, the recorder. So Rabsaces bade them tell Ezechias, Here is a message to thee from the great king, the king of Assyria. What confidence is this that makes thee so bold? Doubtless thou hast some design, in so committing thyself to the fortune of war. On whose help dost thou rely, that thou wouldst throw off my allegiance? What wilt thou rely on Egypt? That is to support thyself on a broken staff of cane, that will splinter and run into a man's hand, if he presses on it, and pierce him through; such does Pharao, king of Egypt, prove himself to all those who rely on him. Or wilt thou answer, We trust, I and my people, in the Lord our God? Tell me, who is he? Is he not the God whose hill-shrines and altars Ezechias has cleared away, bidding Juda and Jerusalem worship at one altar here? Come now, if

thou wert to make terms with my master, the king of Assyria, by which I must hand over to thee two thousand horses, wouldst thou be able to do thy part by putting riders on them? Why, thou art no match even for a city prefect, the least of my master's servants. Trust, if thou wilt, in Egypt, its chariots and its horsemen; but dost thou doubt that I have the Lord's warrant to subdue this land? It was the Lord himself who sent word to me, Make war on this land, and subdue it.

At this, Eliacim and Sobna and Joahe said to Rabsaces, My lord, pray talk to us in Syriac; we know it well. Do not talk to us in the Hebrew language, while all these folk are standing on the walls within hearing. What, said Rabsaces, dost thou think my master hath sent me with this message for thee only, and for that master of thine? It is for the folk who man the walls, these companions of yours that have nothing left to eat or drink but the ventings of their own bodies. Then Rabsaces stood up and cried aloud, in Hebrew, Here is a message to you from the great king, the king of Assyria! This is the king's warning, Do not be deluded by Ezechias, he is powerless to save you; do not let Ezechias put you off by telling you to trust in the Lord; that the Lord is certain to bring you aid, he cannot allow the king of Assyria to become master of your city. No, do not listen to Ezechias; here are the terms the king of Assyria offers you. Earn my good will by surrendering to me, and you shall live unmolested, to each the fruit of his own vine and fig-tree, to each the water from his own cistern.¹ Then, when I come back, I will transplant you into a land like your own, which will grudge you neither wheat nor wine, so rich is it in corn-fields and vineyards, neither olives, nor oil, nor honey, and you will be spared from the destruction that threatens you. No, do not listen to Ezechias when he tells you that the Lord will deliver you. What of other nations? Were their countries delivered, by this god or that, when the king of Assyria threatened them? What gods had Emath and Arphad, what gods had Sepharvaim, Ana and Ava? Did any power rescue Samaria from my attack? Which of all the gods in the world has delivered his country when I threatened it.

¹ Verses 17-31 of this chapter are to be found, with slight variations, in the prophecy of Isaias (chapter 36)

that you should trust in the Lord's deliverance, when I threaten Jerusalem?

- 36 But all kept silence, and gave him no word in answer; the king had given strict orders that they were not to answer him.
- 37 So Eliacim, son of Helcias, the controller of the royal household, and Sobna, the secretary, and Joahe, son of Asaph, the recorder, went back to Ezechias, with their garments torn about them, to let him know what Rabsaces had said.

19 No sooner had king Ezechias heard it, than he tore his garments open, and put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. Meanwhile, he sent word to the prophet *Isaia*s, son of *Amos*. Eliacim, the controller of the household, and Sobna, the secretary, and some of the older priests, went on this errand. Here is a message for thee, they said, from Ezechias. Troublous times have come upon us, times to make us mend our ways, or else blaspheme God. What remedy, when children come to the birth, and the mother has no strength to bear them? Unless indeed the Lord should take cognizance of what Rabsaces has been saying, Rabsaces, who was sent here by his master, the king of Assyria, to blaspheme the living God. Surely the Lord thy God has listened to the reproaches he uttered. Raise thy voice, then, in prayer for the poor remnant that is left.

- 20 Thus visited by the servants of Ezechias, *Isaia*s answered, Give your master this message. Do not be dismayed, the Lord says, at hearing the blasphemies which the courtiers of the Assyrian king have uttered against me. See if I do not put him in such a mind, see if I do not make him hear such news, as will send him back to his own country. And when he reaches his own country, I will give the word, and the sword shall make an end of him.

- 21 And now Rabsaces went back to find the king of the Assyrians before Lobna, hearing that he had raised the siege of Lachis.
- 22 News had come that Taracha, king of the Ethiopians, was on the way to do battle with him. And the king, as he went out to meet Taracha, despatched messengers to Ezechias; Give this warning, he said, to Ezechias, king of Juda, Do not let the God in whom thou puttest such confidence de-

ceive thee with false hopes; do not think Jerusalem will never be allowed to fall into the hands of the Assyrian king. What, hast thou not heard what the kings of Assyria have done to the nations everywhere, destroying them utterly? And what hope hast thou of deliverance? What saving power had the gods of those old peoples my fathers overthrew, Gozam, and Haram, and Repheth, and the race of Eden who lived in Thalassar? Where are they, the kings of Emath, and Arphad, the kings who governed the city of Sepharvaim, and Ana, and Ava?

These despatches were handed by the messengers to Ezechias, and when he had read them, he went up into the house of the Lord, and held them out open in the Lord's presence. And this was the prayer which Ezechias made to him, Lord God of Israel, who hast thy throne above the cherubim, thou alone art God over all the kingdoms of the world, heaven and earth are of thy fashioning. Give ear, and listen; open thy eyes, Lord, and see; do not let Sennacherib's words go unheard, these blasphemies he has uttered against the living God. It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have brought ruin on whole nations, and the lands they lived in, and thrown their gods into the fire; but these were in truth no gods; men had made them, of wood or stone, and men could break them. Now it is for thee, O Lord our God, to rescue us from the invader, and shew all the kingdoms of the world that there is no other Lord, no other God, save thee.

Then *Isaia*s, son of *Amos*, sent word to Ezechias, A message to thee from the Lord, the God of Israel, granting the prayer thou hast made to him about Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians. This is what the Lord has to say of him: See how she mocks thee, flouts thee, Sion, the virgin city! Jerusalem, proud maiden, follows thee with her eyes and tosses her head in scorn. So thou wouldst hurl insults, and blaspheme, and talk boastfully, and brave it out with disdainful looks, against whom? Against the Holy One of Israel. In thy name, these servants of thine have hurled insults at the Lord. It was thy dream that thou hadst scaled, with those many chariots of thine, the slopes of Lebanon;

thou hadst cut down its tall cedars, its noble fir-trees, till thou couldst reach the very summit of its ascent, the garden its woods enclosed. Thou wouldst dig wells and drink wherever it pleased thee, thou wouldst dry up, in thy march, the banked channels of the Nile.

What, hast thou not heard how I dealt with this people in time past? This present design, too, is one I have formed long since, and am now carrying out; such a design as brings with it ruin for the mountain fastnesses, the walled cities that fight against thee. Sure enough, they were overawed and discomfited, the puny garrisons that held them, frail as meadow grass, or the stalks that grow on the housetop, withering before they can ripen. But I am watching thee where thou dwellest, thy comings and goings and journeyings, thy raving talk against me. Yes, I have listened to the ravings of thy pride against me, and now a ring for thy nose, a twitch of the bridle in thy mouth, and back thou goest by the way thou didst come.

Here is a test for thee, Ezechias, of the truth of my prophecy; this year thou must be content with what crops are left thee, and next year the aftergrowth shall be thy food; in the third year you may sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. A remnant of Juda's race will be saved, and this remnant will strike root deep in earth, bear fruit high in air; yes, it is from Jerusalem the remnant will come, from mount Sion that we shall win salvation; so tenderly he loves us, the Lord of hosts. This, then, is what the Lord has to tell thee about the king of the Assyrians; he shall never enter this city, or shoot an arrow into it; no shield-protected host shall storm it, no earth-works shall be cast up around it. He will go back by the way he came, and never enter into this city, the Lord says; I will keep guard over this city and deliver it, for my own honour and for the honour of my servant David.

It was after this that an angel of the Lord went out on his errand, and smote down a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp; when morning came, and he saw the corpses of the dead, the king broke up camp and was gone. So

Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, made his way home, nor did he leave Nineve again. And one day, when he was at worship in the temple of his god Nosroch, two sons of his, Adramelech and Sarasar, drew their swords on him, and so escaped into the land of Ararat; and the throne passed to his son Asarhaddon.¹

20 And now Ezechias fell sick, and was at death's door; indeed, the prophet Isaias, son of Amos, visited him with this message from the Lord, Put thy affairs in order; it is death that awaits thee, not recovery. At this Ezechias turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord thus: Remember, Lord, I entreat thee, a life that has kept true to thee, an innocent heart; how I did ever what was thy will. And Ezechias wept bitterly. Whereupon, before ever Isaias reached the middle of the court-yard, the word of the Lord came to him, Go back, and tell Ezechias, the ruler of my people, Here is a message to thee from the Lord, the God of thy father David. I have listened to thy prayer, and marked thy tears; be it so, I have granted thee recovery. Within three days thou shalt be on thy way to the Lord's temple, and I will add fifteen years to thy life. And I will save thee and thy city from the power of the Assyrian king; I will be its protector, for my own honour and the honour of my servant David. Then Isaias bade them bring a lump of figs, and when this was brought and laid on the king's ulcer, he recovered. When Ezechias asked what sign should be given him that his health would be restored, and that he would set foot in the Lord's temple within three days, Isaias told him, Here is thy proof that the Lord will keep his promise. Wouldst thou have the shadow on the sundial climb forward by ten hours, or travel backwards as much? Why, said he, it were no great matter that it should advance ten hours; rather, by my way of it, let it travel ten hours backwards. So the prophet Isaias made appeal to the Lord, and the shadow retraced the last ten hours it had advanced on the sun-dial of Achaz.²

And now, hearing of his sickness, the king of Babylon, Berodach Baladan, son of

¹ The whole of this chapter is to be found in the prophecy of Isaias chapter 37; see notes there.

² Verses 1-11 are to be found, with slight variations, in the prophecy of Isaias (chapter 38).

Baladan, sent a letter and gifts to Ezechias.

13 Ezechias was delighted at the coming of these envoys, and shewed them his scented treasure-house, with its gold and silver and spices and rich ointments; the rooms where his ornaments were kept; all the wealth of his store-house. There was nothing in palace or domain but he shewed 14 it to them. Then the prophet Isaias gained audience of king Ezechias, and asked him, What message did these men bring, and whence had they come? They came to see me, said Ezechias, from a country that is 15 far away, from Babylon. And when Isaias asked what they had seen in his palace, he told them, They saw everything in my palace; I have no treasures I did not shew 16 them. And at that Isaias said to Ezechias, I have a message for thy hearing from the 17 Lord. Behold, a time is coming when all that is in thy house, all the treasures which thy fathers have amassed there in times past, will be taken away to Babylon; no- 18 thing shall be left of it, the Lord says. And sons of thine, men of thy own line, of thy own stock, shall be carried off to be eunuchs in the palace of the kings of 19 Babylon. Why then, Ezechias said to Isaias, welcome be the word the Lord has spoken through thee! In my time at least may there be peace; may the promise hold good.¹

20 What else Ezechias did, the record of his great deeds, and of the pool and conduit by which he stored water in Jerusalem, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of 21 Juda. So Ezechias was laid to rest with his fathers, and the throne passed to his son Manasses.

21 Manasses was twelve years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted fifty-five years; his mother's name was Haphsiba. 22 This Manasses defied the Lord's will, by courting the false gods of those nations which the Lord destroyed to make room 23 for the sons of Israel. He restored once again the hill-shrines which his father Ezechias had overthrown; he raised altars

to Baal, and set up sacred trees, like Achab king of Israel, and gave to all the host of heaven worship and observance. Nay, he must set up these altars of his in the Lord's own house, the chosen shrine of his name; altars there must be for all the host of 5 heaven in the two temple courts. He consecrated his own son by passing him 6 through the fire; there was watching for auguries and taking of omens, there was divination, and sorcerers abounded, until this defiance of his provoked the Lord's 7 anger. He made an idol, too, after the fashion of the sacred trees, and set it up there in the Lord's temple. And this was at Jerusalem, the Lord's choice among all the cities of Israel; this was in the temple that was to be the everlasting shrine of his name; so he had promised David and Solomon, Nevermore will I let the sons of 8 Israel be dislodged from the land I gave their fathers, if only they will be true to all the observances I have enjoined, all the commands which my servant Moses taught them. That warning went unheeded; the 9 very nations which the Lord destroyed to make room for the sons of Israel were guilty of less wrong than they themselves did, when they were led astray by the example of Manasses.

Thereupon word came from the Lord 10 through his servants the prophets: King Manasses of Juda shall not go unpunished for these deeds of his, more detestable yet than any the Amorrhites did before him; by which foul example Juda has become no less guilty than Israel. This warning, 12 then, the Lord God of Israel sends him: I mean to bring such calamity upon Jerusalem and Juda as shall ring in the ears of all who hear it. Level with Samaria shall 13 Jerusalem lie, lean in ruin as the house of Achab leans; I mean to efface Jerusalem as a wax tablet is effaced, scraping it over and over with pen downwards turned.² I mean 14 to abandon this poor remnant of the people that once was mine, and let them fall into the hands of their enemies, so that every rival of theirs can lay their land waste and plunder it; since the day when their race 15

¹ For verses 12-19, see Is. 39, where the name of the Babylonian king is given as Merodach Baladan. ² The first part of the verse means literally, 'I will spread out over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Achab'. In the second half, the Latin version probably intends an allusion to the Roman custom of using the blunt end of the pen to erase the characters on a wax tablet. The Hebrew text is commonly interpreted as meaning that God will scrape Jerusalem clean, and turn it upside down, like an ungued vessel.

left Egypt, they have never ceased defying me and provoking my anger.

- 16 And Manasses, not content with leading
 17 Juda into all these sins of disobedience,
 18 took innocent lives without number, till all
 19 Jerusalem was brimming with blood. What
 else Manasses did, his history, and the
 record of his crimes, is to be found in the
 20 Annals of the kings of Juda. So Manasses
 was laid to rest with his fathers, within the
 domains of his own palace, in Oza's garden,
 and the kingdom passed to his son Amon.
 21 Amon was twenty-two years old when
 he came to the throne, and his reign at
 Jerusalem lasted two years; his mother's
 name was Messalemeth, daughter of Harus
 of Jeteba. He disobeyed the Lord's will,
 22 like his father Manasses before him; never
 a path his father had marked out but he
 must follow it, never a shameful cult his
 father had honoured but he must be its
 23 slave; but the Lord, the God his ancestors
 had worshipped, he forsook utterly, and
 followed his bidding never. Then there
 was a conspiracy among the courtiers, and
 24 the king was slain in his own palace; but
 these conspirators were overthrown by a
 rising of the common people, who crowned
 25 Amon's son Josias to succeed him. What
 else Amon did, is to be found in the Annals
 26 of the kings of Juda. So they buried him
 in the tomb he had made for himself, in
 Oza's garden, and his son Josias came to
 the throne.

22 Josias was eight years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted thirty-one years; his mother's name was Idida, the daughter of Hadaia of Besecath. He was obedient to the Lord's will, and followed in all things the example of his ancestor, king David, never swerving to right or left.

- 3 In the eighteenth year of his reign, Josias had an errand for the controller of the temple, Saphan, son of Aslia, son of Messula. He was to bid the high priest Helcias reckon up the sum collected by the temple door-keepers for the needs of the Lord's house, and pay it out to the workmen through the temple overseers. Pay must be given to these workmen, engaged on making good the temple fabric, carpenters, masons, and builders alike; there was timber to be bought, too, and stone

from the quarries, before the Lord's temple could be repaired. No account need be kept of these expenses; the overseers could be trusted with full disposal of the money. It was then that the high priest Helcias told Saphan he had found, there in the temple, a copy of the law, which he gave him to read. And Saphan, going back to the king with news of his errand, to report that the temple offerings had been reckoned up and paid over to the temple overseers, for distribution to the workmen, added that he had a book which the high priest Helcias had given him.

This book, then, Saphan read out in the royal presence; and the king, upon hearing the terms of the Lord's law, rent his garments about him. Then he gave his orders to Helcias, and Ahicam son of Saphan, and Achobor son of Micha, and Saphan the controller of the temple, and Asaia, one of his courtiers; Go and consult the Lord, he told them, in my name, and in the name of this whole people of Juda, about this new-found copy of the law. Fiercely the Lord's anger burns against us, that the words of this book should have fallen on deaf ears, and our race should have disobeyed the commands enjoined upon us. So Helcias, Ahicam, Achobor, Saphan and Asaia betook themselves to the prophetess Holda. She was wife to Sellum, son of Thecua, son of Araas, that once kept the royal wardrobe; her dwelling was at Jerusalem, in the new part of the city. So they told her their business, and she, in return, gave them this message from the Lord God of Israel for the man that sent them: Thus says the Lord, For this city and its citizens I have punishments in store, all the punishments threatened in yonder book the king of Juda has read. The men of Juda have forsaken me, and offered sacrifice to alien gods; all they do is done in defiance of me: the fire of my vengeance must needs break out against this city, and there is no quenching it. But to the king of Juda, who sent you here to consult the Lord, give this message from the Lord God of Israel: Well for thee thou didst listen to the warnings this book gave thee! Well for thee that fear caught at thy heart, and thou didst humble thyself before the Lord, at hearing him threaten city and citizens with despair and doom; that thou didst rend thy

garments, and hadst recourse to me in tears! And thou hast won my audience, the Lord says; I will lay thee to rest with thy fathers, in quiet times thou shalt go to thy grave; not for thy eyes to witness the great calamities I mean to bring on this city of thine.

23 When they brought the king his answer, he summoned all the elders of Juda and of Jerusalem; then he went up into the Lord's temple, and all the warriors of Juda bore him company, and all the citizens of Jerusalem, priest and prophet, high and low. There, in their hearing, he read out the terms of the law from the book they had found in the Lord's house. And the king, standing on the dais, made a promise, there in the Lord's presence. They would make the Lord their leader, holding fast by command and decree and observance of his, heart and soul, with fresh loyalty to all the terms of the covenant which this book set on record. To that promise, the whole people gave its assent.

Then the king bade the high priest Helcias, and the priests of lesser rank, and the door-keepers, cast out from the Lord's temple all the appurtenances of worship that belonged to Baal and to the sacred tree and to all the host of heaven; these he burned in the valley of Cedron, and carried the ashes of them away to Bethel. All round Jerusalem, and all over Juda, he disbanded the priests whom the kings of Juda had appointed for the hill-shrines; priests, too, that burned incense to Baal, and sun, and moon, and the twelve stars, and all the host of heaven. The sacred tree must be carried away from the temple, away from Jerusalem, to Cedron valley, where they burned it to ashes, that were scattered over the common burying-ground. He destroyed the rooms in the Lord's house which had belonged to the prostitutes, and were now used by the women that wove curtains for the sacred tree. He brought the priests together from all the cities of Juda, and defiled the hill-shrines where they used to sacrifice, all the

way from Gabaa to Bersabee; pulled down, too, the wayside altars at the approach to the gate of Josue, the city governor, to the left of the main gate. As for these priests of the hill-shrines, they were not allowed to minister at the Lord's altar at Jerusalem, but they shared the eating of the unleavened bread with their brother-priests. Tophet, in the valley of Ben-Ennoam, he desecrated utterly, so that there might be no more devoting sons and daughters by fire to Moloch; and he rid the temple of those horses, sacred to the sun, which earlier kings had stabled at the entrance, by the hall of the chamberlain Nathan-Melech; the chariots of the sun he burned to ashes. There were altars, too, that had been set up by royal command on the roof of Achaz's dining-parlour; altars Manasses had built in the two outer courts of the temple; these Josias beat into dust, and made short work of it in the valley of Cedron.¹ He also desecrated the hill-shrines Solomon had made at Jerusalem itself, on the right hand side of the Hill of Shame, for Astaroth, the foul divinity of Sidon, and Chamos, that was Moab's, and Melchom, that was Ammon's; he broke their images, and cut down the sacred trees, and filled up the ruins with the bones of dead men.

In Bethel, too, there was an altar and a hill-shrine, the work of Jeroboam, son of Nabat, that taught Israel to sin; altar and shrine both Josias overthrew and burned and pounded to dust, setting fire at the same time to the sacred trees. And when he looked about him; and saw the hill-side covered with graves, he had bones fetched from these and burned them on the altar, just as the prophet had threatened in the Lord's name when he foretold all this. And now, seeing an inscription, he asked what this was; Why, the men of Bethel answered, it is the tomb of the prophet who came from Juda, and foretold how thou wouldst profane the altar here. Let him alone, then, said Josias; no one must touch these bones; so they rested on undisturbed, and with them the bones of that other prophet, that was Israelite born.²

¹ 'And made short work of it'; literally, 'and he ran thence, and scattered it'. The Hebrew text is amended by some critics so as to mean 'he carried it away' instead of 'he ran'. ² *vs.* 15-18: see III Kc. 13. 2. 'That was Israelite born'; literally, 'that came from Samaria'. The old prophet lived in Bethel, and the reference to Samaria is probably meant to imply that he belonged to Israel, not to Juda.

19 All the hill-shrines in the cities that once belonged to Samaria, raised by kings of Israel in the Lord's despite, Josias abolished, treating them as he had treated the shrine at Bethel; and the priests that served these altars he put to death, one and all. Then, having profaned the altars by burning men's bones on them, he returned to Jerusalem.

21 And now he bade all his subjects keep paschal holiday in honour of the Lord their God, with all the rites prescribed by the covenant which the book recorded. Many a judge had ruled, many a king had reigned in Israel and Juda, but never was pasch kept like that pasch Jerusalem kept in the Lord's honour, in the eighteenth year of Josias. Gone were the familiar spirits, the diviners, the images, gone were all the foul abominations of Juda and Jerusalem; Josias swept them all away; since Helcias had found the book in the Lord's temple he had no thought but to carry out the law's prescriptions in full. Never was there such a king as this; none before or after him came back to the Lord's allegiance, heart and soul and strength, as he did, with the law of Moses to guide him. Yet the Lord would not relent, so deep his indignation, so pitiless his anger against the men of Juda, after all Manasses' defiance of him; he was determined to banish Juda, no less than Israel, from his presence; to forsake his chosen city, Jerusalem, and the house in which he had promised to make a shrine for his name.

28 What else Josias did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda. It was in his time that Pharaoh-Nechao, king of Egypt, marched against the king of Assyria, all the way to the river Euphrates; and Josias, going out to offer resistance, encountered him at Mageddo and met his death there. From Mageddo, his servants carried his body back to Jerusalem, and buried it in the tomb he had made for himself; and now the people's choice fell on his son Joachaz, who was anointed to succeed his father as king.

31 Joachaz was twenty-three years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted but three months; his mother's name was Amital, daughter of Jeremias of Lobna. This Joachaz disobeyed the Lord's will, after the fashion of

his ancestors; but he did not reign at Jerusalem long. Pharaoh-Nechao kept him imprisoned at Rebla, in the Emath country; meanwhile he levied a fine from Juda, a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold, and put Josias' son Eliacim on his father's throne, changing his name to Joakim. Joachaz was carried off to Egypt, where he died. The fine Pharaoh-Nechao had imposed was paid by Joakim, who levied a tax on the whole country; thus it was the citizens, each according to his means, that must satisfy Pharaoh-Nechao with gold and silver alike. Joakim was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted eleven years; his mother's name was Zebida, daughter of Phadaia of Ruma. He, too, disobeyed the Lord's will, after the fashion of his ancestors.

24 In his time, Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon invaded the country; and for three years Joakim was his vassal; then he rebelled against him. But the Lord sent enemies to attack him, freebooters from Chaldaea, Syria, Moab and Ammon; sent them to attack Juda and lay it waste, in fulfilment of the threat which his servants the prophets had uttered in his name. It was by the Lord's own decree that this befell; he would banish Juda from his presence, in return for all Manasses' sins; and for all those innocent lives taken, in the days when Jerusalem ran with guiltless blood till the Lord refused to pardon it. What else Joakim did, all his history, is to be found in the Annals of the kings of Juda. So Joakim was laid to rest with his fathers, and the throne passed to his son Joachin. Meanwhile, the king of Egypt advanced no more beyond his own frontiers; all the possessions he held, from the brook of Egypt right up to the river Euphrates, the king of Babylon had taken away from him.

Joachin was eighteen years old when he came to the throne, and his reign in Jerusalem lasted but three months; his mother's name was Nohesta, daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. He disobeyed the Lord's will no less than his father before him. It was in his time that the forces of Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, marched against Jerusalem, and siege was laid to the city; and Nabuchodonosor

came there in person to be with them, and
 12 to press on the siege. Whereupon Joachin,
 king of Juda, gave himself up, with his
 mother, his servants, his nobles, and his
 chamberlains; and the king of Babylon, in
 this, the eighth year of his reign, accepted
 13 the surrender. All the treasures of temple
 and palace he took away, and cut in pieces
 all the golden ornaments Solomon, king of
 Israel, had set up in the temple, so ful-
 14 filling what the Lord had prophesied.¹ All
 the citizens of Jerusalem he carried off as
 prisoners, the noblemen, and the best
 warriors in the army, ten thousand of
 them, the craftsmen and the smiths; none
 were left except the poor folk in the coun-
 15 try-side. To Babylon Joachin must go, with
 his mother and his wives and his chamber-
 lains; for Babylon all the judges in the land
 16 must leave Jerusalem as exiles; to Babylon
 Nabuchodonosor removed seven thousand
 warriors, and a thousand craftsmen and
 smiths, all that had strength to bear arms.
 17 In place of Joachin, he made his uncle
 Matthanias king, giving him the name of
 Sedecias.

18 Sedecias was twenty-one years old when
 he came to the throne, and his reign at
 Jerusalem lasted eleven years; his mother's
 name was Amital, daughter of Jeremias of
 19 Lobna. He disobeyed the Lord's will, as
 20 Joakim had; for now the Lord's anger
 hung over Juda and Jerusalem, ready to
 banish them from his presence. And Se-
 decias in his turn revolted against the king
 of Babylon.

25 And now, in the ninth year of
 Sedecias' reign, on the tenth day
 of the twelfth month, Nabuchodonosor
 reached Jerusalem at the head of his army.
 2 They surrounded it and threw up siege-
 works about it; and so the city continued,
 cut off and hedged in, until king Sedecias'
 3 eleventh year. Then, on the ninth day of
 the fourth month,² when famine had
 broken out in the city, and the poorer folk
 had nothing left to eat, a breach was made
 in the walls; and that night all the fighting
 men made their escape by way of the gate
 between the two walls, by the royal garden,
 leaving the Chaldeans to continue the
 siege of the city. The road Sedecias chose
 for his flight was that which leads to the

desert plain; and in the plain by Jericho he
 5 was overtaken by the Chaldeans, who had
 set out in pursuit. All his army melted
 away from him, leaving him alone; and so,
 6 a prisoner, the king was borne away to
 Reblatha, where Nabuchodonosor passed
 sentence on him. He made him witness
 7 the death of his sons; then put out his eyes
 and carried him off in chains to Babylon.

On the fifth day of the seventh month.
 8 In the nineteenth year of Nabuchodonosor's
 reign, the commander of his forces, Nab-
 uzardan, came on his master's errand to
 Jerusalem, where he burned down temple
 9 and palace and private dwellings too; no
 house of note but he set it on fire. The
 troops he brought with him were em-
 ployed in dismantling the walls on every
 side of it. Then Nabuzardan carried off the
 11 remnants of the people that were left in the
 city, the deserters who had gone over to
 Nabuchodonosor, and the common folk
 generally, leaving only such of the poorer
 12 sort as were vine-dressers and farm la-
 bourers. Brazen pillars and brazen stands
 and the great basin of bronze that stood in
 the Lord's temple the Chaldeans broke
 up, and took away all the bronze to Ba-
 13 bylon; for bronze, too, they carried away
 pot and ladle, cup and fork and saucer, all
 14 the appurtenances of worship that were of
 bronze; for gold, too, and for silver, bowl
 15 and censer of gold and silver; nothing did
 Nabuzardan leave behind him. There was
 16 no reckoning the weight of bronze, when
 the two pillars, the great basin, and the
 stands which Solomon had set up in the
 temple are included; each pillar was
 17 eighteen cubits high, and had a capital of
 three cubits' height resting on it, with the
 net-work and pomegranate mouldings on
 the capital all of bronze.

Prisoners, too, Nabuzardan carried
 18 away with him, the two chief priests,
 Saraias and Sophonias, the three door-
 keepers from the temple, and among the
 19 citizens, the chamberlain who commanded
 the army, five other courtiers who were
 still left in the city, Sopher, the army
 leader who had the levying of recruits, and
 sixty citizens of the common sort. All
 20 these were carried away by Nabuzardan to
 Reblatha, into Nabuchodonosor's pre-
 21 sence; and there at Reblatha, in the Emath

¹ Cf. 20. 17 above.

² The word 'fourth' is not in the original, but can be supplied from Jer. 52. 6.

country, Nabuchodonosor put them to death. So the men of Juda were exiled
 22 from their country, and over the few he
 left remaining there the king of Babylon
 put Godolias, son of Ahicam, son of Sa-
 23 phan, in charge. When they heard of his
 appointment, the chieftains came to meet
 him at Maspha, Ismael son of Nathanias,
 Johanan son of Caree, Saraias son of
 Thanehumeth from Netopha, and Jezo-
 24 nias son of Maachati, and all their men
 with them; and Godolias took an oath to
 chiefs and men alike. They need have no
 fear of living under Chaldaean rule; let
 them remain in the country as the king of
 Babylon's vassals, and all should go well
 25 with them. None the less in the seventh
 month this Ismael, son of Nathanias, son
 of Elisama, who was of the royal blood,
 came to Maspha with twelve of his fol-

The Survivors take Refuge in Egypt

lowers and gave Godolias his death-blow;
 killed, too, all his retinue, Jew and Chaldee
 alike. Whereupon all the inhabitants of the
 21 country, high and low, and the chieftains
 with them, removed to Egypt, fearing the
 vengeance of the Chaldaeans.

On the twenty-seventh day of the
 22 twelfth month, in the thirty-seventh year
 after king Joachin of Juda had been carried
 into exile, he was released from prison by
 Evil-Merodach, king of Babylon, then in
 the first year of his reign. Graciously did
 23 Evil-Merodach receive him, gave him a
 seat of honour above the other captive
 kings, and relieved him of his prisoner's
 24 garb. All the rest of his life he was enter-
 tained at the royal table; all the rest of his
 25 life he received, day by day, a perpetual
 allowance made to him by the king's
 bounty.¹

¹ Most of this chapter is repeated in Jeremiah chapter 52.

THE FIRST BOOK OF PARALIPOMENA

FROM Adam, through Seth, Enos,
2 Cainan, Malaleel, Jared, Henoch,
3 Mathusale, Lamech, and Noe came
4 Sem, Cham and Japheth. From
5 Japheth came Gomer, Magog, Madai,
6 Javan, Thubal, Mosoch and Thiras; from
7 Gomer, Ascenez, Riphath and Thogorma;
8 from Javan, Elisa and Tharsis, the Cethim
9 and the Dodanim. From Cham, Chus,
10 Mesraim, Phut and Chanaan; from Chus,
11 Saba, Hevila, Sabatha, Regma and Sa-
12 bathacha; from Regma, Saba and Dadan.
13 (Chus, too, was the father of Nemrod, who
14 was the first great warrior.) From Mes-
15 raim came the Ludim, the Anarim, the
16 Laabim and the Nephthum, the Phetrus-
17 sim, too, and the Chasluim (from whom
18 the Philistines sprang), and the Caph-
19 torim. Chanaan was the father of Sidon;
20 this was his first-born son. From him, too,
21 come Hethites, Jebusites, Amorrhites,
22 Gergesites, Hevites, Aracites, Sinites,
23 Aradians, Samarites and Hamathites.
24 From Sem came Aelam, Assur, Ar-
25 phaxad, Lud, Aram, Hus, Hul, Gether and
26 Mosoch; Arphaxad was the father of Sale,
27 Sale of Heber, who had two sons; one was
28 called Phaleg, Division, because in his
29 time the territory was divided up, and his
30 brother's name was Jectan. This Jectan
31 was the father of Elmodad, Saleph, Asar-
32 moth, Jare, Adoram, Huzal, Decla, Hebal,
33 Abirmael, Saba, Ophir, Hevila and Jobab;
34 all these were Jectan's sons.¹
35 From Sem, through Arphaxad, Sale,
36 Heber, Phaleg, Ragau, Serug, Nachor and
37 Thare, came Abram, who is the same as
38 Abraham.² And Abraham had two sons,
39 Isaac and Ismahel. These had issue as
40 follows.

Ismahel's first-born was Nabaioth; his
other sons were Cedar, Adbeel, Mabsam,
41 Masma, Duma, Massa, Hadad, Thema,
42 Jetur, Naphis, Cedma; all these were sons

of Ismahel.³ (Abraham begot other sons
by his concubine Ceturā, Zamran, Jecsan,
Madan, Madian, Jesboc and Suē. From
Jecsan came Saba, and Dadan who was the
ancestor of the Assurim, Latussim and
Laomim; from Madian Epha, Epher, He-
noch, Abida and Eldaa; all these are
descended from Ceturā.⁴) Abraham's
other son Isaac was father of Esau and
Israel.

Esau was father of Eliphaz, Rahuel,
Jehus, Ihelom and Core; Eliphaz of
Theman, Omar, Sephi, Gatham, Cenez,
Thamna and Amalec; Rahuel of Nahath,
Zara, Samma and Meza.⁵ (It was Seir that
was father of Lotan, Sobal, Sebeon, Ana,
Dison, Eser and Disan. Lotan had a sister
called Thamna, and his sons were Hori
and Homam. From Sobal came Alian,
Manahath, Ebal, Sephi and Onam; from
Sebeon Aia, and Ana that had a son called
Dison; from Disan Hamram, Eseban,
Jethran and Charan; from Eser Balaan,
Zavan and Jacan; from Disan Hus and
Aran.)

There were kings ruling in the Edomite
country before the Israelites had kings of
their own; these are their names; Bale the
son of Beor reigned in Denaba, and after
his death Jobab, son of Zare, from Bosra,
who was succeeded by Husam from the
Themanite country; his successor was
Adad, son of Badad, who defeated Madian
in the territory of Moab; he ruled at Avith.
Adad was succeeded by Semla from Mas-
reca, and Semla by Saul from Rohoboth
on its river, and Saul by Balanan son of
Achobor, and Achobor by Adad who ruled
at Phau; his wife's name was Meētabel,
daughter of Matred, who was daughter of
Mezaab.

After Adad's death there were chief-
tains in Edom instead of kings; Thamna,
Alva, Jetheth, Oōlibama, Ela, Phinon,

¹ vv. 1-23, cf. Gen. 10.

² vv. 24-27, cf. Gen. 11. 12-26.

³ vv. 28-31, cf. Gen. 25. 13-15.

⁴ vv. 32-33, cf. Gen. 25. 2-4.

⁵ The ancestry of Seir is not given; in Gen. 36. 20 it seems to be implied that the Sciritēs were native to the land, the Edomites new-comers.

- 53 Cenez, Theman, Mabsar, Magdiel and Hiram; these were the chieftains of Edom.¹

2 The sons of Israel were Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Issachar, Zabulon, Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Nephthali, Gad and Aser. Juda had three sons by the Chanaanitess Sué, Her, Onan and Sela; Her, his first-born, displeased the Lord by his evil life, and the Lord slew him. Then Juda had two more sons by his own daughter-in-law Thamar, Phares and Zara; so he was father of five sons in all. From Phares came Hesron and Hamul, from Zara Zamri, Ethan, Heman, Chalcol and Dara, five in all. . . .² From Charmi came Achar, who brought trouble on Israel by his sin in stealing the plunder that was forfeit. From Ethan came Azarias, from Hesron, Jerameel, Ram and Calubi; from Ram, Aminadab, and from Aminadab Nahasson, that was chieftain of the tribe of Juda. From Nahasson came Salmon, from Salmon, Booz, from Booz, Obed, and from Obed, Jesse.

13 The name of Jesse's first-born was Eliab; the second son was called Abinadab, the third Simmaa, the fourth Nathanael, the fifth Raddai, the sixth Asom; and David was the seventh. They had two sisters, Sarvia and Abigail; Sarvia was the mother of three sons, Abisai, Joab and Asael, and Abigail bore Amasa to Jether the Ismahelite.

18 (From Hesron's son Caleb, through Azuba and Jerioth, came Jaser, Sobab and Ardon. On Azuba's death Caleb married Ephratha and begot Hur, father of Uri, father of Bezeleel. Hesron, at the age of sixty, took a second wife, the daughter of Machir, from whom came Galaad; and she bore him a son called Segub, father of that Jair who occupied twenty-three townships in Galaad, took Gessur, Aram, Jair's Villages, and Canath with its sixty townships. . . . All these were sons of Machir, father of Galaad. It was after Hesron's death that Caleb mated with Ephratha. Hesron had another wife called Abia, that bore him a son, Ashur, father of Thecua.)⁴

The sons of Hesron's eldest son Jerameel were called Ram, Buna, Aram, Asom and Achia; by his second wife Atara he begot Onam. And Jerameel's eldest son Ram was father of Moós, Jamin and Achar. From Onam came Semei and Jada; from Semei, Nadab and Abisur; from Abisur, by his wife Abihail, Ahobban and Molid; from Nadab, Saled (who died without issue) and Apphaim; from Apphaim, Jesi, from Jesi, Sesan, from Sesan. Oholai. From Semei's brother Jada came Jether (who died without issue) and Jonathan; from Jonathan, Phalet and Ziza. Such were the descendants of Jerameel.

Sesan died without male issue, and it was to an Egyptian servant of his, Jeraa, that he gave his daughter in marriage; she bore him Ethei. From Ethei, through Nathan, Zabad, Ophlal, Obed, Jehu, Azarias, Helles, Elasa, Sisamoi, Sellum and Icaria came Elisama.

Jerameel's brother Caleb had a son called Mesa, father of Ziph, and another son called Maresa, father of Hebron. From Hebron came Core, Thaphua, Recem and Samma; from Samma, through Raham, Jercaam, and from Recem, through Sammai and Maon, Bethsur. By his concubine Epha, Caleb was the father of Haran, Mosa and Gezez; Haran also had a son called Gezez; this Epha was a daughter of Johaddai, whose other children were Regom, Joathan, Gesan, Phalet, Epha and Saaph. By his concubine Maacha, Caleb was father of Saber and Tharana; (also of Saaph, father of Madmena, Sue, father of Machbena, and the father of Gabaa). Caleb's daughter was called Achsa.

(Hur, the first-born of Ephratha, had a son called Caleb; from him, through Sobal, comes Cariathiarim, through Salma, Bethlehem, and through Hariph, Bethgader. From Sobal, besides Cariathiarim, comes Haroe, part of the Manahathites; and the Jethrites, Aphuthites, Semathites and Maserites are also connected with Cariathiarim; the Saraites and Esthaloties derive from these. From Salma, besides

¹ *vt.* 35-54, cf. Gen. 36.

² It seems probable that some words have fallen out here, giving the parentage of Charmi; see Jos. 7. 1.

³ Here, too, it is probable that part of the original text has been mutilated.

⁴ *v.* 24. 'Father' perhaps means founder of Thecua; so elsewhere with place-names in these chapters.

Bethlehem, come the Netophathites, Athroth, Beth-Joab, and the Saraites who are the other half of the Manahathites; the clans, too, of the Sopherites at Jabes, the Tirathites, Simeathites, and Suchathites. These were Cinites that came from Emath, father of the family of Rechab.¹)

3 And these are the names of David's sons. At Hebron, Achinoam the Jezrahelite gave birth to his first-born, Amnon, Abigail of Carmel to Daniel, Maacha daughter of Tholmai, king of Gessur, to 3 Absalom, Aggith to Adonias, Abital to Saphatias, and Eglā, that was also one of 4 his wives, to Jethraam. Thus six sons were born to him during the seven years and six months of his reign at Hebron; during his thirty-three years at Jerusalem 5 Bethsabée, daughter of Ammiel, bore him four sons, Simmaa, Sobab, Nathan and 6 Solomon; he also begot Jebaar, Elisama, 7 (Elipheleth), Noge, Nepheg, Japhia, (Elisama), Eliada and Elipheleth, nine in all.² 9 All these, with their sister Thamar, were David's children, and he had others by his concubines.

10 From Solomon, the succession went from father to son, through Roboam, Abia, 11 Asa, Josaphat, Joram, Ochozias, Joas, 12 Amasias, Azarias, Joathan, Achaz, Ezechias, Manasses and Amon to Josias. 13 Josias had four sons, Johanan, Joakim, 14 Sedecias and Sellum. Joakim had two 15 sons, Jechonias and Sedecias, and Jechonias was father of Asir, Salathiel, Melchiram, Phadaia, Senneser, Jecemia, Sama and Nadabia. Phadaia again had two sons, 16 Zorobabel and Semei, and Zorobabel was father of Mosollam, Hananias and a 17 daughter, Salomith; besides five others, 18 Hasaba, Ohol, Barachias, Hasadias, and 19 Josabhesed. From Hananias, through Phaltias, Jescias, Raphaia, Arnan, Obdia, 20 and Sechenias, came Semeia, the father of six sons, Hattus, Jegaal, Baria, Naaria . . . 21 and Saphat. Naaria had three sons, Elieonai, Ezechias and Ezricam, and of these

Elieonai had seven sons, Oduia, Eliasub, Pheleia, Accub, Johanan, Dalaia and Anani.

4 The men of Juda were descended from Phares, Hesron, Charmi, Hur, and Sobal. Sobal was father of Raia, Raia of Jahath, Jahath of Ahumai and Laad; thence come the Sarathite families. Jezrahel, Jesema, Jedebos and their sister Asalephuni were children of Etam; he, like Gedor's father Phaniel and Hosa's father Ezer, was descended from Ephraim's first-born son Hur, from whom came Bethlehem. Assur, father of Thecuā, had two wives, Halaa and Naara; Naara bore him Oozam, Hephher, Themani and Ahas-thari, and besides these sons of hers he had three sons by Halaa, Sereth, Isaar and Ethnan. . . . From Cos came Anob and Soboba, and all the family of Aharehel son of Arum. . . . Jabes was renowned above all his brethren; his mother had called him by that name as if she would say, Painfully I bore him. And this was Jabes' prayer to the Lord God of Israel, A full blessing, Lord! Wide lands, and thy hand with me, that enmity may never overcome me! And the Lord granted his request.

. . . From Caleb, brother of Sua, through Mahir and Esthon, came Bethrapha, an 12 from Bethrapha Pheesse and Tehinna, and from Tehinna the city of Naas; these are the men of Recha. . . . Cenez was father of Othoniel and Saraia, Othoniel of Hathath and Maonathi, and Maonathi of Ophra. Saraia's son was Joab, founder of the Valley of the Smiths, where all the folk were craftsmen. . . . Caleb, son of Jephone, had sons called Hir, Ela and Naham; from Ela came Cenez. . . and from Jalaleel Ziph, Zipha, Thiria and Asrael. . . . The sons of Ezra were Jether, Mered, Epher and Jalon; and Mered³ begot Mariam, and Sammai, and Jesba, father of Esthamo; his Jewish wife bore him Jared, father of Gedor, and Heber, father of Socho, and Icuthiel, father of

¹ Much of this chapter is obscure and of uncertain interpretation, especially those passages which are included in brackets. The interpretation of verses 50-55 can only be guess-work; it seems clear that the geographical distribution of the various clans in Juda is the main topic under discussion. No attempt has been made here to follow the Latin where it renders as common nouns what are almost certainly meant to be proper names. The last sentence of the chapter is particularly obscure, and has not been sufficiently explained. ² Some doubt attaches to the names given in brackets; they are not given in II Kg. 14-16, and it looks as if a scribe's error had in two cases repeated a name instead of writing in a fresh one. ³ The name Mered is not expressed in the original, but it seems clear from the following verse that this is intended.

Zanoe, but these others were his children by Bethia, daughter of Pharao, whom Mered took to wife. . . . (And the sons of the wife of Odaias, that was sister to Naham, father of Garmite Ceila and Machathite Esthamo). . . . The sons of Simon were called Amnon, Rinna, Ben-Hanan and Thilon; and Jesi's were called Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth.

Juda's son Sela begot Her, father of Lecha, and Laada, father of Maresa; from them, too, come the weaver-folk of Asbea and Jokim, and the men of Choseba, and Joas and Saraph, lords once of Moab; the men, too, of Jasubi-lehem. But that was in bygone days; now they are potters, living about Netaim and Gedera to do the king's work for him; that is why they are left there.

And now for the sons of Simeon; these were Namuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zara, Saul; from him came Sellum, Mapsa and Masma; Masma that was father of Hamuel, Zachur and Semei. This Semei had sixteen sons and six daughters, but his brothers had not many children, and the whole clan could not rival the sons of Juda for numbers. They dwell in Bersabee, Molada, Hasarsuhal, Bala, Asom, Tholad, Bathuel, Horma, Siceleg, Bethmarchaboth, Hasarusim, Bethberai and Saarim; and these were the cities up to king David's time. They had villages, too, the five townships of Etam, Aën, Remmon, Thoehen and Asan, and other villages too round about their cities right up to Baal. So they dwelt, so their homes were distributed.

For chiefs, they had Mosobab, Jemlech, Josa son of Amasias, Joel, Jehu son of Josabias, the sons of Saraia, the sons of Asiel, Elioenai, Jacoba, Isuhaia, Asaia, Adiel, Ismiel, Banaia, Ziza son of Sephe, son of Allon, son of Idaia, son of Semri, son of Samaia; all these named were chieftains of their clans. And now, their households growing more numerous, they went further afield till they reached Gador, on the eastern side of the valley, in quest of a feeding-ground for their flocks. Pasture they found, rich and nourishing; and all that wide, fruitful land was free from alarms, long inhabited by descendants of

Cham. Hither they came, the chieftains named above, in the days of Ezechias king of Juda; smote tents and tent-dwellers there, so that to-day none of them are left, and occupied those fair pasture-lands instead. It was men of Simeon, too, five hundred strong, that invaded the hill-country of Seir, under Jesi's sons, Phaltias, Naarias, Raphaia and Oziel; defeated the Amalecites who had taken refuge there, and occupy their land to this day.¹

5 And now for the sons of Ruben, Israel's first-born. First-born he was, yet never so reckoned, from the day when he came between his father's sheets; his privilege went to another son of Israel, Joseph, instead. Of all those brethren, Juda was the most powerful, and from him chieftains sprang; but it was still Joseph that had the first-born's privilege.

The sons of Ruben, Israel's first-born, were called Enoch, Phallu, Esron and Charmi. . . . From Joel came Samaia, Gog, Semei, Micha, Reia and Baal; from him, too, came Beera, the Rubenite chieftain who was carried off as a prisoner by Thelgath-Phalnasar, king of the Assyrians. But the stock of his clan counted many households, who had still their own chieftains, Jehiel, and Zacharias, and Bala, that was descended from Joas through Samma and Azaz, and held lands in Aroer right up to Nebo and Beelmeon. On the east, they were bounded by the approaches of the desert, and the river Euphrates; many were the cattle they grazed in the Galaadite country. In Saul's time, they had fought against the Agareans and made an end of them, occupying their tents thenceforward all over the eastern part of Galaad.

Beyond them, the descendants of Gad held all Basan up to Selcha; Joel held the primacy, and after him came Saphan. Janai and Saphat, there in Basan. Seven kindred chiefs they had, all at the head of their clans, Michael, Mosollam, Sebe, Jorai, Jachan, Zie and Heber; all these were descended through Abihail, Huri, Jara, Galaad, Michael, Jesesi and Jeddo from Buz; their kinsmen, too, the sons of Abdiel, son of Guni, were chieftains of clans. In

¹ The notices throughout this chapter here seem disconnected, as if they were fragments of an older document, put together on some principle which is now hard to discover. Some of the proper names here given are rendered by the Latin version as if they were common nouns.

Galaad they dwelt, and in the townships of Basan, and on the common-lands of Saron, right up to its borders. All these were registered in the days when Joatham reigned in Juda, and Jeroboam in Israel.

There were forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty warriors from Ruben, Gad, and the eastern half of Manasses, with shield and sword and bow, trained men all, that went out to battle, and levied war on the Agareans, who had Ituræa and Naphis and Nodab to lend them aid. They cried out to the Lord as they went into the fight, and he, to reward their faith, paid heed to them, giving them the mastery over the Agareans and their allies. All the enemy possessed fell into their hands, fifty thousand camels, two hundred and fifty thousand sheep, and two thousand asses, besides a hundred thousand prisoners; and many of them they slew in battle. The Lord had espoused his people's quarrel, and the Agareans might never come by their own lands again till the time of the captivity.

As for the men of eastern Manasses, the territory they held reached from the frontier of Basan as far as Baal-Hermon, and Sanir, and mount Hermon itself, so great their number was. Their clan chiefs were Epher, Jesi, Eliel, Ezriel, Jeremia, Odoia and Jediel; these were the men of rank and power who gave their names to the clans.

But all these forsook the God of their fathers, and played the wanton by worshipping with the native folk whom God had dispossessed at their coming. So he, the God of Israel, would incite the Assyrian kings, Phul and Thelgath-Phal-nasar, to remove Ruben and Gad and eastern Manasses; to Lahela, Habor, Ara and the river Gozan he carried them off, and there they remain to this day.

Levi had three sons, Gerson, Caath and Merari. Caath was the father of Amram, Isaac, Hebron and Oziel, Amram of Aaron, Moses and Mary, Aaron of Nadab, Abiu, Eleazar and Ithamar. From Eleazar, through Phinees, Abisue, Bocci, Ozi, Zaraias, Meraioth, Amarias, Achitob, Sadoc, Achimaas, Azarias and Johanan

came the Azarias who was high priest when Solomon built his temple at Jerusalem. From this Azarias, through Amarias, Achitob, Sadoc, Sellum, Helcias, Azarias and Saraia came Josedec, who went out into exile when the Lord banished the inhabitants of Juda and Jerusalem through Nabuchodonosor.

All Levi's sons, Gerson, Caath and Merari had issue; Gerson was the father of Lobni and Semei, Caath of Amram, Isaac, Hebron and Oziel, Merari of Moholi and Musi. The lines of descent from Levi ran thus, from Gerson, Lobni, Jahath, Zamma, Joah, Addo, Zara, Jethrai. From Caath, Aminadab, Core, Asir, Elcana, Abiasaph, Asir, Thahath, Uriel, Ozias, Saul. (Elcana had three sons, Amasai, Achimoth and Elcana; from this Elcana the line ran through Sophai, Nahath, Eliab and Jeroham to another Elcana again. . . . The sons of Samuel were called Vasseni and Abia.) From Merari, Moholi, Lobni, Semei, Oza, Sammaa, Haggia, Asaia.

It was from these that David chose singers for the Lord's house, as soon as the ark found a resting-place; and in the tabernacle (until Solomon built the Lord a temple at Jerusalem) they rendered service of song, as well as waiting on the Lord in their turn. This hereditary service was rendered for the Caathites by a singer called Heman, descended through Johel, Samuel, Elcana, Jeroham, Eliel, Thohu, Suph, Elcana, Mahath, Amasai, Elcana, Joel, Azarias, Sophonias, Thahath, Asir, Abiasaph, Core and Isaac from Caath; and so from Levi and Israel. On his right stood his confrater Asaph, descended through Barachias, Samaa, Michael, Basaia, Melchias, Athanai, Zara, Adaiia, Ethan, Zamma, Semei, and Jeth from Gerson, and so from Levi. On his left stood the confraters from Merari, led by Ethan, who was descended through Cusi, Abdi, Maloch, Hasabias, Amasias, Helcias, Amasai, Boni, Somer, (Moholi) and Musi from Merari; and so from Levi.

Their fellow Levites were appointed to wait on all the needs of the tabernacle, the Lord's dwelling-place; but only Aaron and

¹ The descent of Elcana from Caath bears several resemblances to the tree given in verses 22-27; and they may be two accounts of the same genealogy, differing either through imperfect manuscript transmission or through a confusion between natural and adopted sons (cf. note on Mt. 1. 16).

his descendants made offering on the altar of burnt-sacrifice and the altar of incense, busied themselves with the inner sanctuary, and made intercession for Israel; such was the command given through

50 God's servant Moses. The line of Aaron descended through Eleazar, Phinees, Abisue, Bocci, Ozi, Zarahia, Meraioth, Amarias, Achitob and Sadoc to Achimaas.

54 The descendants of Aaron had towns and enclosures to dwell in among the 55 Caathites, appointed to them by lot. Juda gave them Hebron with the lands round 56 it; the open country, with its villages, 57 belonged to Caleb, son of Jephone. And besides Hebron, the city of refuge, Aaron's 58 race held Lobna, Jether, Esthemo, Helon, 59 Dabir, Asan... and Bethsames, with the 60 lands round them; and Benjamin gave them Gabee, Almath and Anathoth, with the lands round them; thus in all they had thirteen cities.

61 The rest of the Caathite clan received 62 ten cities from... the western half of Manasses; the Gersonites thirteen cities from 63 Issachar, Aser, Nephthali, and the Manassites of Basan; and the Merarites twelve 64 from Ruben, Gad and Zabulon. The Israelites gave the Levites cities and lands 65 round them, just as Juda, Simeon and Benjamin allotted to them the cities which 66 have been named.¹ The Caathites had 67 cities of their own in Ephraim; Sichem in the hill-country of Ephraim was given to 68 them as a city of refuge, and besides this 69 Gazer, Jecmaam, Bethoron, Helon and Gethremmon... and the western half of 70 Manasses gave them Aner and Baala; all these cities, with the lands round them, 71 belonged to the rest of the Caathites. The Gersonites received from the eastern half 72 of Manasses Gaulon and Astharoth; from 73 Issachar Cedec, Dabereh, Ramoth and Anem; from Aser Masal, Abdon, Hucac 74 and Rohob; from Nephthali Cedec in Galilee, Hamon and Cariathaim, with the 75 lands round them. The Merarites received 76 from Zabulon Remmono and Thabor; and 77 on the further side of Jordan, opposite 78 Jericho, Ruben gave them Bosor, Jassa, 79 Cademoth and Mephaat; Gad gave them

Ramoth-Galaad, Manaim, Hesebon and Jezer; and they had lands round each of 80 these cities.

7 Issachar had four sons, Thola, Phua, 81 Jasub and Simeron. Thola's sons were Ozi, Raphaia, Jeriel, Jemai, Jebsem 82 and Samuel, all heads of clans. A powerful chief was this Thola, and his clan, in 83 David's time, counted twenty-two thousand six hundred men. Ozi's son Izrahia 84 was the father of Michael, Obadia, Johel and Jesia; from Ozi came all these five 85 chieftains, and under them were thirty-six 86 thousand brave warriors, divided into families and clans, with many wives and 87 children among them; and their fellow tribesmen of Issachar counted eighty-seven 88 thousand, all fighting men.

Benjamin had three sons, Bela, Bechor 89 and Jadihel.² Bela was father of Esbon, 90 Ozi, Oziel, Jerimoth and Urai, five valiant chiefs, whose clans put twenty-two thousand and thirty-four men into the field. 91 From Bechor came Zamira, Joas, Eliezer, Elioenai, Amri, Jerimoth, Abia, Anathoth 92 and Almath. All these came from Bechor, and their clans counted twenty thousand 93 two hundred men, brave warriors all. Jadihel had a son Balan, who was father of 94 Jehus, Benjamin, Aod, Chanana, Zethan, Tharsis and Ahisahar. All these were 95 descended from Jadihel, chieftains of clans that went bravely into battle seventeen 96 thousand two hundred strong. Other clans 97 there were, Sepham and Hapham, descended from Hir, and the Hasim, that 98 came from Aher.

Nephthali's chieftains were Jasiel, Guni, 99 Jeser and Sellum, the sons of Bala.

Manasses had a son called Esriel; and by 100 a Syrian concubine he was father also of Machir, from whom came Galaad. And 101 Machir found wives for his sons (Happhim and Saphan)... And he had a sister called 102 Maacha... And the name of the second son was Salphaad; his children were 103 daughters... Machir's wife Maacha bore 104 a son; he was called Phares and his brother Sares, and his sons were called Ulam and 105 Recen; Ulam was the father of Badan. All

¹ The original has 'which they called by their names', but see Jos. 21. 9, of which this verse is evidently a repetition.

² Some think that the word 'Benjamin' has been inserted here by mistake; neither Zabulon nor Dan is represented in this list of the Israelite clans, whereas Benjamin's descendants are traced at the beginning of chapter 8.

these came from Galaad, that came from
 18 Machir, son of Manasses. And his sister
 Hammolect was mother of Isahod, Abie-
 19 zer and Mohola. . . . And these were sons
 of Semida, Ahin, Sechem, Leci, and
 Aniam.¹

20 Ephraim had a son called Suthala, the
 ancestor, through Bared, Thahath, Elada
 21 and Thahath of Zabad. Suthala, Ezer and
 Elad his sons were; but they went to Geth
 on a foray, and there were slain by the
 22 native folk. Long did their father Ephraim
 mourn for them, till his brethren gathered
 23 round to comfort him; so, at last, he
 bedded his wife again, and she, conceiving,
 bore him a son. This son he called Beria,
 as if he would say, At a time of misfortune
 24 for my race this one was born to me. He
 had a daughter, too, called Sara, that
 founded Bethoron, Lower and Upper, and
 25 Ozensara as well. Beria was the ancestor,
 through Rapha, Reseph, Thale, Thaan,
 26 Laadan, Ammiud and Elisama of Nun, the
 28 father of Josue. The places they dwelt in
 were Bethel, and Noran to the east, Gazer,
 Sichem and Aza, with their dependent
 villages.

29 Next to them came the descendants of
 Manasses, dwelling at Bethsan, Thanach,
 Mageddo and Dor, with their dependent
 villages; all these, too, belonged to Israel's
 son Joseph.

30 Aser had four sons, Jemna, Jesua, Jessui
 31 and Baria, and a daughter, Sara. Baria was
 father of Heber, and of Melchiel, from
 32 whom came Barsaith. Heber had three
 sons, Jephlat, Somer and Hotham, and a
 33 daughter, Suaa; Jephlat was father of Pho-
 34 sech, Chamaal and Asoth, Somer of Ahi,
 35 Roaga, Haba and Aram, and their brother
 (Helem) of Supha, Jemna, Selles and
 36 Amal.² From Supha came Suë, Har-
 37 napher, Sual, Beri, Jamra, Bosor, Hod,
 38 Samma, Salusa, Jethran and Bera. There
 were other chiefs, too, Jephone, Phaspha,
 39 and Ara, sons of Jether, and Aree, Haniel
 40 and Resia, sons of Olla. All these were
 heads of their clans and brave warriors,

chieftains with chieftains under them, all
 descended from Aser; and their clan
 counted twenty-six thousand men that
 were of age to bear arms.

8 Benjamin's first-born was called Bale;
 his other sons were Asbel, Ahara,
 Nohaa and Rapha. From Bale came Ad- 2
 dar, Gera, Abiud, Abisue, Naaman, Ahoe, 4
 Gera, Sephuphan and Huram. These are 5
 the sons of Ahod, chiefs of clans in Gabaa,
 that were removed to Manahath. . . . (and 7
 Naaman and Achia and Gera); he it was
 who removed them, and was afterwards 8
 the father of Oza and Ahiud. Saharaim, 8
 too, after he had put away his wives,
 Husim and Bara, begot sons in the land of 9
 Moab; his wife Hodes bore him Jobab,
 Sebia, Mosa, Molchom, Jehus, Sechia and 10
 Marma; all these children of his were clan
 chieftains. Ahitob and Elphaal were his 11
 sons by Husim; and Elphaal's sons were 12
 Heber, and Misaam, and Samad that
 founded Ono and Lod with their depen- 13
 dent villages.³ The men who dwelt in 13
 Aialon, whence they had dislodged the 14
 Gethites, had Baria and Sama for their 15
 chieftains. Ahio, Sesac, Jerimoth, Za- 16
 badia, Arod, Heder, Michael, Jespha and 17
 Joha all came down from Baria. Zabadia, 17
 Mosollam, Hezezi, Heber, Jesamari, Jezlia 18
 and Jobab were descended from Elphaal.
 Jacim, Zechri, Zabdi, Elioenai, Selethai, 19
 Eliel, Adaia, Baraia and Samarath were 21
 descended from Semei.⁴ Jespham, Heber, 22
 Eliel, Abdon, Zechri, Hanan, Hanania, 23
 Aelam, Anathothia, Jephdaia and Phanuel 25
 were descended from Sesac. . . . Samsari, 26
 Sohoria, Otholia, Jersia, Elia and Zechri 27
 were descended from Jeroham. All these 28
 were fathers of clans and chieftains, with
 their home at Jerusalem.⁵ Gabaon was 29
 the dwelling-place of Abigabaon, whose
 wife was called Maaacha, and his eldest 30
 son Abdon. From him came Sur, Cis, 31
 Baal, Nadab, Gedor, Ahio, Zachar, and 31
 Macelloth that was father of Samaa; these
 lived separate from their brethren but

¹ In verses 13-19 it seems likely that there has been some disturbance in the text here; the whole passage is disjointed and obscure, and it looks as if the names Haphhim and Saphan, in verse 15, had crept in by mistake from verse 12 above.

² The name Helem seems doubtful: cf. verse 32 above.

³ The sense of verses 6-13 is by no means certain; the first three names in verse 7 may have been copied by error from verses 4 and 5 above.

⁴ In verse 11, the Latin represents the words 'by Husim' as a single word, 'Mehusim'.
⁵ Semei should probably be identified with the Sama of verse 12.

⁶ It is difficult to believe that all these clan chiefs resided in the city of Jerusalem; perhaps we should understand, here and in verse 32, that the Benjamites remained politically attached to Juda, when the kingdom was divided.

had their home, like their brethren, at Jerusalem.

33 Ner was the father of Cis, Cis of Saul; and Saul had four sons, Jonathan, Melchisua, Abinadab and Esbaal. From Jonathan, through Meribbaal, came Micha, 34 who was father of Phithon, Melech, 35 Tharaa and Ahaz; from Ahaz Joada, who was father of Alamath, Azmoth and Zamri; 36 from Zamri, through Mosa, Banaa, Rapha and Elasa, Asel, who had six sons, Ezricam, Bocru, Ismael, Saria, Obdia and Hanan. All these were Asel's sons; his 37 brother, Escac, begot Ulam, Jehus, and 38 Eliphalet. The sons of Ulam were great warriors, with strong arms to bend the bow; and their sons and grandsons multiplied till there were a hundred and fifty of them. All these were of the race of Benjamin.

9 The whole people was registered, and the Annals of the kings of Israel and Juda shew what their numbers were, at the time when they were exiled to Babylon in 2 expiation of their sins; the names, too, of the leading men, with the lands and cities they dwelt in, temporal holders of land, 3 priests, Levites and Nathinim.¹ Jerusalem had citizens belonging to Juda and Benjamin; some, too, from Ephraim and Manasses. The line of Phares was headed by Othei, descended through Ammiud, Amri 4 and Omrai from Bonni; the Silonites by 5 Asaja and his younger brethren, the line of Zara by Jehuel and his brothers; this clan 7 was six hundred and ninety strong. Of the Benjamites, there were Salo, descended through Mosollam and Oduia from Asana, Jobania son of Jeroham, Ela, son of Ozi, 8 son of Mochori, and Mosollam, descended through Saphatias and Rahuel from Jebanias. And brethren of theirs bore rule in their various clans, nine hundred and fifty-six heads of families.

10 And there were priests, Jedaia, Joiarib and Jachin; Azarias, too, descended from Achitob through Helcias, Mosollam, Sadow and Maraioth, the high priest of God's temple; Adaias, descended from Melchias through Jeroham and Phassur, and Maa-

sai, descended from Emmer through Adiel, Jezra, Mosollam and Mosollamith. And brethren of theirs bore rule in their various clans; seventeen hundred and sixty priests there were, well endowed with strength for all the service they did in the house of God.

There were Levites, too, of name; Semeia, descended through Hassub and Ezricam from Hasebias, of the race of Merari, Bacbacar that was a craftsman in wood, and Galal, and Mathania, descended through Micha and Zechri from Asaph, and Obdia, descended through Semeia and Galal from Idithun, and Barachia, son of Asa, son of Elcana, whose home was close to Netophat. The chief men among the porters were Sellum, Accub, Telmon and Ahimam; but of all that brotherhood Sellum was the first in rank. Up to that time,² it was the Levites who kept watch, by turns, at the royal gate to the east; the Corites, Sellum son of Core son of Abiasaph son of Core and all his kindred, attended to the needs of public worship and also guarded the approaches to the tabernacle. It was their households that were in charge of the entry, marshalled, in former times, by Phinees son of Eleazar, there in the Lord's presence;³ meanwhile Zacharias son of Mosellomia was porter at the tabernacle gate itself. There were two hundred and twelve of these men chosen for the porter's office, and registered in the villages where they dwelt. David, and Samuel the seer, had appointed them to their charge, bidding them keep watch in their turn over the gates of the Lord's house, in those days a tabernacle; on every side, east, west, north and south, there were porters keeping watch. Meanwhile their brethren stayed at home in their villages, waiting for the week when it should be their turn for duty.

The four Levites named were in charge of all the porters, and of the store-houses and treasuries of the Lord's house; all round the temple they kept watch, and opened the doors when morning came. Others looked after the appurtenances of worship, that must be brought in and out

¹ The Nathinim are sometimes identified with the porters described in verses 17-27, but these were Levites, and the Nathinim seem to be mentioned here as a separate class among the inhabitants.

² Perhaps rather, according to the Hebrew text, 'to this day'. ³ 'There in the Lord's presence': the sense of the Hebrew text is rather 'the Lord be with him'!

29 in due order; and others had the needs of the sanctuary itself entrusted to them, taking care of the flour, wine, oil, incense
30 and spices, (although the work of preparing the sacred ointment from the spices
31 was done by priests). It was a Levite, Mathathias, eldest son of Sellum the Corite, who had charge of all that was
32 cooked in the pans; and their kinsmen of the race of Caath must prepare the loaves that were set before the Lord, fresh every
33 week. . . . These were the chief singers, chosen out of the Levite families, to dwell ever in the temple precincts and perform
34 their duties day and night. The heads, too, of the Levite families had their dwelling at Jerusalem.

35 (Gabaon was the dwelling-place of Jehiel, its founder, whose wife was called
36 Maacha, and his eldest son Abdon. From him came Sur, Cis, Baal, Ner, Nadab,
37 Gedor, Ahio, Zacharias, and Macelloth that was father of Samaa; these lived separate from their brethren but had their home, like their brethren, at Jerusalem.
38 Ner was the father of Cis, Cis of Saul; and Saul had four sons, Jonathan, Melchisua,
39 Abinadab and Esbaal. From Jonathan, through Meribbaal, came Micha, who was father of Phithon, Melech, Tharaa and
40 Ahaz; from Ahaz Jara, who was father of Alamath, Azmoth and Zambri; from Zambri, through Mosa, Banaa, Raphaia and
41 Elasa, Asel, who had six sons, Ezricam, Bocru, Ismahel, Saria, Obdia and Hanan. All these were sons of Asel.¹)

10 . . . And now the Philistines had engaged Israel; and the Israelites fled at their onslaught, and were cut down on mount Gelboe as they fled. Ever harder the Philistines pressed on the retreat of Saul and of his sons, till at last his sons, Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchisua had fallen, and he himself bore the whole weight of the attack. The archers were following close on his heels, and sorely the archers wounded him. Then Saul bade his own squire draw on him and kill him; he would not have uncircumcised foes kill him with outrage. And when the squire's heart failed him, so that he would not obey, Saul himself caught up a sword, and fell

on it. Whereupon, seeing his master dead, the squire fell upon his own sword, and died with him. So perished Saul, and his three sons; his dynasty died with him.

And now the Israelites who lived in the plain took to flight; Saul and his sons killed, they dispersed and abandoned their cities, leaving the Philistines to come in and settle there. Next day, coming to plunder the slain, the Philistines found Saul and his three sons, where they lay on mount Gelboe, and they cut off Saul's head, and stripped him of his armour, and sent these from place to place in their own country, to publish the news in the temples of their gods, and among their people. His arms they dedicated in the temple of their own god, and nailed up his head in the temple of Dagon. But the men of Jabes-Galaad came to hear of what the Philistines had done to Saul; whereupon all their fighting men went and took down the bodies of Saul and of his sons; and reaching Gabes they buried them under the oak-tree there, and fasted seven days to lament them.² So died king Saul, for his guilt in disobeying the Lord's command instead of carrying it out faithfully; for consulting the witch, too, instead of trusting in the Lord; to death the Lord doomed him, and passed on his kingdom to David the son of Jesse.

11 After this, all the men of Israel rallied to David at Hebron; We are kith and kin of thine, they said. It is not so long since Israel marched under thy orders, when Saul was still reigning; and the Lord has promised thee that thou shouldst be its shepherd and its captain. And so the elders of Israel went to his court at Hebron; and there, at Hebron, in the Lord's presence, David made a covenant with them, and they anointed him king of Israel, so fulfilling the promise which the Lord made to him through Samuel.

When David and his army marched on Jerusalem, which was then called Jebus, and its native inhabitants Jebusites, the defenders of it told him, Thou shalt never make thy way in here. But take it he did, the keep of Sion that is called David's

¹ Verses 35-44 are a repetition of 8, 29-39, with one or two minor differences.
1-12 are repeated, with very slight variations, from I Kg. 31.

² These verses

6 Keep. Chief and leader shall he be, David promised, that is the first to dislodge these Jebusites; and Joab son of Sarvia was first to scale the walls, so he became leader of the army. There, then, in the keep David made his dwelling, and called it the Keep of David; he built walls about it, too, with Mello for their outer bastion, and left Joab to build the rest of the city. So he went on, prospering and gaining strength, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.¹

10 And these are the names of David's champions, that helped him to attain that rule over Israel which the Lord had promised, the great warriors that were enlisted in David's service. First among all the thirty was Jesbaam the son of Hachamoni; his spear it was that slew three hundred men in one assault.² After him his cousin, Eleazar the Ahohite, one of the three champions that were with David at Phesdomim, where the Philistines had mustered for battle. There in a field of barley, when Israel had fled in confusion, these three stood in the middle of it and held it against the Philistines till they had defeated them; a great victory the Lord gave Israel that day. And once these three leaders of the Thirty were at David's side in the cave of Odollam; the Philistines had encamped in the Valley of the Giants, and David kept close in his stronghold. The Philistines had a garrison at this time in Bethlehem; and now David, overcome with longing, said aloud, Oh for a cup of water from the well by Bethlehem gate!

18 Whereupon the three champions broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem, and brought it to David. Instead of drinking it, he poured it out as a libation to the Lord; As God sees me, he cried, never that! That were to drink men's blood; they brought it to me at the peril of their lives; it is not for my drinking. Such were the feats of the first three champions.

20 Abisai, too, Joab's brother, was one of three champions; with his own spear he engaged three hundred men and slew them. A great name he had as one of the second three, among whom he was foremost, leading the others, but he could not rival the first three. There was Banaias,

too, whose father, Joiada of Cabseel, was a warrior famous for his exploits. Banaias it was that slew the two Heroes of Moab; he also went down into a cavern on a day of snow, and killed a lion there. And there was an Egyptian he slew; a man five cubits high, that carried a spear as big as a weaver's beam; Banaias went into battle with a club, and killed the Egyptian with his own spear, wresting it from his hand. Such were the feats of Banaias son of Joiada; he too was famous as one of the three champions, and of foremost rank among the Thirty, but he could not rival the first three. He was the man David appointed to carry out his secret commands.

And these were great warriors in David's army, Asahel, Joab's brother, and his cousin Elchanaan of Bethlehem, Sammoth from Aror, Helles from Phalon, Ira son of Acces from Thecua, Abiezer from Anathoth, Sobbochai from Husath, Ilai the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, and Heled son of Baana, also from Netophath, Ethai son of Ribai from Gabaath in Benjamin, Banaia the Pharathonite, Hurai from the valley of Gaas, Abiel the Arbathite, Azmoth the Bauramite, Eliaba from Salaboni, the sons of Assem (that was a Gezonite), Jonathan son of Sage, the Ararite, another Ararite, Ahiam son of Sachar, Eliphai the son of Ur, Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahia the Phelonite, Hesro of Carmel, Naarai son of Asbai, Joel that was brother to Nathan, Mibahar son of Agarai, Selec the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite (that was squire to Joab son of Sarvia), the Jethrites Ira and Gareb, Urias the Hethite, Zabad son of Oholi, the Rubenite Adina son of Siza, that led a band of thirty Rubenites, Hanan son of Maacha, Josaphat the Mathanite, Ozia the Astarothite, Samma and Jehiel the sons of Hotham (that was an Arorite), Jedihel son of Samri and his brother Joha, from Thosa, Eliel the Mahumite, Jeribai and Josaia the sons of Elnaem, Jethma the Moabite, Eliel, Obed, and Jasiel from Masobia.

12 Here are the names of the men who rallied to David's side at Siceleg while he was yet being hunted down by

¹ *ev.* 1-9, cf. II Kg. 5. 1-10.

² 'Three hundred'; eight hundred according to II Kg. 23. 8. It seems possible that a copyist may have confused this verse with verse 20.

³ *vt.* 10-40, cf. II Kg. 23. 8-39.

Saul, the son of Cis; brave men all, and
 2 tried warriors, archers, too, that could
 sling stone or shoot arrow as well with the
 left hand as with the right; fellow tribes-
 men of Saul himself, from Benjamin.
 3 Abiezer and his brother Joas, the sons of
 Samaa, from Gabaath; Jaziel and Phaillet,
 sons of Asmoth; Baracha, Jehu of Ana-
 4 thoth, Samaias of Gabaon (one of the thirty
 chiefs, with thirty men behind him), Jere-
 mias, Jeheziel, Johanan, Jezabad of Ga-
 5 deroth, Eluzai, Jerimuth, Baalia, Samaria,
 6 Saphatia the Haruphite, Elcana, Jesia,
 Azareel, the Carehites Joezer and Jesbaam,
 7 Joela, and Zabadia that was son to Jeroham
 of Gedor.

8 There were men of Gad, too, that went
 over to David's allegiance when he was
 taking refuge in the desert, strong men,
 brave warriors, armed with shield and
 spear; no lion so terrible of aspect, no hind
 9 on the mountains so fleet of foot. These
 were their names in order of rank, Ezer,
 10 Obdias, Eliab, Masmana, Jeremias, Ethi,
 11 Eliel, Johanan, Elzebad, Jeremias, Mach-
 banai. All these eleven were Gadites, and
 all held command, the last with a hundred
 men under him, the first with a thousand.
 12 It was in the first month, a time of flood,
 that they came across Jordan; and all the
 dwellers in those valleys, east and west of
 it, fled at their coming.

13 There were others that came to the
 stronghold where David lay, from Ben-
 jamin and Juda. To these David said, as
 he went out to meet them, If you come as
 friends, to aid me, knit be my heart with
 yours; if you are abetting my enemies, by
 laying a trap for an innocent man, then may
 the Lord God of our fathers look
 14 down and judge between us. Wich that,
 inspired to utterance, Amasai answered
 him, that was one of the thirty chiefs:
 Thine, David, we are; with thee, son of
 Jesse, our lot is cast. Peace be to thee,
 peace to all who take part with thee; thou
 hast thy God with thee, taking thy part.
 So David welcomed them, and made them
 15 captains in his army. And there were
 Manassites that went over to David; this
 was at the time when he would march out
 with the Philistines against Saul, but bring
 them aid he might not; the Philistine chiefs

agreed to send him home, fearing he might
 go back to Saul's allegiance, to their great
 peril. So he had returned to Sicleg before
 these men of Manasses reached him, Ed-
 20 nas, Jozabad, Jedihel, Michael, (Ednas,
 Jozabad,) Eliu and Salathi, all chiefs of
 battalion among the Manassites. Brave
 21 warriors these were, and helped David to
 make war on the freebooters, as captains
 in his army. And now no day could pass
 but it brought David fresh allies, till his
 company reached great strength, like a
 host of God's own mustering.

And here is the muster-roll of the armed
 22 men who came to find David in Hebron,
 and make him heir, as the Lord had pro-
 mised, to Saul's kingdom. There were six
 24 thousand eight hundred men of Juda that
 bore shield and sword, all in battle array;
 Simeon sent seven thousand one hundred
 25 fighting men, and Levi four thousand six
 26 hundred. (Among these were Joiada, chief
 of Aaron's clan, with three thousand seven
 27 hundred at his back, and Sadoc, a young
 man of rare promise, with twenty-two
 28 other chieftains, his kinsmen.) Saul's
 29 tribe of Benjamin sent but three thousand,
 since the greater part of them were loyal
 to Saul's race; Ephraim twenty thousand
 30 eight hundred, men well known among
 their clans for their prowess in war; and
 31 from the western half of Manasses came
 eighteen thousand, each one of them sworn
 to make David king. From Issachar came
 32 two hundred clan chiefs, men of good
 parts, that could give sure advice to Israel
 as the times demanded; ¹ the rest of their
 tribe was of the same mind with them.
 From Zabulon, fifty thousand fighting
 33 men, all armed for battle, rallied to David
 with loyalty unfeigned. Nephthali sent
 34 a thousand chiefs, in command of thirty-
 seven thousand that carried shield and
 spear; Dan twenty-eight thousand six
 35 hundred men in arms; and Aser forty
 36 thousand warriors prepared to do battle.
 Besides these, there were a hundred and
 37 twenty thousand men in battle array from
 the tribes beyond Jordan, Ruben and Gad
 and the eastern half of Manasses.

So many armed warriors came to He-
 38 bron with loyal hearts, there to make
 David king of all Israel; and the rest of

¹ The Jewish tradition is, that the men of Issachar were learned in astronomy. But some think this
 verse implies no more than political sagacity among their leaders.

Israel, too, had but one thought, that
 39 David should be king. There they spent
 three whole days in the royal presence, and
 of food and drink had no lack, so well had
 their fellow tribesmen made provision for
 40 them; nay, there were asses and camels
 and mules and oxen bringing them food
 from their neighbours, as far away as Is-
 sachar, Zabulon and Nephthali; flour and
 figs and raisins and wine and oil; cattle,
 too and rams they had in great abundance.
 Such high festival they kept in the land of
 Israel.

13 And now, taking counsel first with
 his captains and commanders and
 2 all the men of rank, David had a word for
 the whole assembly of the Israelites: What
 say you, does it come from God, this
 thought of mine? How if we should send
 word to the rest of our brethren, all over
 the land of Israel, the priests, too, and the
 Levites, where they dwell clustered round
 their cities, bidding them all muster here,
 3 and help us bring home the ark of our
 God? Never, in Saul's days, have we had
 4 recourse to it. To this, there was no voice
 but was raised in agreement; here was a
 project that pleased all alike.

5 So David summoned the whole people
 of Israel, from Sihor by Egypt right up to
 the pass of Emath, to help him bring back
 6 God's ark from Cariathiarim. To Caria-
 thiarim hill, in Juda's country, they went
 up, great and small, to fetch the ark home,
 the ark which takes its name from the Lord
 God, dwelling there above it between the
 7 cherubim. And they carried it away from
 Abinadab's house, putting it on a newly-
 made waggon, with Oza and Oza's brother
 8 for its drivers. There were David and all
 the men of Israel, playing music at their
 best in the Lord's presence, singing to
 harp and zither and tambour and cymbals
 9 and trumpet. They had reached the
 threshing-floor of Chidon, when one of the
 oxen, frisking as it went, tilted the ark a
 little to one side, whereupon Oza put out
 10 his hand to steady it. This rashness of his
 in touching the ark provoked the Lord's
 anger; there, in the divine presence, the
 11 Lord smote him, and he fell dead. Great
 grief it was to David, this ruin the Lord
 had brought on Oza, and he called the

place by the name it bears still, Oza's
 Ruin. And a dread of the Lord came upon
 him that day; How shall I, he asked, give
 shelter to the Lord's ark? No longer was
 he minded to give the Lord's ark a lodging
 in the Keep of David; he took it to the
 house of Obedom the Gethite instead.
 There, in the house of Obedom, the ark
 of God was left for three months, bringing
 a blessing upon all his household and all
 that was his.¹

14 Hiram, too, king of Tyre, sent
 messages offering David cedar
 planks and carpenters and stone-masons,
 to build a house for him. No doubt could
 David have that the Lord had ratified his
 sovereignty over Israel, and made him the
 king of a great people. So, in Jerusalem,
 he provided himself with fresh wives, and
 had sons and daughters born to him. Jeru-
 salem was the birth-place of Samua, So-
 bad, Nathan, Solomon, Jebahar, Elisua,
 (Eliphalet), Noga, Napheg, Japhia, Eli-
 sama, Baaliada and Eliphalet.

When news reached the Philistines that
 David had been anointed as king of all
 Israel, they mustered all their forces to
 hunt him down, and David, hearing of it,
 went out to meet them. They had come in
 and occupied the whole valley of Raphaim.
 Thereupon David consulted the Lord;
 should he attack the Philistines? Would
 he be given the mastery? And he was
 bidden go to the attack; the Philistines
 would be at his mercy. And now they
 advanced to Baalpharasim, where David
 defeated them; The Lord has parted the
 enemy's ranks before me, he said, as easily
 as water parts this way and that; so the
 place came by its name, Baalpharasim.
 The Master of the Breach. They left their
 idols behind them there, and David had
 these burnt. But once more the Philistines
 came to the attack, and occupied the Ra-
 phaim valley; and this time, when David
 asked counsel of God, the answer was, Do
 not go to the attack; withdraw first, and
 then come upon them from the direction
 of the pear-trees yonder. Wait till thou
 hearest, in the tops of the pear-trees, the
 sound of marching feet; then offer battle;
 it is a sign that the Lord marches on before
 thee, to smite down the army of the Philis-

¹ vv. 6-14, cf. II Kg. 6. 2-11.

16 tines. So David did as the Lord had bidden him, and he drove the Philistines before him all the way from Gabaon to Gazera.¹

17 After this, David's renown was noised abroad everywhere, and the Lord struck terror of him into all the nations' hearts.

15 When he put up buildings in the Keep of David, he was careful to leave a plot of ground for God's ark, and to pitch a tent for it there. He thought to himself, too, God's ark must not be carried this way and that by the first comer; the Levites, whom the Lord has chosen out to be his servants for all time, have the duty of carrying it. So now, summoning all Israel to Jerusalem, for the removal of the ark to the site he had prepared for it, he summoned among the rest Aaron's descendants, and the Levites. There were a hundred and twenty Caathites, under Uriel, two hundred and twenty Merarites, under Asaia, a hundred and thirty Gersonites, under Joel, two hundred of Elisaphan's clan, under Semeias, eighty of Hebron's, under Eliel, and a hundred and twelve of Oziel's, under Aminadab. These six David sent for, with the chief priests, Sadoc and Abiathar; You, he said, are the chiefs of the Levite clans; look well to it that you and your brethren are purified of all defilement before you bring the ark of the Lord God of Israel to the site prepared for it. Earlier, when you were not there, we brought on ourselves the Lord's chastisement; there must be no such happening now, for want of due order taken.

14 So priest and Levite cleansed themselves for carrying the ark of the Lord God of Israel; and the ark was carried by Levites, with poles resting on their shoulders, as Moses, speaking in the Lord's name, had enjoined. Then David would have the Levite chiefs appoint some of their brethren to be singers, chanting there with instruments of music, zither and harp and cymbals, till heaven rang with the echoes of their rejoicing. So they appointed two Gersonites, Joel's son Heman and Asaph

son of Barachias, and Ethan, son of Casias, of the clan of Merari, with others of lesser degree, their fellow clansmen, Zacharias, Ben, Jaziel, Semiramoth, Jahiel, Ani, Eliab, Banaias, Maasias, Mathathias, Eliphalu, Macenias, Obededom and Jehiel, that all held the office of door-keeper. Of these singers, Heman, Asaph and Ethan beat cymbals together, Zacharias, Oziel, Semiramoth, Jahiel, Ani, Eliab, Maasias and Banaias played, on their zithers, the Alamothe,² while Mathathias, Eliphalu, Macenias, Obededom, Jehiel and Ozazu led the triumph-song, Seminit-fashion,³ with the harps they bore. And Chonenias, chief of the Levites, was burden-master,⁴ a burden-master chosen for his excellent skill. The doors of the ark were guarded by Barachias and Elcana; and there were seven priests, Sebenias, Josaphat, Nathanael, Amasai, Zacharias, Banaias and Eliezer, that blew trumpets before it. (And the doors of the ark were guarded by Obededom and Jehias.)

So with great rejoicing went David, and with him went all the elders of Israel and all his captains, to Obededom's house, to fetch the ark that bears witness of the Lord's covenant. And as the Lord sped the Levites on their journey, with the ark for their load, seven bulls and seven rams were offered in sacrifice. Like the Levites who carried the ark, the singers, and Chonenias that went as burden-master among the singers, David was clad in a robe of lawn; and he had a mantle of linen as well. Thus all Israel brought the ark home, keeping high festival, to the sound of horn and trumpet and cymbals and zither and harp. Only Michal, Saul's daughter, watching from her window as the ark reached David's Citadel, thought scorn of king David as she saw him dancing and making music there.⁶

16 When the ark had been brought into the city, they set it up in the midst of the tabernacle which David had spread out for it, and brought burnt-sacrifices and welcome-offerings into the

¹ vv. 1-16, cf. II Kg. 5, vv. 11-25.

² A musical term of unknown meaning, rendered here in the Latin as 'secret things'.
³ Another obscure musical term, rendered here in the Latin, 'for the octave'.
⁴ Possibly in connexion with the singing, but it may be the 'burden' was the carrying of the ark (cf. Num. 4. 15): The Latin has 'was in charge of the prophecy, as precursor'.
⁵ Some think the last two words of this verse have been inserted through a copyist's error.
⁶ vv. 25-29, cf. II Kg. 6. 12-23.

2 Lord's presence there. And David, when
his offering was done, blessed the people
3 in the Lord's name, and gave to every Is-
raelite, man or woman, a roll of bread and
a piece of roast beef and a flour cake fried
4 in oil.¹ Then he arranged that the Levites
should serve by courses before the Lord's
ark, by courses, too, should bear record of
his great deeds, and honour the Lord God
5 of Israel with hymns of praise. Asaph
came first of all, and Zacharias second;
then Jahiel, Semiramoth, Jehiel, Matha-
thias, Eliab, Banaias and Obededom. Harp
and zither should be Jehiel's province,
Asaph should make the cymbals echo
6 again; Banaias and Jaziel, that were priests,
should ever be in attendance on the Lord's
ark to sound the trumpet there.

7 It was then that David gave Asaph and
his brethren their first lesson in offering
thanks to the Lord.

8 Praise the Lord, and call upon his name;
tell the story of his doings for all the nations
9 to hear; greet him with song and psalm,
recount his acts of miracle. Triumph in
10 that holy name; let every heart that longs
for the Lord rejoice. To the Lord, to the
Lord's strength, have recourse; ever-
more court his presence. Remember the
11 marvellous acts he did, his miracles, his
sentences of doom; are you not the poster-
12 ity of Israel, his own servant, sons of
that Jacob on whom his choice fell? And
13 he, the Lord, is our own God, wide though
his writ runs through all the world. Keep
14 in everlasting memory that covenant of his,
that promise which a thousand genera-
15 tions might not cancel. He gave Abraham a
promise, bound himself to Isaac by an
16 oath; by that law Jacob should live, his
Israel, engaged to him by an eternal cov-
17 nant. To thee, he said, I will give the land
of Chanaan, as the portion which thou and
18 thine must one day inherit. So few they
were in number, only a handful, living
19 there as strangers! And ever they passed
on from country to country, the guests of
20 king or people; but he suffered none to
harm them; to kings themselves the warn-
21 ing came, Lay no hand on them, never hurt
them, servants anointed and true spokes-
22 men of mine.²

23 In the Lord's honour, let the whole

earth make melody; never cease bearing
record of his power to save. Publish his
2 glory among the heathen, his wonderful
acts for all the world to hear. How great is
3 the Lord, how worthy of honour! What
other god is to be feared as he? They are
4 but false gods the heathen call divine; the
Lord, not they, made the heavens. Honour
5 and beauty wait on his presence; worship
and magnificence are the attendants of his
shrine.

Lands of the heathen, make your offer-
6 ing to the Lord, an offering to the Lord of
glory and praise, an offering of glory to the
7 Lord's name; bring sacrifice, come into his
presence; with reverent grace worship the
8 Lord. Before the Lord let the whole earth
9 bow in awe; he has built the earth on
foundations immovable. Rejoice, heaven,
10 and let the earth be glad; tell the heathen.
The Lord is king now. Let the sea, and all
11 the sea contains, give thunderous ap-
plause; smiling the fields, and all the
12 burden they bear; no tree in the forest but
will sing for joy to greet its Lord's coming.
He comes to judge the earth.³

Praise the Lord, the Lord is gracious;
3 his mercy endures for ever. Cry we to
4 God, our deliverer, Deliver us now, gather
us again in safety, scattered as we are
among the heathen, to praise thy holy
5 name, to triumph in thy renown. Blessed
be the Lord, the God of Israel, from all
6 eternity to all eternity; let all the people
cry, Amen, hymning the Lord.⁴

So he left Asaph and his brethren there,
7 with the ark that bears witness of the
Lord's covenant, to attend it by turns on
their appointed days. Obededom and his
8 brethren, sixty-eight of them. . . . And he
made Obededom, son of Idithun, and
9 Hosa door-keepers. Sadoc and the other
priests, his brethren, were left with the
10 tabernacle, at the hill-sanctuary of Ga-
baon, ever to offer the Lord victims on the
11 altar of burnt-sacrifice, morning and even-
ing; such was the charge the Lord had laid
12 on Israel. And with Sadoc were Heman
and Idithun, and others of less name,
13 chosen to give the Lord thanks for his
everlasting mercy; it was for Heman and
14 Idithun to sound the trumpet and beat the
cymbals at the divine music, and Idithun's

¹ vv. 1-3, cf. II Kg. 6. 17-19.

² vv. 8-22, cf. Ps. 104. 1-15.

³ vv. 23-33, cf. Ps. 95.

⁴ vv. 34-36, cf. Ps. 105. 1, 47, 48.

41 sons he made door-keepers.¹ And so the people dispersed to their homes, and David himself went back to bless his own household.

17 Now that David had a palace of his own to dwell in, he said to the prophet Nathan, Here am I dwelling in a house all of cedar, while the ark that bears witness of the Lord's covenant has nothing better than curtains of hide to cover it! And Nathan answered, Fulfil thy own purpose; the Lord is with thee. But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, Go and give my servant David a message from the Lord: Not thine to build me a house to dwell in. House was never mine, since I rescued the sons of Israel from Egypt; still in a tabernacle, a wanderer's home, I journeyed this way and that, ever at Israel's side. Now to this ruler, now to that, I gave the leadership of my people Israel, and never did I reproach any of them for not building me a house of cedar.

7 This message, then, thou wilt give to my servant David from the Lord of hosts: Out in the pasture-lands, where thou wast tending the sheep, I summoned thee away to bear rule over my people Israel; go where thou wouldst, I was ever at thy side, exterminating thy enemies to make room for thee, granting thee such renown as only comes to the greatest on earth. Henceforth my people are to have a settled home, taking root in it and remaining in undisturbed possession of it, no longer harassed by godless neighbours, as they have been ever since I first gave Israel judges to rule them. Now, I have crushed all thy enemies, and this too thou must know, that the Lord means to grant thy line continuance. So, when thy days are ended, and thou hast become part of thy race, I will grant thee for successor a son of thy own body, established firmly on his throne. He it is that shall build me a house. I will prolong for ever his royal dynasty; he shall find in me a father, and I in him a son. I will not cancel my merciful promises to him, as I cancelled my promise to the king who went before thee. Sovereignty undisturbed I will give him among this people of mine,

in this kingdom of mine, for ever; his throne, to endless time, is secure.

All this message, all this revelation, was handed on by Nathan to king David. And David went into the Lord's presence, and betook himself to prayer: Lord God, he said, that one such as I am, sprung from such a house as mine, should receive such gifts! But it was not enough, thou wouldst do more, wouldst foretell the destiny of thy servant's line in days far hence; Lord God, thou hast honoured me as no man ever yet was honoured. No words can thy servant David find; such glory thou dost grant, such favour thou dost shew him. Lord, thou wilt have thy great deeds known, and it has been thy pleasure to do great things in thy servant's behalf; none is like thee, Lord, thou alone art God, read we the history of past days aright. Can any other nation say, like thy people Israel, that its God came to buy it back for himself as his own people, as thou didst, in rescuing us from Egypt, in dispossessing the nations, through thy dread power, to make room for us? So thou didst pledge this people of Israel to be thy people eternally, and thou, Lord, didst become their God.

This promise then, Lord, which thou hast made concerning thy servant and his line, do thou for ever fulfil; make thy word good, so that thy name may for ever live, for ever be glorified. In one breath let men say, Israel has the Lord of hosts for its God, and, Through his favour, the dynasty of his servant David ever abides. O Lord my God, thou hast given me secret knowledge of thy will, promised me a long posterity; what wonder that I am emboldened to make this prayer before thee? So be it, Lord; thou art God, and it is thy word that promises thy servant such bounty; thou dost vouchsafe to bless his line and keep it always under thy protection; through this blessing of thine my race shall be blessed for ever.²

18 After this, David defeated the Philistines and brought their pride low; wrested from them, too, the possession of Geth and its daughter cities. He also defeated Moab, and Moab became tributary to king David. He defeated

¹ The details given here in verses 37-42 seem confused, and it is possible there has been some dislocation in the text. ² *vv.* 1-27, cf. II Kg. 7.

Adarezer, king of Soba in the Hemath country, when he marched out to extend his domains up to the river Euphrates; 4 a thousand chariots he took from him, with seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand that fought on foot, and cut the hamstrings of the horses, but kept a hundred teams for himself. When the Syrians of Damascus came out to reinforce Adarezer king of Soba, David routed their 5 army of twenty-two thousand, and put a garrison of his own in Damascus, to make Syria his tributary vassal. In every enterprise he undertook, the Lord stood by him. 7 All the golden trappings which Adarezer's men wore, David carried off and brought to Jerusalem; from Thebath, too, 8 and from Chun, cities in Adarezer's dominion, he carried away great stores of bronze, that Solomon used afterwards for the basin, the pillars, and the other brazen 9 furnishings of the temple. When the news of David's victory over Adarezer's forces reached Thou, king of Hemath, he sent his 10 son Adoram to make a treaty with him, and to wish him well over the conquest and rout of Adarezer, who was Thou's enemy. 11 All the gold and silver and bronze ornaments, all the silver and the gold he took from so many nations, Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines and Amalecites, king David consecrated to the Lord. 12 It was Abisai, son of Sarvia, that defeated eighteen thousand Edomites in the 13 Valley of the Salt-pits, and put a garrison in Edom to secure its loyalty to king David. Thus the Lord protected David in all his 14 enterprises; the whole of Israel was under his rule, and to all his people he administered justice and gave award. His army 15 was commanded by Joab, son of Sarvia, and Josaphat, son of Ahilud, kept the records; the priests were Sadoc, son of Achitob, and Achimelech, son of Abiathar, 16 and Susa was secretary; Banaïas, son of Joiada was at the head of the Cerethites and Phelethites, and David's sons, too, held 17 high office about the king's person.¹

19 When Naas, king of the Ammonites, died, and his son came to the throne, David thought to himself, I will shew friendliness to Hanon, as his father Naas did to me; and he dispatched envoys

to condole with him over his father's death. But when these reached the Ammonite country on their mission, the chiefs 3 there said to Hanon, What, David send messengers to comfort thee, in honour of thy father's memory? Nay, if he has sent men here, they are spies ready to search thy land and make report on it. So Hanon 4 robbed David's men of their shoes, shaved them, and cut off the skirts of their clothes, feet to buttocks, and in that guise sent them back. When the news reached him 5 of their return, David sent to meet them, covered with confusion as they were, and bade them wait in Jericho, not returning home until their beards were grown again. 6 Meanwhile Hanon and the Ammonites, well aware that they had made an enemy of David, sent and hired mercenaries, with a thousand talents of silver, from Mesopotamia, and the Syrians of Maacha, and from Soba, with chariots, too, and horsemen. 7 Thirty-two thousand they hired, as well as the king of Maacha with his army; all these came and pitched their tents before Medaba, and the Ammonites themselves left their cities, to offer battle. 8 Upon hearing the news, David sent the whole of his forces to engage them, under Joab. 9 The Ammonites had come out from the city, and drawn up their line at its gates; the kings who had come to aid them were at a distance, out in the open country. And 10 Joab, seeing that he would be attacked both in front and from the rear, chose the best of his troops and led them out against the Syrians, leaving the rest, under his brother 11 Abisai, to march against the Ammonites. Bring me aid, said Joab, if the Syrians are too strong for me, and I, if the Ammonites have the mastery, will bring thee aid instead. 12 Play the man; fight we valiantly for our people, and for the city walls that are sacred to our God; the Lord's will be done. 13 So Joab and his men engaged the Syrians and routed them; and the Ammonites, 14 seeing the Syrians in full flight, gave way in their turn before the onslaught of his brother Abisai, retreating into the city. Thereupon Joab went back to Jerusalem.

Thus defeated, the Syrians dispatched 16 messengers and brought their fellow tribesmen on the further side of the river to their aid; Sophach, Adarezer's general,

¹ *ev.* 1-17, cf. II Kg. 8.

17 was in command of them. David, as soon as he heard the news, mustered the whole forces of Israel, and marched across the Jordan; he went straight to the attack, and they, seeing him drawn up in battle array, 18 prepared to meet him. But the Syrians were routed by Israel, with a loss of seven thousand chariots and forty thousand foot soldiers; Sophach himself was among the slain. 19 And now all the vassals of Adarezer, seeing that they were no match for Israel, went over to David and became his subjects; and no more was heard of the Syrians bringing aid to the men of Ammon.¹

20 And now spring returned, the time when kings march out to battle; and Joab mustered an army, the pick of all the fighting men, to ravage the Ammonite territory. He marched against Rabba and laid siege to it; nor had David himself yet left Jerusalem when Joab overcame Rabba 2 and destroyed it. David took the crown from Melchom's image, which he found to be of a full talent's weight, set with the rarest jewels, and made himself a crown out of it; much spoil he took from the city 3 besides. As for the people in the city, he brought them out and had harrows and sleds and chariots of iron driven over them, till they lay cut to pieces or crushed, and the same treatment he gave to all the cities of Ammon. Then he and all his men returned to Jerusalem.²

4 There was another battle against the Philistines at Gazer, in which Sobochai the Husathite overcame them, slaying Saphai, 5 that was of the Raphaim breed; and another in which Elehanan the son of Jair slew the brother of Goliath the Gethite, that had a shaft to his spear big as a 6 weaver's beam. In another battle, at Geth, there was a man of huge stature that had twelve fingers and twelve toes; he too was 7 of the Rapha breed; and when he challenged the Israelites, Jonathan, son of David's brother Samaa, smote him down. All these were Raphites from Geth, all slain by David and his men.³

21 But now Satan disturbed the peace of Israel, by inciting David to make 2 a register of the people. From David the

word came to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go through all the tribes from Dan to Bersabee, make a muster-roll, and let me know the full tale of them. Why, said 3 Joab, my prayer is that the Lord may increase the number of his people a hundred-fold. But, my lord king, are we not all at thy service? What need, my lord, to carry out such a design as may bring guilt on the whole of Israel?⁴ But the king's will might not be thwarted; so Joab left his presence to make a review of the whole country, and when he came back to Jerusalem he handed 5 in to David the number of those he had registered; the full muster-roll was one million one hundred thousand that bore arms in Israel, with four hundred and seventy thousand in Juda. Levi and Benjamin were never counted, so loth was Joab to execute the king's will. 6

But meanwhile, in his displeasure at the command given, the Lord had begun to smite down Israel; whereupon David confessed to the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done; give me sin quittance; I have played a fool's part. And the word 9 of the Lord came to Gad, that was David's seer, Go and give David this message from 10 the Lord; Here are three choices I grant thee, to choose thy own punishment. So 11 Gad presented himself before David, bidding him in the Lord's name make his choice. Wilt thou have three years of 12 famine, he asked, or three months of flight before thy enemies, and yet no escape, or three days in which the Lord's own sword of pestilence shall pass through the land, his angel dealing death all through the realm of Israel? Think well, and tell me what answer I shall make to him whose message I bear. I am hard pressed on all 13 sides, David told him; but it is better to fall into the hands of the Lord, so rich is he in mercy, than into the hands of men. So the Lord sent a plague on Israel, by which seventy thousand men perished. 14 But when his angel reached Jerusalem, 15 ready to carry out his errand and smite it, the Lord was moved with pity over their great calamity; and he said to the angel that would have smitten them, It is enough, stay thy hand. The angel of the Lord stood close, then, to the threshing-

¹ 1st vv. 1-19, cf. II Kg. 10.² 2nd vv. 1-3, cf. II Kg. II, 1, 12, 30, 31.³ 3rd vv. 4-7, cf. II Kg. 21, 18-22.⁴ Some think this was a sin of pride; and others, that David meant to introduce forced labour.

16 floor of Ornan the Jebusite; and David, looking up, saw him standing there with drawn sword between heaven and earth, with his face towards Jerusalem. At that, both he and all the elders, that went clad in sack-cloth, fell prostrate on the ground.

17 Nay, said David to the Lord, was it not at my command that the muster-roll was taken? The sin is mine, the fault is mine; these poor sheep of mine, what wrong have they done? Against me turn thy hand, O Lord my God, and against my father's race; let the people be smitten no more.

18 Then, at the bidding of the Lord's angel, Gad would have David go up to Ornan's threshing-floor and build an altar there to the Lord his God; and Gad's word, that was the Lord's word, the king made haste to obey. Ornan and his four sons, that were threshing wheat there, had hidden themselves upon sight of the angel standing above them; but now, as he saw David approaching, Ornan went to meet him, and did reverence, bowing down to earth. Give me, David said, this site of thy threshing-floor, to build an altar to the Lord here; ask what price thou wilt, only let the people be plagued no more. Why, said Ornan, let the king's grace take all he needs and do what he will with it; here are oxen for the sacrifice, here is the sled for kindling-wood, here is corn for the offering; most readily I make the gift of them all. Nay, said the king, I must pay thee their price in money; should I accept them from thee, and offer the Lord a sacrifice which costs me nothing? So David paid Ornan six hundred golden sicles, duly weighed out, for the price of his land; and there he built an altar to the Lord, and brought burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering. Fire came down from heaven upon his altar of burnt-sacrifice, to prove the divine acceptance of his plea; and with that, at the Lord's bidding, the angel put his sword back in its sheath.

28 So David, finding that the Lord had granted his prayer upon Ornan's threshing-floor, offered more victims there. As for the tabernacle which Moses made for the Lord in the wilderness, and its altar of burnt-sacrifice, they were still, at this time, 30 in the hill-sanctuary at Gabaon; and to that altar David might not repair, in his

need of the Lord's help, so adread was he of the sword which the angel of the Lord carried.¹

22 Here, said David, is the Lord's home; here Israel shall find an altar for its burnt-sacrifices. And thereupon he held a muster of all the men of alien birth that dwelt in Israel, and chose out from these masons that should cut and dress the stone for building God's house. It was David that procured iron in abundance for door-nail and flange and socket, a weight of bronze, too, beyond all reckoning; nor was there any counting the cedar planks that were provided for David by the men of Sidon and Tyre. My son Solomon thought he, is but a boy and still untried; and this house I mean to have built for the Lord must be such that all the world tells of its renown; I must store up for him what he needs. So it was that before his death he had all the preparations made for it.

Then he summoned the young prince and laid a charge upon him, bidding him build a house for the Lord God of Israel. My son, he told him, it was my thought to have built such a house myself, to be a shrine for the name of the Lord my God: but this message came to me from the Lord: Blood thou hast spilt in rivers and wars thou hast waged a many; not for thee to build me a house, that comest before me with so much blood on thy hands. Thou shalt have a son born to thee whose reign shall be all peace; on every side I will secure his frontiers from attack, and he will be well named Solomon, the Peaceful, such untroubled ease shall Israel enjoy during his reign. He it is that shall build a house to be the shrine of my name; I shall find in him a son, and he in me a father, and I will maintain his dynasty on the throne of Israel for all time.

Courage, then, my son; the Lord be with thee, and prosper thou ever. Build a house for the Lord thy God, as he himself has promised; and may he grant thee prudence and discernment, in ruling thy people of Israel and in holding fast by the law of the Lord thy God. Do thou but keep decree and award of his, handed on through Moses to Israel, and all shall be well with thee; play the man, and keep thy

¹ vv. 1-30, cf. II Kg. 24.

courage high, never doubting, never
 14 daunted. My hard-earned store thou hast,
 to build the house with; a hundred thou-
 sand talents of gold, and a million talents
 of silver, bronze and iron of what weight
 I know not, past all reckoning; wood and
 15 stone too I have made ready against all thy
 needs.¹ Many workmen thou hast in thy
 service, stone-cutters and stone-masons
 16 and carpenters, and masters of every craft
 to work for thee, fashioning the gold and
 silver, the bronze and iron, that passes all
 reckoning. To the task, then! The Lord
 will be ever at thy side.

17 On all the rulers of Israel David laid the
 same charge, bidding them lend Solomon
 18 their aid. You can see for yourselves, he
 told them, that the Lord your God is with
 you; has he not secured all your frontiers
 from attack, and given you the mastery
 over your enemies, so that the whole land
 now gives ready obedience to the Lord and
 19 to the Lord's people? Give yourselves,
 then, heart and soul, to the following of the
 Lord your God; bestir yourselves, and
 build the Lord God a sanctuary, a house
 dedicated to his name, where the ark that
 bears witness of the Lord's covenant, and
 all the holy things consecrated to him, may
 find a resting-place.

23 David was already an old man, and
 near his end, and had already de-
 signed his son Solomon as king of Israel,
 2 when he held this muster of the rulers,
 priests and Levites.

3 There were thirty-eight thousand Le-
 vites over the age of thirty; twenty-four
 thousand of these were appointed to carry
 5 out various duties in the Lord's house; of
 the rest, six thousand were rulers and
 judges, four thousand were porters, and as
 many more were musicians, to sound the
 Lord's praises with the instruments David
 6 had made for psalmody. It was David who
 prescribed courses of service for the
 various Levite families, all coming down
 7 from Gerson, Caath, and Merari. From
 8 Gerson came Leedan and Semei, from
 9 Leedan Jahiel, Zethan and Joel, (from
 Semei¹ Salomith, Hosiel and Aran; all

these of Leedan's race). From Semei Le-
 10 heth, Ziza, Jaus and Baria, the first two
 11 taking rank separately, while Jaus and
 Baria counted as one family, so few were
 their descendants. From Caath came Am-
 12 ram, Isaac, Hebron and Oziel, from Am-
 13 ram Aaron and Moses. Aaron and his sons
 were set apart to serve in the inner sanctu-
 ary for all time, to make the Lord due
 offering of incense and pronounce eternal
 blessing in his name. Moses, too, the man
 14 of God's choice, had descendants who
 were reckoned among the Levites; from
 15 him came Gersom and Eliezer. Gersom's
 16 first-born son was Subuel, and Eliezer's
 17 Rohobia; Eliezer had no other sons, but he
 had many descendants through Rohobia.
 Isaac's first-born son was called Salomith.
 18 From Hebron came Jeriau, Amarias, Jaha-
 19 ziel and Jecmaan, from Oziel Micha and
 Jesia. From Merari came Moholi and
 20 Musi, from Moholi Eleazar and Cis; of
 22 these, Eleazar died without male issue, but
 his daughters married their cousins, the
 sons of Cis. Musi's sons were Moholi,
 23 Eder and Jerimoth.

Clan and family of the Levites, their
 24 courses named after these clan chieftains,
 used to do duty in the Lord's house after
 reaching the age of twenty; the Lord God
 25 of Israel, thought David, has given his
 people a resting-place, and made Jeru-
 salem their home for ever; no more need
 26 of Levites to carry the tabernacle and all
 its furniture this way and that. It was
 27 David's last dispositions that the Levites
 were registered as soon as they reached the
 age of twenty. They were to assist the sons
 28 of Aaron in the care of the Lord's temple,
 in court and chamber, wash-house and
 shrine, wherever their service was needed.
 There was work (for the priests)² to do in
 29 setting out the consecrated loaves, looking
 after the unleavened cakes, the frying and
 the roasting, the weights and the measures.
 There was work to do (for the Levites) in
 30 waiting upon the Lord with songs of praise
 morning and evening; there was burnt-
 31 sacrifice to be offered on sabbaths, and
 at the new moon, and on all other days
 of solemnity; every occasion had its due

¹ Some think the figures here given may have been distorted by an error in copying; Solomon himself only received 666 talents of gold among his yearly revenues (III Kg. 10. 14). ² It is not clear where this other Semei comes in the genealogy. ³ In verses 29 and 30 the words in brackets do not occur in the Hebrew text, or in the Septuagint Greek.

ceremonies that must still be carried out in the Lord's presence. The tabernacle with its usages, the sanctuary with its worship, the needs of their brethren, the sons of Aaron, as they ministered in the Lord's house, were all in the Levites' charge.

24 The descendants of Aaron were also divided into separate clans. Of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abiu predeceased him, dying childless, so the priesthood passed to Eleazar and Ithamar. Sadoc represented the sons of Eleazar, and Achimelech the sons of Ithamar, when David appointed them the different duties they were to perform; and it proved there was no parity in their numbers, the division must take place between sixteen heads of families in Eleazar's clan, eight in Ithamar's. The order of these families was arranged by lot, the heads of families in either clan taking rank as overseers of the sanctuary and of all divine things. In the presence of the king and his nobles, of the high priest Sadoc, Abiathar's son Achimelech, and all the heads of the priestly and Levitical families, the Levite scribe Semeias, son of Nathanael, inscribed the names, precedence being given first to one of Eleazar's households, then to one of Ithamar's. And the lot gave the names in this order: Joiarib, Jedei, Harim, Seorim, Melchia, Maiman, Accos, Abia, Jesua, Sechenia, Eliasib, Jacim, Hoppa, Isbaab, Belga, Emmer, Hezir, Aphses, Pheteia, Hezechiel, Jachin, Gamul, Dalaiou, Maa-ziau. These were the courses under which they exercised their office in turn, duly entering the Lord's house after the manner prescribed by their father Aaron at the bidding of the Lord God of Israel.

Among the other Levite clans, the following gave their names to courses; of Amram's sons, Subael, of Subael's, Jehedeia, of Rohobia's, Jesias, of Issar's, Salemoth and his son Jahath, . . .¹ and his four sons, Jeriau, Amarias, Jahaziel and Jecmaan; of Oziel's, Micha, his son Samir, his brother Jesia and Jesia's son Zacharias. Of Merari's Moholi and Musi, . . . Benno son of Oziau. . . Oziau son of Merari. . .

¹ It seems probable that some words have fallen out: cf. 23. 19.

² The name Semeias has dropped out in the original text; it can be supplied from verse 17.

⁴ "Made him the proud father": literally, "lifted up his horn by making him the father". The sense of the verse is largely uncertain, and some think there is a reference to the horn as a musical instrument, cf. Jos. 6. 5.

Soam, Zachur and Hebrî. . . (Moholi had a son Eleazar who died without issue). . . Jerameel son of Cis.² And of Musi's sons, Moholi, Eder and Jerimoth. Thus were Levi's descendants arranged by clans; and these too, in the presence of king David, and Sadoc, and Achimelech, and all the chiefs of the priestly and Levitical families, drew lots to match their brethren the sons of Aaron; greater or less, all must abide by the lot's arbitrament.

25 Next, David and his captains set apart the sons of Asaph, Heman and Idithun to give praise with harp and zither and cymbals, each fulfilling their appointed office in turn. The sons of Asaph, Zacchur, Joseph, Nathania and Asarel were under the direction of their father, that took his commands from the king. The six sons of Idithun, Godolias, Sori, Jeseias, (Semeias), Hasabias and Mathathias, were under the direction of their father Idithun, that played the harp while they sang the Lord's praise. Heman's sons were called Bocciau, Mathaniau, Oziel, Subuel, Jerimoth, Hananias, Hanani, Eliatha, Geddelthi, Romemthiezer, Jesbacassa, Mellothi, Othir and Mahazioth. This Heman was the king's seer, interpreting the divine utterance to him; and God had made him the proud father of all these;⁴ fourteen sons he gave him and three daughters. Thus were the sons of Asaph, Idithun and Heman marshalled, at the king's express order, for their temple service of making music with cymbals, harp and zither.

The whole number, including those brethren of theirs who had skill in the divine chant, all masters of their craft, was two hundred and eighty-eight; and they cast lots for the order in which they were to take turns, without regard to seniority or to skill. The first lot fell to Joseph, that was of Asaph's clan. Of the rest, each had twelve more, his brethren and his sons, associated with him; their names were Godolias, Zacchur, Sori, Nathania, Bocciau, Oziel, Jesaias, Mathaniau, Semeias, Asarel, Hasabias, Subuel, Mathathias,

122 Jerimoth, Hananias, Jesbacassa, Hanani,
126 Mellothi, Eliatha, Othir, Geddelthi, Ma-
131 hazioth, Romemthiezer.¹

26 The door-keepers, too, were di-
vided into families. For the
Corites, there was Meselema, a son of
2 Asaph, and his seven sons, Zacharias,
3 Jadhel, Zabadias, Jathanael, Aelam, Jo-
4 hanan and Elioenai; together with the
eight sons of Obedom, Semeias, Joza-
5 bad, Joaha, Sachar, Nathanael, Ammiel,
Issachar and Phollathi; such blessing had
6 Obedom from the Lord. His grandsons,
too, through Semeias, were tried warriors
7 and heads of separate families, Othni, and
his warrior brothers, Raphael, Obed, Elza-
8 bad, Eliu, and Samachias. All these were
descended from Obedom, and with their
sons and brethren, sturdy ministrants,
9 they made a company of sixty-two; the
descendants of Meselema, with their sons
and brethren, valorous men too, were but
10 twenty-eight. And for Merari there were
the sons of Hosa; their father, his first-
born lost, gave the chief place among them
11 to Semri; the others were Helcias, Tabelias
and Zacharias. Sons and brethren Hosa
had in all thirteen.

12 These were the men appointed to serve
as commanders of the temple watch,
13 sharing the duty with their brethren. Lots
were cast between the various families,
without regard to seniority, and so the
14 various gates were assigned to them; the
eastern side fell to Meselemias, the
northern to his son Zacharias, a shrewd
15 man and skilful; the south, where the
elders sat in council,² to Obedom's
16 family, (to Sephim and) to Hosa the
western side by the gate at the head of the
ascent;³ to each family its own watch.
17 Each day there must be six Levites on
guard to the east, four to the north, four to
the south, with two more on each side of
18 the council-chamber, and on the west,
where the door-keepers had their guard-
rooms, four without and two in either
19 guard-room. Thus were duties assigned to

the door-keepers, all of the Corite and
Merarite families.

The Levites, too, under Achias, had 20
charge of the temple treasury, and of the
votive offerings. Some of these came down 21
from Ledan, son of Gersom; the heads of
their families were named after Jehiel, who
was descended from Gersom by Ledan,
and Jehiel's two sons, Zathan and Joel. 22
These families had the permanent treas-
ures of the Lord's house in their charge,
representing the whole Caathite clan, Am- 23
ramites, Isaarites, Hebronites and Ozi-
helites alike; and the treasurer was Subael, 24
descended through Gersom from Moses.
Meanwhile Gersom's brother Eliezer was 25
represented by Selemith, his descendant
through Rahabia, Isaia, Joram and
Zechri; it was Selemith and his kindred 26
that were treasurers of the votive offerings
made by king David, by head of clan and
captain and chief and general under him;
out of their wars and the spoils of their 27
wars, they made these offerings for the
maintenance and furnishing of the Lord's
house. There was much that had been 28
dedicated by the prophet Samuel, by Saul
the son of Cis, Abner son of Ner, and Joab
son of Sarvia; everything so dedicated was
under the care of Selemith and his kindred.

The Isaarite clan, under Chonenias and 29
his sons, had the affairs of Israel, beyond
the confines of the city, in their charge, as
teachers and judges; and for the Lord's 30
service and the king's business in general
the Hebronites, a thousand and seven
hundred active men under Hasabias and
his brethren, commanded the whole of
Israel west of the Jordan. And of the 31
Hebronites... with all their clans and
families, Jeria was the chief. In the forti-
eth year of king David, a register was
taken at Jazer in Galaad, and the active 32
men of his clan, all in the prime of life,
counted two thousand and seven hundred
(heads of families). These, for the Lord's
service and for the king's business, David
put in charge of Ruben and Gad and the
eastern half of Manasses.⁴

¹ The names in verses 10-31 are here given in the same forms as in verses 2-4 above; in the original text there are several differences, Zacchur appearing as Zachur, Sori as Isari, Oziel as Isreela, Asarela as Azareel, and Subuel as Subael.

² Or perhaps, 'where the stores were kept'.

³ The words in brackets are probably due to the error of a copyist who wrote down a Hebrew word in verse 15 twice over.

⁴ The details in verses 29-32 are obscure, and it seems likely that the text has been badly handed down. After hearing that the Hebronites had charge of Israel west of Jordan, we do not expect to be told that they were registered east of Jordan, and held command there. It looks as if some other name, perhaps

27 The men of Israel were marshalled under clan chiefs and commanders and captains; the king had, besides, his commissioners, serving him at the head of their several regiments. Each of them, with twenty-four thousand men under him, went on duty once a year and was relieved at the end of a month. The first regiment of twenty-four thousand was on duty in the first month, under Jesbaam son of Zabdiel; he was descended from Phares, and he took the first month as having precedence among the commissioners. The second regiment, in the second month, was under an Ahothite, Dudia, and afterwards under another called Macelloth. The third regiment was under Banaias son of Joiada, the king's minister,¹ the same Banaias that was a leader among the thirty, and had thirty under him; his son Amizabad commanded the regiment as his deputy. The fourth was under Joab's brother Asahel, and afterwards under his son Zabadias; the fifth under Samaoth of Jezer; the sixth under a man of the Tecua, Hira son of Acces; the seventh under the Phallonite Helles; the eighth under Sabochai the Husathite, of the race of Zarahi; the ninth under Abiezer the man of Anathoth, from Benjamin; the tenth under Marai the Netophathite, of the race of Zarai; the eleventh under Banaias the Pharathonite, from Ephraim; the twelfth under Holdai the Netophathite, of the race of Gothoniel.

Meanwhile the tribes had their own chiefs; Eliezer son of Zechri for Ruben, Saphatias son of Maacha for Simeon, Hasabias son of Camuel for Levi, Sadoc for the race of Aaron, Eliu, David's brother, for Juda, Amri son of Michael for Issachar, Jesmaias son of Abdias for Zabulon, Jerimoth son of Ozriel for Nephthali, Osee son of Ozaziu for Ephraim, Joel son of Phadaia for western Manasses, Jaddo son of Zacharias for Manasses in Galaad, Jasiel son of Abner for Benjamin, and Ezrihel son of Jeroham for Dan; these were the chiefs of Israel.² There was no register giving the number of Israelites under twenty years of age; had not the Lord promised that they should be count-

of the Ozihelites (cf. verse 23 above) has dropped out. Nor is it easy to understand why Israel proper should have claimed the services of 1,700 Levites all heads of Levite families.

¹ Literally, 'the priest'; see note on II Kg. 8. 18. are omitted from the list.

less as the stars of heaven? And indeed, when Joab son of Sarvia went about to register them, he left the task incomplete, because of the divine vengeance that fell on Israel; thus the annals of king David do not give the full number of those registered.

The controller of the king's own treasure-house was Azmoth, son of Adiel; what was stored in cities, townships and fortresses was in the keeping of Jonathan, son of Ozias. As for husbandry, the farmers were under Ezri son of Chelub, the vine-growers under Semeias the Romathite, the cellarage under Zabdiat the Aphonite, the olive and fig plantations all through the country-side under Balanan of Geder, the store-houses of oil under Joas. Care of the herds that grazed in Saron belonged to the Saronite Satrai, of the cattle in the low grounds, to Saphat son of Adli, of the camels to the Ismahelite Ubil, of the asses to Jadias the Meronathite, and of the sheep to Jaziz the Agarean. These were the controllers of the king's property.

David had an uncle called Jonathan, a prudent counsellor and a man of letters; he, with Jahiel son of Hachamoni, had charge of the royal princes. Achitophel was the king's counsellor, and Chusai the Arachite held the title of king's friend; after Achitophel came Banaias' son Joiada, and Abiathar. And the army was commanded by Joab.

28 All these notables of Israel king David now summoned to his presence, the clan chiefs, and the commissioners that were the king's own servants; commanders and captains, controllers of the royal property, princes and chamberlains, all that was powerful and all that was valiant in the city of Jerusalem. Rose he, and stood before them; Listen, he said, fellow tribesmen of mine and true lieges. I thought to have built a house, in which the ark that bears witness to the Lord's covenant should find a home, in which God's feet should have their resting-place; and all that could be prepared to that end, prepare I did. But God warned me that it

out. Nor is it easy to understand why Israel proper should have claimed the services of 1,700 Levites all heads of Levite families.

² It is not clear why the tribes of Gad and Aser

was not for me to build such a shrine for his name; I was a war-maker and a shedder
 4 of blood. Yet, when he would grant Israel an abiding dynasty, it was on me, alone of my father's house, that his choice fell. Out of all the tribes he has chosen Juda, out of all Juda my father's house; and of all my father's sons, who but I was to be king of
 5 all Israel? And he is choosing still; many sons he has given me, and among all these it is Solomon that is to reach a throne, king
 6 of the Lord's own people. So the Lord himself has told me: It is Solomon, thy heir, that shall build house and court for me. I have chosen him for my son, and he
 7 shall find in me a true father; let him ever observe decree and award of mine as they are observed this day, and his dynasty shall
 8 endure for all time. Let me speak, then, as in the presence of all Israel, with our own God listening to us. Obey, all of you, the will of the Lord our God, study, all of you, to learn it; then it shall be yours to enjoy this fair land, and bequeath it to your
 9 posterity for ever. And do thou, my son Solomon, acknowledge ever thy father's God, serving him faithfully, serving him willingly; no heart but is open to the Lord's scrutiny, no thought in our minds but he can read it. Search for him, and thou shalt find him; forsake him, and he
 10 will for ever reject thee. Meanwhile, here is this house to be built, the Lord's sanctuary; on thee his choice has fallen; courage! To the task!

11 Then David handed over to his son Solomon the full plan of porch and temple, of store-house and parlour and inner chamber, of the throne of mercy itself; all his designs, too, for the outer courts and for the surrounding rooms in which the permanent treasures of the Lord's house and the votive offerings were to be laid up.
 12 He told him of the order in which priest and Levite were to do all that had to be done, keep all that had to be kept, in the
 13 Lord's temple. He gave him gold by weight and silver by weight for all the appurtenances of worship, varied for various
 14 needs. Gold and silver in due measure for every lampstand and lamp of gold and
 15 silver; gold for the table on which the halloved loaves were set forth, gold and silver
 16 for every table of gold and silver. Pure

gold for fork and bowl and censer and cup; no cup of gold or silver but had its due weight apportioned;¹ pure gold for the
 18 altar of incense, pure gold for the equipage of cherubs that should spread their wings to overshadow the Lord's ark. This came
 19 to me, said he, with the Lord's own sign-manual; all the pattern he would make clear to me. Play a man's part, said David
 20 to Solomon; courage! To the task! Never doubting, never daunted; the Lord thy God will be at thy side, never failing thee, never forsaking thee, and see that thou hast strength to do all that must be done for his
 21 temple. Priest and Levite are there, ready to fulfil their appointed duties in the Lord's house; chieftains and common folk are all minded to do thy bidding.

29 This, too, David said to all who were assembled there: The Lord's choice has fallen on my son Solomon, and no other, a prince still young and untried. Heavy the task, to house God, not man. Whatever lies in me I have done, to make
 2 ready the material for the temple of my God; gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood where they were needed, onyx and jet and precious stones of all colours, abundance, too, of the best marble. Such love had I to
 3 the house of my God; and now, over and above the preparations I have made for this holy work, I offer gold and silver out of my own purse for the temple's needs;
 4 three thousand talents of Ophir gold and seven thousand talents of tried silver. All this, for gilding the temple walls, and to
 5 put more gold and silver into the craftsmen's hands.

Let every man that has the will to offer make to the Lord here and now, with open hand, his gift. So chief and commissioner, commander and captain and overseer, promised to do their part; and their gift to
 7 God's house was five thousand talents of gold, and ten thousand gold pieces, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand of bronze, and a hundred thousand
 8 of iron; others, who had precious stones in their possession, gave these in, through Jaziel the Gersonite, to the temple treasury. Great was the rejoicing of the people
 9 that day, as promise after promise was made, so generously they offered what they

¹ For 'cup' the Latin version has 'lion' here, but not in I Esdras 1. 9.

had to the Lord; and greatly might David himself rejoice.

- 10 Then, before all the people, he blessed the Lord's name thus: Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our father Israel, from
 11 the beginning to the end of time. Thine, Lord, the magnificence, thine the power, splendour and glory and majesty are thine; to thee all that is in heaven, all that is on earth, belongs, to thee the kingdom, of all
 12 princes thou art overlord. Riches and honour come from thee; all things obey thy will; from thee power comes and dominion; only thy hand exalts, only thy
 13 hand makes strong. To thee, then, our God, we pay homage this day, to thy glorious name bring renown. That I, that
 14 this people of mine, should have the means to make thee such promises! All things belong to thee; all that thou hast from us
 15 is thy own gift; as thou seest us, we are exiles and wanderers, no less than our fathers were; our days on earth pass like
 16 a shadow, and there is no abiding here. O Lord our God, all this store we have in
 17 readiness, for the building of a shrine to thy name, comes from thy hands; all things are thine. My God, thou readest
 18 our hearts, I know it well, and it is the honest heart thou lovest. With honesty of intent I have made all these offerings
 19 gladly, and gladly have I seen all that are here assembled make their gifts to thee. O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel,
 20 keep this will of theirs for ever unchangeable; still be that mind theirs, a mind set
 21 on thy worship. And oh, to my son Solomon give integrity of heart; command and decree and observance of thine may he
 22 hold ever in honour, and ever perform; be

it his to build the temple for which I have made provision.

Then David would have the whole assembly bless the Lord's name, and bless it they did, the name of the Lord God of their fathers; and so made reverence, to God first and then to the king. Victims, too, they slaughtered in sacrifice to the Lord; on the day following they offered in burnt-sacrifice a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with due libations made, and with a sacrificial banquet in which the whole of Israel shared to their heart's content. So ate they and drank that day, keeping high festival in the Lord's presence, and anointed Solomon to be their prince, Sadoc to be their priest, in the Lord's service. Thus Solomon took his seat, instead of his father David, upon the throne the Lord had appointed; winning favour and obedience from all; not one of the chiefs and rulers, not one of the royal princes themselves, but did homage and accepted Solomon as king. High pre-eminence the Lord gave him over the whole people, and such royal majesty as never yet king had in Israel.

So reigned David the son of Jesse over the whole of Israel, for forty years' space, seven at Hebron and thirty-three at Jerusalem. And he died grown old in comfort, neither length of days nor riches nor honours wanting to him, and with his son Solomon to reign as his heir. All his deeds, first and last, stand recorded by the seer Samuel, and the prophet Nathan, and Gad the man of visions; the history of his reign, and the greatness of his reign, and the times that passed during his reign, in Israel and in all the kingdoms of the world.

THE SECOND BOOK OF PARALIPOMENA

SOLOMON, then, king David's heir, was firmly seated on his throne, and the Lord his God was with him, brought him to great renown. And now he sent out his summons to the whole of Israel, to commander and captain and warrior chief, to all judges of the people and heads of their families, and, with such great retinue, betook himself to the hill-sanctuary at Gabaon. Gabaon was still the resting-place of that tabernacle which God's servant Moses fashioned, out in the desert, to be the witness of the divine covenant. The ark of God had left it, first for Cariathiarim, then for the site in Jerusalem where David had brought it, giving it a tent of its own. But the brazen altar which Beseleel made, Beseleel, son of Uri and grandson of Hur, was there still before the entrance of the Lord's tabernacle. To it Solomon repaired, and the whole assembly with him; on that brazen altar, before the tabernacle that bore witness of the Lord's covenant, he offered a thousand victims in sacrifice.

That same night, the Lord appeared to him, bidding him choose what gift he would. Thou hast been very merciful, Solomon answered, to my father David, in granting him a son to succeed him; and now, Lord God, make good thy promise to him. Since thou hast made me king over thy people, a great people countless as the dust, grant me wisdom and discernment in all my dealings with them. How else should a man sit in judgement over such a people as this, great as thy people is great? And the Lord answered, For this choice thou hast made, thou shalt be rewarded. Thou didst not ask for riches or possessions, for glory, or vengeance upon thy enemies, or a long life. Thy prayer was for wisdom and discernment, to make thee a better judge for the subjects I have given thee. Wisdom and discernment thou shalt

have; and I will give thee riches and possession too, and such glory as never king shall have before or after thee.¹

So from the hill-sanctuary at Gabaon, from the entrance of that tabernacle which bears witness of the covenant, Solomon returned to Jerusalem. There he reigned over Israel, and mustered a great force of chariots and of horsemen; a thousand and four hundred chariots, and horsemen twelve thousand; some of these were kept in towns set apart for stabling them, others in Jerusalem at the king's side. Silver he made as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedars as plentiful as the sycamores that grow in the valleys. And horses were brought to him from Egypt and from Coa, where his agents went to buy them for a fixed sum; six hundred silver pieces for a chariot, and for a horse a hundred and fifty; the kingdoms of the Hethites, too, and the kings of Syria sold him horses at the same price.²

2 A house Solomon would build, to be a shrine for the Lord's name, and for himself a royal palace. So he made a register of seventy thousand men that should carry burdens on their backs, and eighty thousand to quarry stone in the hills; of overseers, he would have three thousand six hundred. And he sent a message to Hiram, king of Tyre: When my father David was building the palace in which he dwelt, thou didst send him planks of cedar. Do as much for me, now that I would build a temple dedicated to the Lord, the God I worship; there to burn incense of rich spices, keep hallowed loaves set forth continually, offer sacrifice at morning and evening, at sabbath and at new moon, and on all the feasts our changeless rite enjoins in the Lord's honour. A great fabric it needs must be; great above all gods is the God we worship, and to build a house

¹ vv. 3-12, cf. III Kg. 3. 3-14.

² vv. 13-17, cf. III Kg. 10. 26-29.

worthy of him is indeed too high a task for man's powers; who am I, that I should be his architect, whom heaven itself, and the heaven above the heavens, cannot contain?

7 Yet into his presence we must come, to offer incense there. A craftsman I would have of thee, that can work skilfully in gold and silver, bronze and iron, tapestry of purple and scarlet and blue; that can help the workmen my father David has left me, here in Jerusalem, carve the figures they
8 would. Send me planks, too, of cedar and juniper and pine; I know well how deftly thy men can fell trees on Lebanon; mine
9 shall be apprenticed to them, and cut me planks in abundance; it is a great temple,
10 a famous temple, I would build. Thy woodmen shall have for their maintenance forty thousand quarters of wheat, and as many of barley, of wine and of oil six hundred and forty tuns.

11 To this Hiram, prince of Tyre, wrote in answer, A loving Lord this people has, to
12 give them such a king as thou art. Blessed be the name of the Lord God of Israel, maker of heaven and earth, for giving David an heir so wise and so versed in affairs, so prudent and so discerning, fit to build a temple for the Lord, a palace for
13 the king! I am sending thee a wise man and a skilful, one Hiram, that is a master of his craft. A woman of Dan was his mother,
14 his father a Tyrian. Well he knows how to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, in marble and in wood, in tapestry of purple and blue, lawn and scarlet thread; to carve what carving thou wilt, and devise all that needs devising, thy craftsmen to aid him, and the craftsmen the king's grace,
15 thy father, left thee. For the rest, my lord, do thou send us wheat and barley, wine
16 and oil, as thou hast promised, and we will set about cutting the planks thou needest, on mount Lebanon. They shall be brought in rafts by sea to Joppe, and it shall be thy part to carry them to Jerusalem.

17 It was king Solomon, not content with the register his father David had made, who registered afresh all the aliens that dwell in Israel; the number of these proved to be a hundred and fifty-three thousand
18 six hundred; seventy thousand to carry

burdens on their backs, eighty thousand to quarry stone in the hills, and three thousand six hundred overseers.

3 Solomon, then, set about the building of the Lord's house, there on mount Moria, the place of David's vision, where David had bought the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. It was in the second month of his fourth year as king that he began building, and the foundations he laid for the Lord's house, using the old cubit measure, were sixty cubits long and twenty cubits wide. In front was a porch twenty cubits long, to match the width of the temple, and (a hundred and) twenty cubits high,¹ the gilding within was of the purest gold. The main building was faced with planks of pine, that had plates of fine gold attached to them, and it had a pattern of palm branches and chains interlaced; its floor was laid in precious marble, nobly patterned. The whole building, beam and pillar and wall and doorway, was faced with none but the purest gold, and on the walls of it were carvings of cherubim.

He made, too, an inner shrine, twenty cubits long like the width of the main building, and twenty cubits wide. Some six hundred talents of gold were used in the facing of it; the very nails were of gold, each of fifty sicles' weight; even the upper rooms were faced with gold. Within the inner shrine stood two carved cherubs, all plated with gold; the four wings of them had twenty cubits' stretch, either touching the wall with one of its wings, five cubits long, and its fellow cherub with the other. Thus, with outspread wings both of them, they occupied the whole space of twenty cubits; upright they stood on their feet, with their faces turned towards the outer building. A veil, too, he made, of fine linen thread twined with threads of blue, purple and scarlet, with a tapestry of cherubs. And before the doors of the temple he set up two pillars thirty-five cubits high, with capitals of five cubits; and he made chains (within the inner shrine) which he hung round the capitals, each interspersed with a hundred figured

¹ The enormous height of a hundred and twenty cubits is given in the Hebrew text, but the manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek seem doubtful about the inclusion of the 'hundred'. The temple itself was only thirty cubits high (III Kg. 6. 2).

17 pomegranates.¹ At the very entrance of the temple he set up these pillars, one on the right, to which he gave the name of Jachin, and one on the left, to which he gave the name of Booz.

4 He made a brazen altar, too, twenty cubits in length and width, ten in height. And he cast a great round basin ten cubits from brim to brim, five cubits high, and with a girth of thirty cubits. It rested on figures of oxen, and without, a chain of moulding ran round its belly in two rows. The oxen were cast in metal, and supported the basin, twelve of them, three facing north, three west, three south, three east, with the basin so resting on them that their hind-quarters were hidden beneath it. The basin was a palm's breadth thick and its brim curved as the brim of a cup does, or of an open lily; it held ninety-six tuns. He also made ten smaller basins, and put five on the right, five on the left, for the washing of all that was to be offered in burnt-sacrifice; in the great basin the priests themselves washed.²

7 Within the temple were ten golden lamp-stands, of a prescribed pattern, five to the right and five to the left, and ten tables disposed in the same way. And there were a hundred goblets, all of gold. 9 There were precincts, too, for the priests, and a great court; the doors of this court were covered with bronze. The great basin was put on the right, towards the south-east.

1 Pot and fork and bowl Hiram made, and all that the king needed for the service of the Lord's temple; pillar and soffit and capital, and net-work over capital and soffit; four hundred figured pomegranates, and two lengths of net-work pattern, two rows of pomegranates to each length of net-work, draped over capital and soffit alike. He made stands, and smaller basins for the stands to carry, the large basin, with the twelve oxen beneath it, and pot and fork and bowl besides all else. All such ornaments for the Lord's house did Hiram, king Solomon's master craftsman, fashion out of the purest bronze; the king had them cast in the clay soil of the Jordan valley,

between Socoth and Saredatha; a great multitude of them, so that the weight of bronze was never counted or known.

19 Other appurtenances, too, of the Lord's house must Solomon make; the golden altar, and the golden tables on which the hallowed loaves were set out, the lamp-stand with its lamps, all of pure gold, ready to burn in due course before the shrine, and the flowered bosses for them, and the lamps themselves, and the tongs, of pure gold too. Nothing but must be made of the purest gold, incense-boat and censer and bowl and spoon. Carved doors within, leading to the shrine, temple doors without, alike were plated with gold. Thus Solomon completed all the work needed for the service of the Lord's house.³

5 And now Solomon must bring into the temple all the votive offerings his father David had made; silver and gold and lesser ware, all must be stored up in its treasure-chamber. Then he sent for the elders of Israel, the chiefs of the tribes and the heads of clans; all must meet at Jerusalem to bring the Lord's ark home from its resting-place in the Keep of David, which we call Sion. It was on the great feast day of the seventh month that all Israel obeyed the king's summons; and when the last of the chieftains had arrived, the Levites took up the ark and brought it in; the tabernacle, too, with all its equipment, and all the furniture of the sanctuary that remained still in the tabernacle, priests and Levites brought to the spot. Meanwhile king Solomon, with the whole Israelite assembly, all that had gathered before the ark, offered rams and bulls; so many were the victims that there was no counting them. So the ark that bears witness of the Lord's covenant was borne by the priests to the place designed for it, there in the temple's inner shrine where the cherubim spread their wings; spread them over the very place where the ark rested, to protect it and protect the poles that bore it. These poles jutted out indeed, being longer than the ark they bore, so that the ends of them could be seen by one standing before the shrine; but beyond the

¹ The words enclosed in brackets are obviously meaningless. Some think that, by a very slight error, the Hebrew word for the 'inner shrine' has been written by a mistake for a word meaning 'a neck-lace'.

² *vv.* 2-6, cf. III Kg. 7. 23-27.

³ *vv.* 11-22, cf. III Kg. 7. 40-51.

temple limits they were seen no more; and so they have remained to this day. And nothing was in the ark except the two tablets Moses laid up there on mount Horeb, when the Lord gave the sons of Israel a law to live by, after their escape from Egypt.

At last the priests left the sanctuary; all of them who were present had purified themselves so as to gain admission, for as yet they had no times and manners of service planned out for them. To the east of the altar stood Levites and singers, the clans of Asaph, Heman and Idithun alike, all robed in lawn, playing on their cymbals, zithers and harps; and now they had a hundred and twenty priests with them, sounding with trumpets. Trumpet and voice, cymbals and flute, with all the other instruments, sounded aloud so that the noise of them could be heard far off, as they praised the Lord together; Praise the Lord, they sang, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endures for ever. And with that, the whole of the Lord's house was wreathed in cloud; lost in that cloud, the priests could not wait upon the Lord with his accustomed service; his own glory was there, filling his own house.¹

6 Where the cloud is, cried Solomon, the Lord has promised to be. It is true, then, the house I have built in his honour is to be, for ever, his dwelling-place. With that, the king turned to bless the whole assembly; all Israel, that stood waiting there. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, he said, who has fulfilled in act the promise he made to my father David. So many years since he had rescued his people from Egypt, and never a city among all the tribes of Israel had he chosen to be the site of his dwelling-place or the shrine of his name, never a prince had he appointed over his people of Israel, till at last he chose Jerusalem, to enshrine his name there, and David for his people's ruler. And when he, my father, would have built a house in honour of the Lord God of Israel, the Lord told him that he had done well to conceive such a purpose in his heart; But it is not for thee, he said, to build me a house. A house shall be built in my honour, but by thy son, the heir of thy body.

That promise of his the Lord has fulfilled; I have come forward in my father David's place, sit upon the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised I should; it has been mine to build a house to the honour of the Lord, Israel's God, and to find a home for this ark, witness of the covenant he made with Israel's sons.

Then Solomon stood before the Lord's altar in full view of all Israel, and stretched out his hands. In the midst of the great court he had bidden them set down a block of bronze, five cubits across either way and three feet in height; on this he mounted, and there, in the sight of all Israel, kneeling down with his hands lifted up towards heaven, he prayed. Lord God of Israel, he said, thou reignest without rival in heaven and earth, making good thy merciful promises to all who follow thee with undivided hearts. And thou hast not disappointed thy servant, my father David; thy act matches thy word; this day, who doubts it? Do not forget, Lord God of Israel, that other promise of thine to David, that he should always have an heir to sit on the throne of Israel, would but his sons guide their steps, like David himself, as in thy presence; let that promise too, Lord God of Israel, be ratified!

Folly it were to think that God has a dwelling-place on earth. If the very heavens, and the heaven that is above the heavens, cannot contain thee, what welcome can it offer thee, this house which I have built? Yet it has not been built in vain, O Lord my God, if thou wilt give heed to thy servant's prayer, that sues for thy favour, listen to the cry of entreaty he makes before thee. This I ask, that thy eyes should be ever watching, night and day, over this temple of thine, the chosen sanctuary of thy name; be this the meeting-place where thou wilt listen to thy servant's prayer. Whatever requests I or my people Israel make shall find audience here; thou wilt listen from thy dwelling-place in heaven, and listening, wilt forgive.

Has a man wronged his neighbour, and is he ready to clear himself of the charge by an oath? Then, if he comes to this house of thine, to swear the lie before thy altar, thou, in heaven, wilt be listening, and wilt do justice between thy servants, passing

¹ *vv.* 2-14, cf. III Kg. 8. 1-11.

sentence upon the guilty and avenging the wrong, acquitting the innocent and granting him due redress.

124 Are thy people of Israel condemned to flee before their enemies, in punishment of the sins they will surely commit? Then, if they come back to thee in repentance, call on thy name and plead with thee in this temple of thine, thou wilt be listening in heaven; forgive the sins of thy people Israel, and restore them to the land which thou gavest to their fathers.

126 Does the sky bar its gates against them, and give no rain, in punishment for their sins? Then, if they come here acknowledging thee with prayer and repentance, and turn away, in their sore need, from their sins, do thou, in heaven, listen, and grant thy servants the people of Israel forgiveness; teach them to guide their steps aright, and send rain on the land thou hast given them for their home.

128 Is there famine in the land, or pestilence, blight or mildew, plague of locust or caterpillar? Does some enemy press hard on it, besieging its city gates? Whatever be the plague or the sickness that weighs us down, if any one among thy people, accepting that plague or sickness as his own, makes prayer to thee, stretching out his hands in this temple, thou, in heaven, thy high dwelling-place, wilt be listening; do thou relent, and send to each man the lot his deeds deserve, thou, who alone readeest the hearts of human kind. So will men learn to fear thee and to follow in thy paths, long as they live to enjoy the land thou gavest to our fathers.

132 Nay, is it some stranger, with no part in thy people Israel, who yet comes here from distant lands, for love of thy renown, for the constraining force thy power displays, and worships thee in this temple? Still, in heaven, thy secure dwelling-place, thou wilt grant the alien's prayer. So shall all the world come to hear of thy renown, and fear thee no less than Israel itself; shall doubt no more that this temple I have built claims thy protection.

14 Sometimes thy people will go out to levy war upon their enemies, here and there at thy bidding. Then, as they fall to prayer, let them but turn in the direction of the city thou hast chosen, the temple I have

built there in thy honour, and thou, in heaven, wilt listen to their prayer for aid, wilt maintain their cause.

But what, if they have offended thee by their faults? No man but is guilty of some fault; it may be thou wilt give them up, in thy anger, into the power of their enemies, and as prisoners they will be banished into countries far away, or alien countries within sight of home. But ere long, in their banishment, they will come back to thee with repentant hearts, crying out to thee, poor exiles, We are sinners, we have done amiss, rebels all! In that alien land, the land of their captivity, they will turn back to thee with all the purpose of their heart and soul. Then, if they turn in prayer towards the land thou gavest their fathers, the city of thy choice, and the temple I have built in thy honour, thou, in heaven, on thy peaceful throne, wilt once more listen to their prayer for aid, wilt maintain their cause still. And thou wilt relent towards thy people, though they have sinned against thee.¹

My God! Ever be thy eyes open, ever thy ears attentive to the prayer that is offered here. Up, Lord, take possession of this, thy home, with the ark that makes known thy power; Lord God, let thy priests go clad in triumph, thy faithful people rejoice in thy bounty. Lord God, do not reject my prayer, the king thou hast anointed; bethink thee of the loving designs thou hadst for thy servant David before him.²

7 Scarce had Solomon finished his praying, when fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, consumed all the victims; the glory of the Lord, too, filled the temple, and the priests might not enter; his own glory was there, filling his own house. The fire that fell, the brightness of the Lord's visible presence, was seen by all Israel; there on the stone pavement they fell down to earth in worship, crying, Praise the Lord, the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever. King and people offered their victims in the Lord's presence; the beasts king Solomon slew that day, when he and all the people dedicated the Lord's house, were twenty-two thousand bulls and a hundred and

¹ *vv.* 1-39, cf. III Kg. 8. 12-52.

² Or perhaps, 'the acts of mercy done by thy servant David'.

6 twenty thousand rams. There stood the priests at their task, and the Levites with the instruments of sacred music, that king David had given them to praise the Lord with, playing David's own chant of everlasting mercy, while the priests led with their trumpets, and all the people stood
7 around. That day, the king must needs hallow the middle part of the court before the Lord's house, burning there the burnt-sacrifice and the fat taken from the welcome-victims; the brazen altar he had made would not suffice for these and for
8 the bloodless offerings too. After this, king Solomon spent seven days in keeping the feast of Tabernacles, and with him a great multitude from the whole land of Israel, that stretched from the pass of Emath
9 down to the river of Egypt; and the eighth day he kept as a great holiday, after seven days given up to the temple dedication,
10 and seven to the feast. At last, on the twenty-third day of the month, he sent the people home, rejoicing with full hearts over the mercies the Lord had shewn to David, to Solomon, and to his own people of Israel.¹

11 When Solomon had finished building the temple, and his own palace, and brought all his plans for one and the other to a prosperous issue, the Lord spoke to
12 him in a vision seen by night. I have listened to thy prayer, he said; this place, none other, shall be the home of my sacrifices. Shut I the heavens, so that no rain
13 should fall, give I charge to the locust to ravage the country-side, send I pestilence to destroy my people; if they, this people
14 of mine, thus dedicated to my name, will betake themselves to my presence in entreaty, and repent of their ill doings, I, in heaven, will listen, will pardon their sins,
15 will bring healing to their country. Open my eyes shall be, my ears attentive to every
16 man's prayer that here prays to me; I have set this place apart and hallowed it, to be the shrine of my name for all time; never a day but my eyes shall be watching, my heart be attentive here.

17 Do thou guide thy steps, like thy father,

as in my presence, do thou fulfil all I command, hold true to observance and decree of mine; and I will raise up a dynasty to follow thee; such was my promise to thy father David, that he should always have an heir to sit on the throne of Israel. But if you are content to turn your backs upon me, neglecting the decrees and commands I have given you, betaking yourselves to the service and the worship of alien gods, then I will pluck you up by the roots out of the land I gave you, and this temple, which I have hallowed as the shrine of my name, shall be thrust away out of my sight. It shall be a proverb and a by-word among the nations. It shall be a monument to the passers-by, and they will ask in wonder, Why has the Lord treated this land, this house so cruelly? And the answer will come, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who rescued their fathers from the land of Egypt, and betook themselves to the worship and service of alien gods; that is why all this ruin has come upon them.²

8 Twenty years passed, after Solomon had built the Lord's temple and his own palace; then he set about fortifying the towns which Hiram had made over to him, and establishing Israelite inhabitants there.³ He marched against Emath Suba, and took possession of it, fortified Palmyra, out in the desert, and other fastnesses in the Emath country. He rebuilt Bethoron, upper and lower, making two walled cities there, bolted and barred against attack; Baalath, too, and all those other fortress-cities which bear Solomon's name, cities where he stationed his chariots and his horsemen. In Jerusalem, on Lebanon, all through his kingdom Solomon built whatever he had the whim to design. Some of the old population was still left, Hethites, Amorrites, Pherezites, Hevites, Jebusites, that were no true breed of Israel, but came down from the stock which had been spared by the invaders; these king Solomon made into bondservants, as they are to this day. Among the Israelites, he would have no man enslaved to the royal

¹ *vv.* 4-10, cf. III Kg. 8. 62-66.

² *vv.* 11-22, cf. III Kg. 9. 1-9.

³ The corresponding passage in the third book of Kings refers to a cession of cities by Solomon to Hiram, in return for his help in building the temple. Some think the twenty cities were made over to Hiram for twenty years as payment, and that the present passage deals with the moment when he gave them back. But if so, the account given in the earlier book is a confused one. There may have been many rectifications of frontier between Solomon and his neighbours at this time, if only in connexion with royal marriages, cf. III Kg. 11. 1.

service; it was from these he drew his warriors and his courtiers, the commanders of his chariots and his horsemen. Five hundred and fifty captains king Solomon had, that issued his commands to the people at large. He must build a new house, too, for Pharaoh's daughter, so that she might dwell in David's Keep no longer. I will not house wife of mine, said he, in David's home, that was king of Israel; the ark of the Lord has found its way there, and it is hallowed ground now.

Solomon used the altar he had built to the Lord in front of the temple porch for offering burnt-sacrifice day by day, as the law of Moses enjoined, on sabbaths, too, and at the new moon, and for the three feasts that came round yearly, the feasts of Unleavened Bread, of Weeks, and of Tabernacles. And he assigned to the priests the duties they were to perform, as his father David had prescribed them; and to the Levites their duties of singing praise, and of helping the priests with their task, as the needs of each day required; and to the door-keepers their various posts. All that God's servant David had enjoined must be done; neither priest nor Levite might go beyond the king's orders, in this or in the keeping of the sacred treasures.

All that he needed king Solomon had by him, from the day when he laid the foundations of the Lord's house till the day when he finished it;¹ after that, he betook himself to Asiongaber, and Ailath, in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea, where Hiram's men met him with ships and skillful mariners. These, with Solomon's own men, sailed for Ophir, and brought back four hundred and fifty talents of gold to the royal coffers.²

9 And now Solomon was visited by the queen of Saba. His fame had reached her, and she came to make trial of his power with knotty questions. Great was the wealth she brought with her to Jerusalem; her camels were loaded with spices and abundant gold and precious stones. And when she met Solomon, she told him all the thoughts that exercised her mind; every doubt he resolved, no question of

10 hers but found an answer. And when she saw how wise a man he was, saw, too, the house he had built, the food that was on his table, the lodging of his servants, the order and splendour of his court, the fine attire of his cup-bearers, and what victims he offered in the Lord's temple, she stood breathless in wonder. And she said to the king, It was no false tale I heard in my own country, of the powers thou hast, of the wisdom which is thine. I could not believe what they told me, without coming and seeing it for myself; now I find that half of it was lost in the telling, here are wonders surpassing all I heard. Happy thy folk, happy these servants of thine who wait ever on thy presence, and listen to thy wise words. Blessed be the Lord thy God, that would have a throne for himself, and thee, a king of his own, to sit on it! He loves Israel indeed, and means to preserve it evermore, that has appointed such a king to do justice and to make award for it.

A hundred and twenty talents' weight of gold she gave to king Solomon, with many spices and precious stones; never were such spices as the queen of Saba gave to king Solomon. (Though indeed Hiram's fleet, when it brought back gold from Ophir, brought sandal-wood, as well as precious stones; and of this sandal-wood king Solomon made pedestals for temple and palace, harp and zither for his musicians; never was such wood seen in Juda.) Solomon, in his turn, gave the queen of Saba all she desired and asked for, more than ever she brought with her; and so she went back to her own country, with all her retinue.

The weight of gold that reached Solomon every year was six hundred and sixty-six talents, not counting what was brought by the envoys of different countries, by his own merchantmen, and by the kings of Arabia, with the governors of their provinces; these, too, brought gold and silver to king Solomon. Two hundred shields king Solomon made of the gold;³ six hundred sicles of gold went to one shield; besides three hundred golden bucklers, three hundred sicles of gold being used for the plating of each; and all these the king

¹ At the end of verse 16 the Hebrew text suddenly adds 'and the house was finished', as in III Kg. 9. 25; see note there. ² *vs.* 1-18, cf. III Kg. 9. 10-28. ³ 'Shields'; the Latin here has 'spears', probably through inadvertence; cf. III Kg. 10. 16.

put away in the store-chamber of the building that was called the Forest of Lebanon. He also made a great throne of ivory, and lined it with gold unalloyed; six steps led up to it, and the footstool was all of gold. This throne had an arm at either side, and a lion standing by it; twelve other lions stood on the steps, six on either side; no other kingdom had a throne to match it.

Of gold all the plate was when the king feasted, of pure gold all the ornaments in the house called the Forest of Lebanon; in those days, silver was little thought of.

Every three years the king's fleet and Hiram's would sail to Tharsis, whence they came back laden with gold and silver; with ivory, too, and apes and peacocks for their freight.

So, both in riches and in renown, Solomon outvied all the kings of the world; and kings from every part of the world craved his audience, to make proof for themselves of the wisdom God had put in his heart.

And all these brought him gifts, so that gold and silver ware, presents of clothes and armour, spices, too, and horses and mules came in year by year. Forty thousand horses king Solomon had in his stables, twelve thousand chariots, and horsemen with them; some he kept in his chariot cities, and others at his side in Jerusalem. And he was overlord of all the kings from the river Euphrates to Philistia, and to the frontiers of Egypt. Silver he made as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedars as plentiful as the sycamores that grow in the valleys; horses he had from Egypt and from all the world over.

What else Solomon did, first and last, is to be found in the book that was written by the prophet Nathan, in the prophecy of Ahias the Silonite, and in the vision of the seer Addo that pronounces doom against Jeroboam son of Nabat. For forty years Solomon reigned at Jerusalem over all Israel; then they laid him to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Roboam.

10 This Roboam betook himself to Sichern; at Sichern the whole of Israel had assembled to crown him king.

But meanwhile Jeroboam, son of Nabat,

who had fled to Egypt to be out of king Solomon's reach, had come back on hearing the news of his death; and he, too, was summoned to meet them. He, and all Israel, came to make a request of Roboam; Thy father, they said, made us bear a bitter yoke. Less thou must ask of us than those cruel exactions, those stern commands, if we are ever to be servants of thine. Give me three days, he said, and then come back to hear my answer. So, when the people had left him, he asked advice first of the older men that had been courtiers in the life-time of his father; what answer should he make to the people? Why, they told him, if thou wilt but court their favour, and win them with gracious words, they will never cease giving thee loyal service. But he left their advice unheeded, and began to take counsel instead of the younger men who had grown up with him, and were of his following; How think you? he asked. What answer shall I make to the people's request that I would lighten the yoke my father laid on them? And these, men that had been brought up with him in luxurious ways, gave him advice in their turn. Do they complain that thy father laid a heavy yoke on them, and ask for relief? Then tell them there is more strength in thy little finger than in all the breadth of thy father's back; if his yoke fell heavy on them, thine shall be heavier still, if thy father's weapon was the lash, thine shall be the scorpion.

So the third day came, and Jeroboam, with all the people at his back, kept their tryst with him. And the king, instead of heeding the advice which the older men had given him, spoke to the people harshly, with such words as the younger men would have him use, If my father's yoke fell heavy on you, mine shall be heavier still, if his weapon was the lash, mine shall be the scorpion. Thus the king refused to fall in with the people's request; the Lord's will was to give effect to the promise he had made, through Ahias the Silonite, to Jeroboam son of Nabat. The people, thus churlishly answered, cried out, David is none of ours, not for us the son of Jesse; go back, men of Israel, to your homes! David's rule for David's tribe! And with that, Israel dispersed to their homes, leaving Roboam

¹ *vs.* 1-28, *cf.* III Kg. 10. 1-28.

to reign over such Israelites as lived in the cities of Juda. And now, when Aduram, who had charge of the levy, came to them in the king's name, the Israelites stoned him to death; whereupon Roboam mounted his chariot and betook himself, with all speed, to Jerusalem. From that day to this, the men of Israel have refused allegiance to the dynasty of David.¹

11 Upon reaching Jerusalem, Roboam mustered the whole forces of Juda and Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand tried warriors, to do battle with the Israelites and recover his kingdom. But the Lord sent word to the prophet Semeias, Here is a message for Roboam, son of Solomon, king of Juda, and for all the Israelites of Juda and Benjamin. You are not to march out, the Lord says, and make war upon your own brethren; go home, every man of you; all this is my doing. Learning that this was the Lord's will, all went home, and never marched out against Jeroboam.²

Roboam had his capital at Jerusalem, but there were many other cities in Juda he fortified, Bethlehem, Etam, Thecue, Bethsur, Socho, Odollam, Geth, Maresa, Ziph, Aduram, Lachis, Azecha, Saraa, Ajalon and Hebron. All these cities of Juda and Benjamin were fastnesses of his, each of them walled about, and furnished with a commander, and stores of food, wine and oil, and an armoury full of shields and spears; no pains did he spare in making them secure. Juda and Benjamin were his subjects, and from their homes in every part of Israel the priests and Levites rallied to him. Precincts and lands must be left behind, to Juda and Jerusalem they must betake themselves, now that Jeroboam and his heirs would have none of their divinely appointed ministrations; Jeroboam must have his own priests, to serve the hill-shrines, and the devil-gods, and the calves he had made. Nay, in all the tribes of Israel there were dedicated hearts that had recourse still to the Lord God of Israel; these, when they had victims to offer, would present themselves at

Jerusalem, before the Lord God of their fathers. These added strength to the kingdom of Juda, and lent courage to Roboam, the son of Solomon, but only for three years. Only for three years did they follow loyally in the steps of David and Solomon.

Roboam married, first Mahalath, daughter of David's son Jerimoth, then Abihail, daughter of Jesse's son Eliab, the mother of Jehus, Somoria and Zoöm, then Absalom's daughter Maacha, who bore him Abia, Ethai, Ziza and Salomith. Roboam had eighteen wives and sixty concubines, who bore him twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters; but Maacha, Absalom's daughter, he loved best of all. And it was to Maacha's son Abia that he gave the foremost place among the royal princes, meaning to make him king. This prince was abler than the rest, and had more influence up and down Juda and Benjamin, as well as in the garrison cities. All alike must be well cared for, and wives a many found for the royal house.³

12 Now that Roboam was strong, and firmly seated on his throne, he defied the divine law, and all his people did the like.⁴ Then, in his fifteenth year, their sin against the Lord was punished; Sesac, king of Egypt, marched on Jerusalem with a thousand and two hundred chariots, with sixty thousand horsemen; nay, there was no counting the hordes that followed with him, Libyan and Troglodyte and Ethiopian all at once. All the strongest cities fell before him, and at last he reached Jerusalem itself. Thereupon the prophet Semeias came into Roboam's presence, where he sat with all the chief men of Juda, that had taken refuge in Jerusalem at Sesac's approach. This is the Lord's message for you, he told them; You have abandoned me, and now I am abandoning you to the mercy of Sesac. King and chieftains cried out in dismay, The Lord's sentence is just. And now, seeing them humbled, the Lord sent his word to Semeias, Their pride is humbled; I will spare them from ruin. A little aid they shall have from me, nor shall my vengeance rain down upon

¹ vv. 1-19, cf. III Kg. 12. 1-19.

² vv. 1-4, cf. III Kg. 12. 21-24.

³ The sense of this verse is obscure, and the text doubtful. Some understand it as meaning that king Roboam distributed his sons among the various districts of his kingdom. It is not clear whether it was Roboam or Abia who demanded many wives, and whether this was done, by one or the other of them, for himself or for the royal princes.

⁴ 'His people'; literally, 'Israel', curiously used here in the sense of 'Juda'.

Jerusalem with Sesac for its instrument.

8 But he shall be their master; they shall learn the difference between serving me and serving an earthly king. Thus Sesac, king of Egypt, raised the siege of Jerusalem, but not until he had removed all the treasures of temple and palace. Among the spoils he carried away were the golden shields Solomon had made, and in place of these, Roboam made shields of bronze, which he handed over to the chief shield-bearers that kept guard at the palace entrance. When he made a progress into the Lord's house, they were brought in by the shield-bearers, and carried back afterwards to their armoury. Well for the men of Juda that their pride was humbled; they were spared the Lord's vengeance; were not doomed to perish, like a race in whom no good is to be found.

13 So Roboam took courage, and ruled his people yet. He was forty-one years old when he came to the throne, and for seventeen years he reigned at Jerusalem, the city the Lord chose, out of all Israel's tribes, to be the shrine of his name. His mother was called Naama, an Ammonitess. An ill life his; here was no heart that learned to have recourse to the Lord. All he did, first and last, is to be found set out fully in the writing of the prophet Semeias and the seer Addo. All through his reign there was war between him and Jeroboam. Then he was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place; and the throne passed to his son Abia.

13 Abia, coming to the throne of Juda in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam, reigned three years at Jerusalem; his mother was called Michaiia, daughter of Uriel from Gabaa. Between Jeroboam and Abia, a state of war continued.

3 With four hundred thousand warriors, picked men all, Abia came out to offer battle, and with eight hundred thousand, picked men too, Jeroboam came out to meet him. It was at mount Semeron, in Ephraim, and there Abia took his stand; Here is a message, he cried, for Jeroboam, a message for all the men of Israel. Doubt there is none that the Lord God of Israel has pledged the kingship of it to David and all his heirs for all time, by an oath inviolable. Yet here is Jeroboam, son of

Nabat, that held office under king Solomon, David's heir, rebelling against his own master; here are restless spirits, upstart rogues, have rallied to his side, and had their way against Roboam, that was true heir to Solomon. What could he do to withstand them, so new to his task and so faint-spirited? Think you now to maintain yourselves against that kingdom which David's line rules by divine commission? Your numbers indeed are many; but what gods protect you? Only the golden calves Jeroboam made for you. For these, you have cast out the priests of the Lord, Aaron's race, and the Levites with them; you must needs make priests of your own, like the heathen around you; the first comer, bring he a bull with him or seven rams for his hallowing, may be a priest, fit priest for the gods that are no gods. Our God is the Lord, unforsaken still; the priests that serve him are of Aaron's true breed; we have Levites to be their ministers. Day in, day out, they offer the Lord burnt-sacrifice; incense is ours, made as the law prescribes, and the loaves set out on the hallowed table; the golden lampstand is ours, and the lamps ever lit at evening; the commands of the Lord our God, among you so slighted, we keep. Here, then, is an army that has God for its leader; it is his priests that will sound their trumpets for the attack. Men of Israel, do not fight against the Lord, or it will go ill with you.

While he thus addressed himself to them, Jeroboam was laying an ambush in his rear; still confronting them, he would surround the men of Juda unawares. And they, when they looked about them and found themselves attacked from front and rear at once, cried out to the Lord, while the priests with their trumpets sounded the alarm; a great shout went up from the men of Juda, and as they shouted, the Lord struck terror into Jeroboam's heart, and the hearts of all Israel that were Abia's and Juda's enemies; to Juda the Lord gave the mastery, and they drove Israel before them in flight.

A great victory Abia won that day, and there were five hundred thousand of Israel's warriors that fell; a sore blow for Israel's pride, and a day of great rejoicing for Juda, that put their trust in the Lord

19 God of their fathers. Abia pursued Jeroboam in his flight, and took three cities of his, Bethel and Jesana and Ephron, with their daughter villages, nor, while Abia reigned, might Jeroboam any more withstand him. Afterwards the Lord's vengeance fell on Jeroboam, and he died. So was Abia firmly established on his throne; fourteen wives he wedded, and had twenty-two sons by them, and sixteen daughters. What else Abia did, the life he led and all his exploits, may be found fully set down in the writings of the prophet Addo.

14 So Abia was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Asa; for the first ten years of his reign, the land was at peace. His was a life well lived, in obedience to the Lord's will; altar and hill-shrine of alien worship he overthrew,¹ broke the images, cut down the forest sanctuaries, and bade Juda have recourse to the Lord, the God of their fathers, carrying out all his law enjoined. No city in Juda but he rid it of altar and of shrine, and so he reigned in peace. And now, the Lord so blessing him with peace, his reign free from every alarm of battle, he set about fortifying the cities in his realm. Rebuild we these cities, he said to the men of Juda, and wall them about, making them fast with tower and bolt and bar, while we are still free from wars, and the Lord God of our fathers grants to us, his worshippers, a time of peace with our neighbours. So build they did, without let or hindrance.

8 Three hundred thousand men of Juda this Asa had in his army, that carried shield and spear, besides two hundred and eighty thousand men of Benjamin, armed with shield and bow, trained warriors all. When Zara the Ethiopian marched in, and reached as far as Maresa, he had a million of fighting men and three hundred chariots to match against them. But Asa went to meet him, and offered battle in the valley of Sephata, close by Maresa. And there he made his plea to the Lord God; It is all

one to thee, Lord, be they few or many to whom thou wouldst bring thy aid. Help us now, O Lord our God; in thee, in thy name we put our trust, boldly offering battle to such hordes as these. Lord, thou art our own God; do not let man have the mastery of thee. With that, the Lord struck terror into the Ethiopians as Asa and the men of Juda approached, so that they turned and fled; all the way to Gerara Asa and his men pursued them, till nothing was left of them; it was the Lord that smote them, his army that did battle against them; and rich were the spoils of that victory. All the cities about Gerara, now overcome with terror, they conquered and plundered, carrying away their booty with them; the sheep-folds, too, they broke down, and drove away sheep and camels in abundance. And so they returned to Jerusalem.

15 It was then that the spirit of the Lord moved Azarias, son of Oded, to prophesy. He it was went out to meet Asa, and thus greeted him: Listen to me, Asa, listen to me, tribes of Juda and Benjamin. If the Lord declares for you, it is because you have declared yourselves for him; have recourse to him, and he is yours, forsake him, and you will find yourselves forsaken. Israel he has abandoned; long must they wait without true God, true prophet or true law, till affliction brings them back to the Lord, their own God, and they look for him again, and find him. Meanwhile no peace, only constant marching to and fro; alarm of battle in the kingdoms all around, nation fighting against nation, city against city, because the Lord would have them ever restless, ever in sore straits.² But you, take courage; never slacken your resolve; still for your loyal service you shall have reward.

Upon hearing the inspired words of this prophet, Azarias son of Oded, Asa's courage rose; never an idol was left in Juda or Benjamin, or the cities he had recovered in the hill-country of Ephraim. He also dedicated anew the altar of the Lord before the temple porch, summoning all Juda and

¹ The original text does not make it clear that the hill-shrines, as well as the altars, were those of false gods; but we see from 15. 17 that Asa did not destroy the hill-shrines dedicated to the God of Israel.

² Some think verses 3-6 refer to the past history of God's people in the time of the Judges; some, that they look forward to the future of the ten tribes which revolted against Juda. Verse 3 in the original begins simply: 'Long must Israel wait'.

Benjamin, and with them new-comers from Ephraim, Manasses and Simeon; not a few of these Israelites had transferred their allegiance to him, when they saw what favour he enjoyed with the Lord his God. In the third month of Asa's twenty-fifth year they assembled at Jerusalem, and sacrificed to the Lord that day, out of their spoil and out of the cattle they had driven away, seven hundred bulls and seven thousand rams. Then he set about solemnly ratifying the covenant which bound them to have recourse to the Lord God of their fathers, heart and soul. Death to high or low, death to man or woman, Asa cried, that turns to any god save the Lord God of Israel! Loud were their cries of acclaim, loud rang trumpet and horn, as the oath was taken, binding every man in the territory of Juda under a curse. Loyally they swore, loyally kept their oath, nor did they turn to the Lord in vain; peace undisturbed on every frontier was their reward.

His own mother, Maacha, Asa deprived of her royal dignity, for making a forest shrine that had Priapus' image in it; the image he broke, and burnt the fragments of it, and cast the ashes into the river Cedron. He did not abolish the hill-shrines, but all his days his heart was true to the Lord; and he enriched the Lord's house with gold and silver and great array of other ornaments, some dedicated by his father, some in performance of his own vows.¹ And war there was none till Asa's reign had reached its thirty-fifth year.

16 Then, in the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, Baasa king of Israel invaded Juda, and began making a fortified city of Rama, so as to deny Asa's subjects free passage. Whereupon Asa took out all the silver and gold that was left in the treasure-chambers of temple and palace; this he sent to Benadad, king of Syria, at Damascus, with the message, There is an alliance between us; were not thy father and mine ever at peace? Witness these gifts of silver and gold I send thee; do thou annul the treaty thou hast made with Baasa, king of Israel, and help me drive him out of my country. Thus approached,

Benadad sent out his generals with orders to attack the cities of Israel; Ahion they overcame, and Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the fortified cities of Nephthali. So Baasa, when the news reached him, left his plan of fortifying Rama half-finished; and Asa, with all Juda at his back, carried off the stones and wood-work that should have been used towards it, and with these fortified Gabaa and Maspha instead.

Thereupon the prophet Hanani came into the royal presence, with this message: This was ill done, to call the king of Syria to thy aid. If thou hadst put thy trust in the Lord, the army of Syria itself should have been at thy mercy. Stronger in chariots and horsemen, stronger in their huge array, were the Libyans and Ethiopians over whom the Lord gave thee mastery, in return for thy trust. Wide as earth is the Lord's scrutiny, and there he gives mastery where he finds hearts that have utter faith in him. Thou hast played a fool's part; henceforward, there shall be no lack of wars to threaten thee. At this, Asa fell into a rage, and had the prophet committed to prison, to vent his high displeasure; it was at this time, too, that he put many of his subjects to death.

All that Asa did, first and last, is set down in the Annals of the kings of Israel and Juda. In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, a malignant disease attacked his feet; nor, in that sickness, did he have recourse to the Lord, trusting rather in the skill of physicians. So, dying in the fortieth year of his reign, he was laid to rest with his fathers,² and they buried him in the tomb that had been dug for him by his own orders, in the Keep of David. There he lay, on his own bed, that was piled high with spices and rare ointments, mingled with all the perfumer's art; and these, in high funeral pomp, they burned over his grave.

17 The throne passed to his son Josaphat, who made his territories secure against threat from Israel; all the fortified cities of Juda he garrisoned, and kept troops on guard throughout Juda, and in the cities his father Asa had taken from

¹ *vv.* 16-18, cf. III Kg. 15. 13-16. The statement there made, that Asa and Baasa were at war all through their reigns, perhaps means only that their relations were unfriendly, not (in view of the present passage) that there was any border fighting.

² *vv.* 1-13, cf. III Kg. 15. 17-24.

3 Ephraim. Josaphat reigned, and the Lord was with him, because the first years of his father (David)¹ were the example he followed; he put his trust, not in gods of the country-side, but in his own father's God; kept close to the divine commandments, far from the sins of Israel. So the Lord gave him a firm hold on the reins of government; from all parts of Juda gifts came to Josaphat, till riches and renown were his in abundance. Boldly he upheld the Lord's commandments, sweeping away hill-shrine and forest sanctuary from Juda.²

7 In the third year of his reign, he would have some of his chief officers go out and give instruction in the townships of Juda, Benhail, Obdias, Zacharias, Nathanael, and Michaeas, and with them certain Levites, Semeias, Nathania, Zabadias, Asael, Semiramoth, Jonathan, Adonias, Tobias and Tob-Adonias, and two priests, Elisama and Joram. They took a copy of the Lord's law with them, the better to instruct the men of Juda, and went round all its cities, teaching the common folk.

10 Never a king in all the countries about Juda durst levy war against Josaphat, such terror the Lord had struck into their hearts; the very Philistines brought him gifts, and paid a tribute of silver, and the Arabs must bring in their herds, seven thousand seven hundred rams and as many goats. Josaphat, then, grew to great magnificence, filling Juda with fortresses and walled towns; and all through the cities of Juda he had store in abundance. At Jerusalem, he was surrounded by brave warriors, clans thus enrolled: from Juda, three hundred thousand fighting men under the command of Ednas, one of his chieftains; two hundred and eighty thousand under Johanan, and two hundred thousand under Amasias son of Zechri, that was set apart for the Lord's service. And (from Benjamin)³ two hundred thousand with bow and spear under brave Eliada, and a hundred and eighty thousand, well equipped for battle, under Jozabad. All these were close to the king's side, not counting those he had marshalled in the walled cities from end to end of Juda.

18 Rich and renowned, Josaphat had allied his house by marriage with the house of Achab; and now, when some years had passed, he went to visit him at Samaria. Many a ram, many a bullock did Achab slaughter to make him and his retinue welcome; then he had a plan to put before him, that they should march against Ramoth-Galaad. And what answer made Josaphat, king of Juda, when Achab, king of Israel, proposed that they should attack Ramoth-Galaad together? Thou and I, said he, are all at one; my army is all thine, we will stand at thy side in battle. But he would have Achab consult the Lord first. So Achab sent for his prophets, four hundred in number, and asked whether they should attack Ramoth-Galaad or let it be? Go to the attack, they said; the Lord means to make the king's grace master of it. But still Josaphat asked whether there was no prophet of the Lord to be found, so that they could make enquiry through him. Why yes, the king of Israel told him, there is one man through whom we might ask for the Lord's counsel; yet is he no friend of mine, still he will be prophesying that ill fortune is to befall me, never good; Michaeas is his name, the son of Jemla. Nay, my lord king, said Josaphat, think better of it. So Achab summoned one of his chamberlains, and bade him fetch Michaeas the son of Jemla with all speed.

There sat the king of Israel and Josaphat king of Juda, each on his throne, in all their royal state, in an open space by the gate of Samaria; and there in their presence all the prophets said their say. One of them, Sedecias the son of Chanaana, had provided himself with a pair of horns fashioned in iron; With these, he said, thou shalt toss Syria about, till thou hast made an end of it. And all the prophets had the same word for him; Go and attack Ramoth-Galaad, they told him, and a blessing on thy journey! The Lord means to make the king's grace master of it. So the messenger who went to summon Michaeas told him, Here are all the prophets bidding the king good speed, like one man; pray join thy voice to theirs, and prophesy

¹ The word 'David' is not given by some manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek; it may be a misleading footnote which has crept into the text, the real reference being, not to David, but to Asa. ² The hill-shrines referred to must have been those of false gods, not of the Jewish religion; cf. III Kg 22. 44.

³ The words 'from Benjamin' are omitted, probably by accident, in the Latin.

- 13 good fortune. Nay, answered he, as the Lord is a living God, the word I speak shall be the word he gives me.
- 14 So he came into the king's presence, and when he was asked whether it were better to attack Ramoth-Galaad, or to let it be, he answered, Go to the attack; all shall be well with you, and your enemies shall be
- 15 at your mercy. What, cried Achab, shall I never cease adjuring thee in the Lord's name to tell me only the truth? Listen
- 16 then, said he; I had a vision of all Israel straying over the mountains like sheep that had no shepherd, and the Lord's word
- 17 came, They have no master now; let them disperse to their homes in peace. (It is as I told thee, Achab said to Josaphat; still he
- 18 prophesies ill fortune, never good.) Then Michaeas went on, Here is a message to thee from the Lord. I had a vision of the
- 19 Lord sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven waiting on his pleasure, to right and left. And the Lord said, Who is to
- 20 beguile Achab, king of Israel, so that he will march to Ramoth-Galaad, and there meet his fall? One said this, one that; till
- 21 at last a spirit came forward and stood in the Lord's presence, offering to beguile Achab. And how wilt thou beguile him?
- 22 The Lord asked. I will go abroad, said he, and on the lips of all his prophets I will make myself an influence to deceive. Deceive them thou shalt, the Lord said, and have thy way with them; go abroad, then,
- 23 and carry out thy errand. And now, see what a lying influence the Lord has spread among these prophets of thine! For indeed the Lord has determined on thy ruin.
- 24 At that, Sedecias son of Chanaana went up and gave Michaeas a blow on the cheek; Has the spirit of the Lord passed me by, he asked, and spoken to none but thee?
- 25 And Michaeas only answered, Thou shalt live to see the day when thou must needs take refuge in an inner room, to hide there.
- 26 Then the king of Israel gave his orders; Take Michaeas hence, said he, and put him in the charge of Amon, the city governor, and of Joas, son of Amelech. And give them this royal command of mine, that they are to imprison him, and give him scant allowance of food and drink, till
- 27 I come back safe and sound. Come thou back safe and sound, Michaeas said, and

mine was no message from the Lord. Witness my words, all you that stand here!

So the king of Israel, and Josaphat king of Juda, marched out to attack Ramoth-Galaad. And Achab said he himself would go into battle in disguise; let Josaphat, meanwhile, wear his royal robes. So none knew the king of Israel by his array, when he went into battle. To all the captains of his cavalry the king of Syria had given the same orders: Press for no other mark, high or low, but the king of Israel himself. And these, upon sight of Josaphat, cried out that this was the king of Israel, so that armed men surrounded him on all sides, but he cried out to the Lord, who brought him succour, and turned aside their attack. Then, seeing that this was not the king of Israel, the captains of the cavalry let him be. It was an archer, letting fly a shaft at haphazard, that gave Achab a chance wound; it fell between neck and shoulder-blades, and Achab bade his charioteer wheel about, and carry him away from the fight, wounded as he was. With night, the battle came to an end; all day, the king of Israel had stood upright in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and did not die till evening.¹

19 But Josaphat came home safe and sound to Jerusalem. There he was met by the prophet Jehu, son of Hanani, who said, What, wilt thou comfort the sinner, ally thyself with the Lord's enemies? Nay, thou wouldst have brought the Lord's vengeance on thyself, but for those worthy deeds thou hast to shew. Well for thee that thou hast rid Juda of those shrines, taken that resolve to have recourse only to the God of thy fathers!

And now, returned to his capital, Josaphat set out on a progress all through his kingdom, from Bersabee to the hill country of Ephraim, recalling the Lord God of their fathers to his people's minds anew. In every fortified city he appointed judges: and this was the charge he gave them: Take heed how you perform your office: it is the Lord's commission you hold, not man's, and according to the award you make, yourselves will be judged. As you fear the Lord's vengeance, do not spare yourselves any pains; when the Lord our

¹ *vv.* 2-34, *cf.* III Kg. 22. 4-35.

God gives sentence, there is no wrongful award, no room for flattery of the great, or for bribery. At Jerusalem, too, he set up courts, under Levites, and priests, and heads of families, to give sentence and award in the Lord's name to the citizens. As you fear the Lord's vengeance, he warned them, go about your work faithfully, with sincere hearts. Suits will be remitted to you by your brethren in the other cities, of feud between clan and clan, of issues between law and decree, between statute and award given; yours to resolve their doubts, lest they should incur guilt in the Lord's eyes, and bring punishment on you and themselves alike. So shall your duty be done faultlessly; where God's rights are concerned, your high priest Amarias will preside over you, and Zabadias son of Ismahel, Juda's own chieftain, will have charge of every case that touches the king's prerogative. The Levites are at your side to instruct you; boldly and carefully set about your task, and the Lord will be with you to defend the right.

20 After this the Moabites and the Ammonites, with certain tribesmen that lived in the Ammonite country, mustered their forces to levy war on Josaphat; and messengers came to tell him that a great army was marching against him, from the country beyond the Dead Sea and from Syria; they were encamped even now at Asasonthamar (which is the same as Engaddi). Most fervently, in his great dismay, Josaphat betook himself to prayer, proclaiming a fast for the whole of Juda; whereupon all Juda gathered to offer the Lord their plea; from every city they assembled to prefer their common request.

There, then, Josaphat stood in the Lord's house, at the entrance to the New Court, with all Jerusalem and Juda assembled round him. Lord God of our fathers, he prayed, from thy throne in heaven thou rulest all earthly kingdoms, holding a sceptre of such majesty that none may resist thee. Thou it was didst overthrow all the dwellers in this land to make room for thy people Israel; thy irrevocable gift it was to the sons of Abraham, thy friend. Here, then, they dwelt, and built a temple in thy honour. And if we come

into thy presence, they said, here in the shrine of thy own name, crying out to thee in time of need, when disaster falls upon us, pestilence, or famine, or the avenging sword, then do thou hear, and save. See now what need is here! We are attacked by Ammon, Moab and Edom, the very nations whose frontiers thou didst forbid Israel to cross, after the march out of Egypt. Our fathers turned aside, leaving them unharmed, and this is our reward; we are to be driven out from the home thou hast given us. It is for thee, our God, to grant redress; we have no strength of our own to meet such an onslaught as this; despairing hearts, that know not where else to turn, we look to thee!

All Juda stood about him, there in the Lord's presence, even mothers with babes in their arms, children at their side. And now, upon one man in all that throng, the Lord's spirit fell; it was a Levite of Asaph's clan, Jahaziel, come down from Mathanias through Zacharias, Banaias and Jehiel. Listen, Juda, he cried, listen, citizens of Jerusalem, listen, king Josaphat, to a message from the Lord. Put an end to your fears, do not be dismayed at the sight of this great army; it is God's battle, not yours. Go down to-morrow and offer them battle, as they climb up the slope of Sis; it is there you will find them, at the head of the ravine which faces the Jeruel desert. Not yours the battle, you have but to stand firm, Juda and Jerusalem, and watch the Lord coming to your aid. No flinching, no faint hearts; go down to-morrow, and the Lord will be at your side.

At this, Josaphat and Juda and all the citizens of Jerusalem fell down face to earth, there in the Lord's presence; and the Levites, sons of Caath and Core, cried aloud till the heavens rang, in praise of the Lord God of Israel. Dawn came, and they began their march across the desert of Thecue; Josaphat, as they set out, came forward to speak. Listen to me, he said, men of Juda; listen, citizens of Jerusalem. Trust in the Lord your God, and you have nothing to fear; trust his prophets, and all shall go well with you. Thus he encouraged them, and would have the Lord's minstrels praise him in chorus, marching before the army and singing, Praise the Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endures for ever.

- 22 As the chant rose, the Lord turned the stealthy approach of Juda's enemies, Ammon and Moab and Edom, to their own discomfiture. First Ammon and Moab fell on the Edomites, cutting them down till there was nothing left of them; and when this was done, the two armies turned against one another, till their feud brought
- 24 destruction on both. And when the men of Juda reached the vantage-ground that overlooks the desert, nothing was to be seen, look where they would, but the corpses of the slain; not a man was left
- 25 there alive. So Josaphat and his men went down to strip them of their spoil, and found there, among the dead, such plunder of harness and clothes and precious ornaments as they could not carry with them; it was three days before all the booty was
- 26 taken away. Then, on the fourth day, they mustered in the Valley of Blessing, which still bears the name they gave it when they
- 27 returned thanks to the Lord there; and so went back to Jerusalem, men of Jerusalem and men of Juda alike, with Josaphat at their head, full of joy at the triumph the Lord had given them over their enemies;
- 28 into Jerusalem they came, and into the Lord's house, with harp and zither and trumpets playing. So the Lord struck terror into the hearts of the heathen, with the news that he himself had fought against
- 30 Israel's enemies; Josaphat reigned in security, and on every frontier God gave him peace.
- 31 This reign of his over Juda began when he was thirty-five years old, and for twenty-five years it lasted, there in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azuba,
- 32 daughter of Selahi. He followed the example of his father Asa, and never swerved aside from the Lord's will; though indeed he did not abolish the hill-shrines; not yet had his people turned their whole minds to worshipping the Lord, the God of their
- 34 fathers. What else Josaphat did, first and last, is told in the record preserved by Jehu son of Hanani, among the Annals of the kings of Israel.
- 35 At the end of his life, Josaphat made an alliance between Juda and Israel, under king Ochozias, that reigned very evilly.
- 36 Together they would build a fleet that should sail for Tharsis; and build it they

¹ *vv.* 35-37, cf. III Kg. 22. 48-50.

Josaphat's Victory; Reign of Joram

did, in Asiongaber; but Eliezer, son of Dodau from Maresa, prophesied to king Josaphat, The Lord has shattered those hopes of thine, because of thy alliance with Ochozias; and the ships were wrecked before ever they reached Tharsis.¹

21 Josaphat, then, was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Joram. Many brothers Joram had, princes of the blood; Azarias, Jahiel, Zacharias (Azarias), Michael and Saphatias were all sons of Josaphat, king of Juda, and to all these their father gave rich presents of silver and gold, money for their needs, and walled cities in Juda to be their homes, but to Joram, the eldest, he left his kingdom. So Joram came to his father's throne, and when he was firmly established on it, he slew all these brethren of his, and some of the chief men of Juda with them.

This Joram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted eight years. He followed the example of the Israelite kings, just as Achab's line did; he himself had married a daughter of Achab's. So he defied the Lord's will; but the Lord would not bring ruin upon David's race; had he not made a covenant with him, promising to keep the lamp of his line unquenched for ever? It was in Joram's days that the Edomites renounced their allegiance to Juda, and set up a king of their own choice. Joram indeed marched out across the river, with his captains and all the horsemen he could muster, and when the Edomites surrounded him, he broke through them with a night attack, broke through the commanders of their chariots; but Edom has never been subject to Juda from that day to this. Lobna, at the same time, revolted from his allegiance.² An ill day it was for him when he forsook the Lord, the God of his fathers, raised hill-shrines in the cities of his realm, taught Jerusalem to betray her troth, and made sinners of Juda.

A letter, too, was brought to him, written by the prophet Elias, with a message from the Lord, the God of his father David: Not for thee the example of thy

² *vv.* 5-10, cf. IV Kg. 8. 16-22.

father Josaphat, and of king Asa, that reigned in Juda before thee; thou wouldst teach the wanton, like the house of Achab, teach the men of Juda and Jerusalem to betray their troth, after Israel's fashion, and wouldst slay thy brethren, princes of thy own father's line, better men than thyself. A heavy punishment the Lord will send upon thee, taking toll of thy people, of thy sons, of thy wives, and of all thou hast; and for thyself, a foul disease shall attack thy inward parts, that grows worse from day to day until thy very bowels drop out.

After this, the Lord embroiled the Philistines against Joram, and the Arab tribesmen, too, that dwell next the Ethiopians. These marched upon Juda and ravaged it, carrying off all the palace treasures, and his sons and wives with them; never a son was left to Joram but Joachaz, the youngest of all.¹ And, not content with this, the Lord smote him with an incurable disease of his inward parts. Wearily the days passed, lengthened themselves out till two whole years had run their course; till at last he voided his very bowels, and his sickness ended only with death. Right foul was the manner of his ending, and his subjects made no burning at his funeral, as they did for his ancestors. He had reigned but eight years, that was thirty-two years old when he came to the throne; a life ill lived. And they laid him to rest in David's Keep, but not in the burying-place of the kings.

22 It was his youngest son, Ochozias, that the citizens of Jerusalem made king in his place. All his elder brothers had been killed by Arab freebooters, that fell on the camp where they were lodged; and so Ochozias became Joram's heir, and reigned in Juda. When he came to the throne, he had lived (twice) a score of years and two,² and his reign at Jerusalem lasted but a year. His mother's name was Athalia, descended from Amri. He too followed the example of Achab's

line, his mother prompting him to impious deeds. Little wonder if he defied the Lord's will no less than Achab's race, since these were his counsellors, to his undoing, after his father died.

He shared, too, their designs, and marched with the king of Israel, Joram that was son to Achab, against Hazael, king of Syria. They met at Ramoth-Galaad, and there Joram was wounded by the Syrians, so that he must go back to Jezrahel to recover; wounds a many he had received in the battle we speak of. And when Joram, son of Achab, lay sick at Jezrahel, Ochozias son of Joram king of Juda came there to visit him.³ It was the divine will, for Ochozias' punishment, that he should pay Joram this visit, and with him should offer battle to Jehu, son of Namsi, whom the Lord had anointed king to make an end of Achab's line. Jehu it was that fell in with the princes of Juda, sons of Ochozias' kinsmen and courtiers of his, and slew them, at the time when he was exterminating the line of Achab; Jehu it was that made enquiry after Ochozias himself, who was found hiding in the kingdom of Samaria, and so brought before him and slain. Yet he was given burial; was he not descended from king Josaphat, a king who had set his whole heart on following the Lord?⁴

Little hope there seemed then of Juda being governed any longer by Ochozias' kindred. The more so because his mother, Athalia, no sooner heard the news of her son's death, than she set about exterminating all the blood royal of Joram's dynasty. Only Joas, Ochozias' son, was rescued by the princess Josabeth, who stole him away while all the other princes were being slain, and hid him, with his nurse, in the room where the bedding was stored up. This Josabeth, who hid him, was a daughter of king Joram's, sister to Ochozias and wife to the high priest Joiada. Joas, then, escaped murder at Athalia's hands, and for the six years of her life that remained he was hidden away in the house of God.

¹ It appears that the 'brethren' of Ochozias (or Joachaz) mentioned in IV Kg. 10. 12 were only distant kinsmen, so called by the conventions of Hebrew speech.

² The reading 'forty-two' in the Hebrew text is clearly a scribe's mistake for 'twenty-two', which is preserved in the Septuagint Greek. This is evident both from IV Kg. 8. 26, and from the fact that Joram was only forty when he died.

³ *cf.* IV Kg. 8. 27-29. ⁴ This passage seems to correct the impression we should otherwise derive from IV Kg. 9. 27, that Ochozias died of the wound he received during his escape at Jezrahel. Jehu, it appears, killed him at Mageddo; 'in Samaria' is simply a way of describing the northern kingdom, as in III Kg. 13. 32.

23 Then, in the seventh year, Joiada was emboldened to act. He took some of the captains into his confidence, Azarias son of Jeroham, Ismahel son of Johanan, Azarias son of Obed, Maasias son of Adaia and Elisaphat son of Zechri; and these went round the whole of Juda, mustering the Levites and the clan chiefs in each city and summoning them to Jerusalem. There, in the Lord's own house, they all engaged their loyalty to the king; Here, said Joiada, is the heir to the throne; we must make him king, in pursuance of the Lord's will for the posterity of David. And now, here is your task. Those of you, priests, Levites and door-keepers, whose turn it is to mount guard this week, will be keeping watch, a third of them over the gates, a third over the royal palace, and a third at the Foundation-stone Gate. All the rest are to be in the temple courts, none entering the Lord's house itself, except those who have kept themselves free of defilement for that end, priests and Levites who are their ministers, but all alike attentive to the Lord's command. The king must have a bodyguard of Levites, all fully armed, ready to slay anyone else who tries to enter the temple, attending the king closely wherever he goes.

8 All the commands which the high priest Joiada gave them, the Levites, and the rest of Juda with them, faithfully carried out; mustered their men, alike those who mounted guard and those who were relieved of duty that week, since the high priest would not let the companies who had finished go home. Joiada supplied the captains with spears, shields and bucklers, that king David had put up as offerings in the Lord's house; and from right to left of the temple, facing the altar and the temple itself, he drew up the whole array of his supporters, that were armed with daggers, to protect the king. Then they brought the young prince out, and gave him the crown and the pledge that went with it, a copy of the law to be held in his hand, and so they made him king. The high priest Joiada, with his sons, anointed him and prayed over him, and cried out, Long live the king! Meanwhile, the noise of all this stir and shouting reached the ears of Athalia, and she made her way into the temple,

where the crowd was gathered, to find the king standing on a dais, there at the entry, with chieftains and bodyguard about him, while all the folk rejoiced, blowing trumpets and playing on instruments of many kinds, and shouting their praises. Well might she rend her clothes, and cry out, Treason, treason! Thereupon Joiada came out, and bade the captains and the commanders of the army lead her away beyond the temple precincts, and there dispatch her; She must not be slain in the Lord's house, the priest told them. So they caught her by the neck, and as she passed along the horse-way that leads to the palace, she was slain.

After this, Joiada would have a covenant made, that bound himself and the people and the new king to be the Lord's own people. And the whole populace went into Baal's temple and destroyed it, breaking down its altars and its images, and killing Mathan, that was Baal's priest, there before the altar. Then Joiada set up officers to look after the Lord's temple; but under the direction of those priests and Levites to whom David had assigned their tasks there, in offering burnt-sacrifice to the Lord as Moses bade them, and singing praise after David's own fashion. Porters, too, he placed at all the temple gates, that should forbid entry to all who were in any way defiled. Then, with the captains and the men of renown, with the nobles and all the common folk of the land, he escorted the king from the Lord's house by way of the upper gate into the palace, and there they set him on his royal throne. All through the land were great rejoicings, and the city had rest, now that Athalia lay dead.¹

24 Thus Joas came to the throne as a boy of seven years old, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted forty years. His mother's name was Sebia, a woman of Bersabee. As long as the high priest Joiada was alive, Joas obeyed the Lord's will, and it was Joiada who found him his two wives, that bore sons and daughters to him.

And now Joas had a mind to put the Lord's house in repair. He summoned priests and Levites, and bade them go

¹ *ev.* 1-21, cf. IV Kg. 11.

round the cities of Juda, collecting money from all that were of Israel's race every year, so as to repair the temple of the Lord their God; and this he would have them do with all speed. But the Levites went about their work slowly, and the king must needs send for the high priest Joiada; Why hast thou been at no pains, he asked, to make the Levites collect money throughout Juda and Jerusalem, the same money which the Lord's servant Moses bade all Israel devote to the needs of the tabernacle? Here is God's house all laid waste by Athalia, the godless queen, and those sons of hers, that would deck Baal's temple with all the votive offerings that were once in the temple of the Lord. Then the king bade them have a chest made, and this they put by the outer gate of the Lord's house. And word went round Juda and Jerusalem that each man was to pay the tax Moses enjoined on all Israel, out in the desert. Gladly did chieftains and common folk together come in with their gifts for the Lord's treasury, piling the chest high till it was full. When the Levites saw that a great sum was amassed, it was time they should take it into the royal presence. The king's secretary would come in, and with him one that was appointed by the high priest; together they poured out the money that was in the chest, which they then put back in its place. Every day this was done, and the great sum thus collected was paid over by the king and Joiada to the master-builders, who hired stone-cutters with it, and other craftsmen, to repair the Lord's house; workers, too, in iron and bronze, so as to prop up what was like to fall down. Busily these men went about their tasks, till the breach was healed under their hands, and the building restored to its former state; the house stood firm once more. It was only when they had finished all this that the rest of the money collected was brought before the king and Joiada; with this they made all the appurtenances for worship and offering sacrifice in the temple; bowls, too, and other ornaments of gold and silver.²

All through Joiada's life-time burnt-sacrifice was offered in the Lord's house;

but at last he grew old, and the full tale of his years was complete; he died at the age of a hundred and thirty. And for his great services to Israel and to David's house, they buried him in David's own Keep, among the kings. But now that he was dead, the chieftains of Juda came in to do the king reverence, and with their smooth speech won him over to another mind; forgotten, now, was the Lord's temple, God of their fathers though he were; they must worship before forest shrines, and carved images. This guilt of theirs brought the Lord's vengeance on Juda and Jerusalem; still he would send them prophets, to bring them back to him, but their protest went unheeded. At last the divine spirit fell on the high priest Zacharias, that was son to Joiada; full in the presence of the people he stood up and gave them a message from the Lord God: What means it that you so transgress the Lord's command, to your peril, forsaking him, and by him forsaken? But they, at the king's orders, gathered about him and stoned him, there in the court of the Lord's house. Such was the gratitude of Joas; for the great services the father had done him, the son must die. And as he died, he said, May the Lord look on this, and exact the penalty.

A year passed, and the army of Syria was on the march against Joas. Into Juda, into Jerusalem they came, killed all that were of note among the people, plundered, and sent back what they had plundered to their master at Damascus. It was but a small force of Syrians that came, yet the Lord gave them the mastery over a great host; and all because Juda had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. A shameful punishment Joas must undergo, and when they left him, they left him a prey to heavy sickness. Then, in vengeance for the murder of the high priest's son, courtiers of his own conspired against him and slew him in his bed. So dying, he received burial in the Keep of David, but not in the burying-place of the kings. It was Zabad, son of the Ammonitess Semmaath, and Josabad, son of the Moabitess Semarath, that made the plot against him. What sons he had, what moneys he amassed, how he restored the

¹ Ex. 30. 12.

² *vv.* 4-14, *cf.* IV Kg. 12. 4-16. *v.* 14, *cf.* IV Kg. 12. 13, where the meaning must be that the money collected was not used for furnishing the temple until the needs of the actual fabric had been met.

house of God, may all be found set out in the Records of the Kings; and the throne passed to his son Amasias.

25 Amasias was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted twenty-nine years; his mother's name was Joadan, a woman of Jerusalem. This Amasias obeyed the Lord's will, but not with full obedience. Once his power was firmly established, he put his father's murderers to death, but not their children; the Lord's injunction, laid down by the terms of Moses' law, was that a father must not die for his son's guilt, or a son for his father's; no guilt but his own should bring a man to death.¹

Then he mustered the whole of Juda, marshalling them by their clans, and appointing commanders and captains for the whole of Juda and Benjamin. When the count was taken of all that were above the age of twenty, he found himself in command of three hundred thousand fighting men, armed with spear and shield. To these he added a force of a hundred thousand warriors from Israel, hired for a hundred talents of silver. But now a messenger from God came and told him, My lord king, this force of Israelites must not march with thee; to Israel, to the whole kingdom of Ephraim, the Lord denies his aid. Count as thou wilt on the strength of thy array, God will give thy enemies the mastery; he alone sends victory and defeat.

And when Amasias asked what was to become of the hundred talents he had spent on the mercenaries from Israel, the answer came, Worse losses yet the Lord can make good to thee. Thereupon Amasias drew off the Israelite troops and bade them go home; go home they did, but full of indignation against Juda. And he, with renewed confidence, led his own army out to the Valley of the Salt-pits, where they killed a thousand Edomites on the field; ten thousand more they captured alive, and took them to a steep rock, from whose summit they threw them down headlong, so that all were dashed to pieces. But meanwhile the army which Amasias had sent home, instead of taking them into battle with him, scattered here and there among

the cities of Juda, all the way (from Samaria)² to Bethoron, killing three thousand of the inhabitants, and carrying away great store of plunder.

After this victory over the Edomites, Amasias brought home with him some of the idols men worshipped there in Seir; and these gods he made his own, worshipping them himself and burning incense before them. And the Lord, much angered with him, sent a prophet to ask, What gods are these thou worshippesst, that could not rescue their own people from thy onslaught? He answered, What, wouldst thou be the king's counsellor? Peace, or thy life shall pay for it! And the prophet said, as he turned to go, So much ill done, and no heed paid to my counsel! Certain it is the Lord has doomed thee to die. And now Amasias, upon ill advice taken, sent a challenge to Joas, son of Joachaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, Come, let us have a trial of strength! And this message he had in answer: Said Lebanon thistle to Lebanon cedar, Let my son have thy daughter to wife. But down came wild beasts from Lebanon forest, and all the thistle got was, he was trampled underfoot. At the thought of thy victory over Edom, thy heart is puffed up with pride. Keep thyself at home, do not invite disaster, to thy own and Juda's ruin. But Amasias would have his way; the Lord's will was that he should fall into his enemy's hands, to punish him for worshipping the gods of Edom. So Joas, king of Israel, marched out, and they faced one another while Amasias, king of Juda, was still in his own territory, at Bethsames; here the men of Juda were routed by the Israelites, and scattered to their homes in flight. Thus Amasias, son of Joas, son of Joachaz, king of Juda, was captured by Joas king of Israel at Bethsames, and taken back to his own city of Jerusalem; where Joas made a breach in the wall four hundred cubits long, from the gate of Ephraim to the Corner gate, carried off all the gold and silver and other ware that was to be found in the temple, in the treasury of Obed-edom, and in the royal treasury, took hostages besides, and so made his way back to Samaria.

¹ Deut. 24. 16.

² The mention of Samaria is not in place here. We should expect the name of some town in the south of Juda, and on the way to Edom: perhaps Sama (Jos. 15. 26) or Samir (Jos. 15. 48).

25 Amasias, son of Joas, king of Juda, sur-
 26 vived this Joas, son of Joachaz, king of
 27 Israel, fifteen years. What else Amasias
 did, first and last, is set down in the Record
 of the kings of Israel and Juda. But ever
 since he forsook the Lord, fresh troubles
 befell him. A conspiracy was made against
 him in Jerusalem, and when he fled to
 28 Lachis they sent in pursuit of him and put
 him to death there; afterwards his body
 was brought back to Jerusalem in a horse-
 litter, and there buried with his fathers in
 David's Keep.¹

26 Thereupon the whole people of
 Juda chose one of his sons, Ozias,
 a boy of sixteen years, to succeed his father

2 Amasias; he it was who carried out the
 designs of his dead father by fortifying the
 harbour of Ailath and restoring it to the
 3 possession of Juda. Sixteen years old he
 was when he came to the throne, and his
 reign at Jerusalem lasted fifty-two. His
 mother's name was Jechelia, a woman of
 4 Jerusalem. He obeyed the Lord's will,
 as faithfully as once his father Amasias
 5 did. As long as Zacharias lived, a man
 taught by divine visions, Ozias had re-
 course to the Lord, and as long as he had
 recourse to the Lord, all went well with
 him.

6 He it was that marched out to battle with
 the Philistines, and laid in ruins the walls
 of Geth, and Jabnia, and Azotus; and built
 towns to command Azotus and the Philis-
 7 tines.² Such victory God gave him over
 the Philistines, the Arabs, too, that dwelt
 8 in Gurbaal, and the Ammonites; the Am-
 monites paid him tribute, and the renown
 of his many victories reached the very
 9 frontiers of Egypt. It was Ozias, too, that
 fortified the Corner Gate, the Valley gate,
 and the other gates on that side of Jeru-
 salem, by building towers over them.
 10 Towers, too, he built out in the desert, and
 dug cisterns in plenty, for his many herds
 that grazed both in the lowlands and in the
 desert solitudes; he had vines, too, and
 vine-dressers to tend them, in the hill-
 country and about the town of Carmel; he
 was a man that loved husbandry.

11 He had an army of fighting men, mar-
 shalled in readiness for battle by the scribe

Jehiel and the controller Maasias; and out
 of all his generals he chose Hananias to
 command it. The clan chiefs that led it, all
 12 tried warriors, were two thousand six hun-
 dred in number; and the whole force under
 13 their command was one of three hundred
 and seven thousand five hundred fighting
 men, to maintain the king against his
 enemies. For all this great array Ozias
 14 provided shield and spear, helmet and
 breastplate, bows, too, and slings for
 shooting stones. At Jerusalem, he con-
 15 trived engines of many sorts, poised on
 tower or on wall-corner, that discharged
 arrows and great boulders. Far spread his
 fame, such help the Lord gave him, and
 such greatness.

But this greatness of his made his heart
 16 proud, to his own undoing. He slighted
 the Lord his God; into the temple he
 would go, and there burn incense at the
 censuring-altar. Close at his heels the high
 17 priest Azarias entered, and eighty priests
 with him, strong men all, to withstand
 18 the royal will. Not for thee, Ozias, they cried,
 to burn incense in the Lord's honour; that
 is for the priests, the sons of Aaron, that
 are set apart for this office. Leave this holy
 place, and profane it no more; thou wilt
 win no favour from the Lord God by such
 doings as these. At this, Ozias turned
 19 round in anger, the censer already in his
 hand with the incense ready for lighting,
 and began to threaten them. And with
 that, in the priests' presence, there in the
 Lord's house, by the censuring-altar, the
 mark of leprosy started out on his brow.
 No time they lost, Azarias and his fellow
 20 priests, that sign once seen, in thrusting
 out the leper; he himself, feeling the stroke
 of the Lord's present judgement, was in
 haste to be gone.

King Ozias remained a leper till the day
 21 of his death, dwelling apart in a house of
 his own, while his son Joatham had charge
 of the palace, and heard the complaints of
 his subjects. What else Ozias did, first and
 22 last, stands recorded by the prophet Isaias,
 son of Amos. At last he was laid to rest
 23 with his fathers, not among the royal
 tombs, because he was a leper, but in the
 same burying-ground. And the throne
 passed to his son Joatham.

¹ 1-28, cf. IV Kg. 14. 1-20.

² 'To command Azotus': this seems the best rendering of the Hebrew text. The Latin version has 'in Azotus', which does not give a good sense.

27 This Joatham was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted sixteen years; his mother's name was Jerusa, daughter of Sadoc. He obeyed the Lord's will, imitating the piety of Ozias, but not his sacrilege;¹ among the people, there were corrupt ways of worship still. He it was built the high gate that leads into the Lord's house, and added much to the Ophel wall; there are walled cities, too, in the hill-country of Juda, fortresses and towers in woodland places, that are of his building. He gave battle to the Ammonites and defeated them; a hundred talents of silver the Ammonites must pay him, with ten thousand measures of wheat, and as many of barley, that year and in the two years that followed. Such greatness Joatham achieved by his obedience to the Lord's will. What else he did, the battles he fought and the life he lived, may be found set down in the Record of the kings of Israel and Juda. So, when he had lived forty-one years, and reigned sixteen years at Jerusalem, Joatham was laid to rest with his fathers, with the Keep of David for his burying-place, and the throne passed to his son Achaz.

28 This Achaz was twenty years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted sixteen years. He did not obey the Lord's will like his father David before him; he followed the example of the Israelite kings, casting images of the countryside gods. He it was that burnt incense in the ravine of Benen-nom,² and consecrated his sons by passage through the fire, after the wont of those nations which the Lord overthrew to make room for Israel. Never a high hill or a mountain slope or a leafy wood but Achaz must do sacrifice and offer incense there. So the Lord his God left him at the mercy of the king of Syria, who defeated him, and robbed his kingdom of rich spoils, which he carried off to Damascus. The king of Israel, too, had the mastery of him, and inflicted grievous loss; a hundred and twenty thousand men of Juda, all tried warriors, did Phacee son of Romelia slay in one day's space, and all because they had

forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. At the same time Maasias, a royal prince, and Ezrica, the controller of the household, and Elcana, that was the king's chief minister, were put to death by Zechri, one of the great warriors of Ephraim.

Two hundred thousand captives the men of Israel took, women, and boys, and girls, their own flesh and blood, with much booty besides, and conveyed them to Samaria. But there was a prophet of the Lord dwelling there at this time, Oded by name, who went out to meet the army on their way into the city, and expostulated with them. Here are the men of Juda, said he, left at your mercy, only because the Lord, the God of your fathers, is angry with them; and you have made murderous use of your victory; the tale of your cruelties mounts up to heaven. That is not enough for you; against all right, you would seize bondmen and bondwomen from Juda and Jerusalem. What, have you no sins of your own to account for? Be guided by me; take the captives home, that are your own flesh and blood; if not, a bitter punishment from the Lord awaits you. And now four of Ephraim's chieftains barred the way against the returning army; Azarias son of Johanan, Barachias son of Mosollamoth, Ezechias son of Sellum, and Amasa son of Adali. Never offend the Lord, they cried, by bringing in these captives with you! Would you add sin to sin, crown the guilt that long stands at our door? Here is grievous wrong; here is a bitter punishment from the Lord threatening Israel! So, before their chieftains and before all the multitude assembled, the warriors gave up their booty and their prey. And the four men we have named stood there befriending the captives; those that went naked must be clothed out of the spoils; then, clothed and shod, they must be refreshed with food and drink, must be anointed after their journey. No care was wanting; some, that could not walk, or were of feeble age, must ride on asses. And so they escorted them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, and restored them to their kindred, and themselves went back to Samaria.

So evil were those times, that Achaz

¹ Literally, 'according to all his father Ozias had done, except that he did not enter the temple of the Lord', an awkward phrase which must, presumably bear the meaning given above. ² See Jer. 19. 5.

must send to the king of the Assyrians to
17 beg for aid. The Edomites came in and
slew many of Juda's folk, taking rich spoils
18 besides, and the Philistines spread out
their forces among the cities of the plain,
and over the southern part of Juda, taking
Bethsames, Aialon, Gaderoth, Socho,
Thamnan, Gamzo and their daughter
19 townships to settle in. Thus did the Lord
humble Juda, to shew how Achaz had
robbed them of all aid, by slighting the
20 divine will.¹ As for the king of the As-
syrians, Thelgath-Phalnasar, the Lord
made him an enemy, not an ally, to Juda,
which he oppressed and plundered, with
21 none to oppose him, till Achaz was fain to
court his favour with gifts, stripping
temple and royal palace and princely
palace of their treasures, but no help did
22 he win thereby. Such a man was this
Achaz, that times of adversity did but
minister to the contempt he shewed for the
23 Lord; he would even offer victims to the
gods of Damascus, that were his enemies;
These Syrian gods, thought he, help their
own country now, they will be on my side
instead, if I win them over with gifts. But
in truth these gods were his ruin, and all
24 Israel's.² All the ornaments of the Lord's
house he had already taken away and
broken up; now he closed the temple
doors, and built altars of his own in every
25 corner of Jerusalem; altars, too, in every
city of Juda, the smoke of whose incense
enraged the Lord, the God of his fathers.
26 What else he did, all his history, first and
last, may be found in the Record of the
kings of Juda and Israel. So Achaz was
27 laid to rest with his fathers, with the city
of Jerusalem for his burying-place; but
among the tombs of Israel's kings they
would not lay him. And the throne passed
to his son Ezechias.

29 Ezechias was twenty-five years old
when he came to the throne, and
his reign at Jerusalem lasted twenty-nine
years. His mother's name was Abia, the
2 daughter of Zacharias. Here was one that
obeyed the Lord's will no less than his
3 father David before him. In the first year
of his reign, when the first month came

round, he opened the gates of the Lord's
house again, and put them in repair. Then
4 he summoned the priests and the Levites
to assemble in the open space east of the
temple. Men of Levi, he said, it is my
5 will that you should cleanse yourselves;
cleanse, too, the house of the Lord, the
God of your fathers, and rid his sanctuary
of all defilement. Ours is an inheritance of
6 guilt, from fathers who have disobeyed the
Lord our God, and forsaken him; turned
their backs on his dwelling-place, where
7 their eyes should ever be. Fast shut were
the gates of yonder porch, spent the lamps,
never did incense smoke, never was victim
offered in the sanctuary of the God of Is-
8 rael. What wonder if the Lord was angry
with Juda and Jerusalem, doomed them
to unrest, and ruin, and disgrace, such as
9 you see all around? What wonder if they
fell in battle, these fathers of ours; if sons
and daughters and wives were carried off
10 into exile? Here, then, is my resolve; we
must bind ourselves by a covenant to the
Lord our God, if his fierce anger is to
relent. As my own sons I charge you, do
11 not stand by with folded hands; on you the
Lord's choice has fallen, to wait upon his
presence, ministering, and doing worship,
and burning incense before him.

Well did the Levites answer his call;
12 Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of
Azarias, Caathites; Cis son of Abdi and
Azarias son of Jalaleel, Merarites; Joah son
of Zemma and Joah's son Eden, Ger-
sonites; of Elisaphan's sons, Samri and
13 Jahiel, of Asaph's, Zacharias and Mathania,
of Heman's, Jahiel and Semei;
14 Idithun's, Semeias and Oziel. Mustering
their brethren, they purified themselves,
15 and so, obedient to the royal command and
the divine will, entered into God's house
to cleanse it. The priests, too, were in the
16 Lord's temple for the cleansing; no unhal-
lowed thing they found in porch or temple
but the Levites carried it away, into the
17 Cedron valley beyond. It was on the first
day of the first month that they set about
their task; on the eighth day of the same
month they were still in the porch, and
then they took eight days more ridding the
temple itself of defilement; by the six-

¹ 'Robbed them of all aid'; the verb in the Hebrew text means rather 'left them free from all control'.

² 'Israel's', that is, Juda's. This use of the whole for the part occurs several times in the Hebrew text of this book, but the Latin version usually corrects the name; for instance, in verse 19 above.

18 tenth day, their undertaking was complete. And now they craved audience with king Ezechias; We have cleansed the Lord's house, they told him, and the altar of burnt-sacrifice, with all that belongs to it, the table of hallowed loaves, and all that
19 belongs to the table. We have cleansed all the temple furniture that was profaned in the time of king Achaz, when he fell a-sin-ning; all this thou wilt find laid out before the Lord's altar.

20 Next day, Ezechias was abroad early, with all the chief men of the city gathered about him, to make his way into the house
21 of the Lord. Seven bulls they offered, seven rams, seven lambs; seven goats, too, as an offering for fault; all this on behalf of the royal house, of the priestly line, and of
22 Juda.¹ And the king bade the priests, Aaron's sons, offer the victims at the
23 Lord's altar. So bulls and rams and lambs were slaughtered, and the altar received
24 their blood; the goats were brought out into the presence of king and people, who laid their hands on them, and then the
25 priests slaughtered them, and poured out their blood at the altar to expiate Israel's common guilt; the king's command was that burnt-sacrifice and offering for fault
26 should both be offered on behalf of the whole people. He had bidden the Levites
27 take their stations, there in the Lord's house, with cymbals, harp, and zither, as David enjoined; as Gad, the man of
28 visions, and the prophet Nathan enjoined, for it was through these prophets of his
29 that David had learned the Lord's will. There stood the Levites, with instruments
30 of David's own, and the priests with their trumpets; and when Ezechias gave the word, and the burnt-sacrifice began, loud
31 echoed their praises to the Lord, loud the trumpets blew, loud rang the music
32 planned by David, king of Israel, long ago. Still must singer and trumpeter be at their
33 task among the throng of worshippers, till all the sacrifice was consumed; and when
34 this was over, while the king and all his company bowed down to adore, these
35 Levites were bidden by the king and his

nobles to praise the Lord with psalms of David, and of Asaph, the man of visions. Praise him they did with hearts full of joy, and they too bowed down to worship.

It was not enough; Here, said Ezechias,² are hands consecrated to the Lord afresh; come forward, and present victim and thank-offering in the Lord's house. Thereupon the whole multitude brought victims and thank-offerings, and some, in their devotion, whole burnt-sacrifice.³ In burnt-sacrifice they offered seventy bulls, a hundred rams, and two hundred lambs, and consecrated to the Lord six hundred cattle and three thousand sheep. The priests
3 were too few in number to flay so many burnt-offerings at once, and the Levites must needs help them to finish their task, till such time as more priests should have rid themselves of defilement; such cleansing is an easier matter for Levite than for priest.⁴ So much work there was to do
4 with all the burnt-sacrifice that must be performed; the fat, too, of the welcome-offerings must be burned, and libations poured over the sacrifices.

Thus was the worship of the Lord's house restored in full. Greatly did Ezechias and all the people rejoice over their duty well done, for all that the resolve was taken so suddenly.

30 Then Ezechias sent out a summons to Juda and all Israel (for his word went out by letter even to Ephraim and Manasses), bidding them come up to the Lord's house at Jerusalem, and keep his paschal feast there. The king and his nobles and all Jerusalem were of this advice, that the pasch should be kept in the second month; keep it at the appointed time they might not, but must wait till priests had cleansed themselves in sufficient number, and the people could assemble at Jerusalem. Such was the resolve taken by the king and his subjects; and because so many had long neglected the law's injunction, the summons should go out to all Israel, from Bersabee to Dan, bidding them keep the pasch there at

¹ Literally, 'on behalf of the kingdom, of the sanctuary, and of Juda'. ² Ezechias talks of this temple cleansing as if it had been, in effect, a reconsecration of the priesthood. In this and the following verses it is necessary to distinguish between the burnt-sacrifice, which was devoted entirely to the Lord (Lev. 1), and the welcome-offering, which was shared between the Lord and his worshipper (Lev. 3).

³ The sense of the Hebrew text is rather that the Levites had been more energetic than the priests in going through the ceremony of personal purification.

Jerusalem, in the Lord's honour, that was
6 all Israel's God. So couriers went out in
the king's service, bearing letters in his
name and in the name of his nobles to
Israel and Juda alike, and this was their
purport; Come back, Israelites, to the
7 Lord, all that remnant of you the Assyrian
king has spared; and he, the God of
Abraham, Isaac and Israel, will come back
8 to your side. See how your fathers and
brethren have deserted the Lord, the God
of their race, and been left to their doom;
9 he wiser than they. Do not rebel, as your
fathers did, against his yoke; surrender to
the Lord, and come up to this sanctuary,
which he has hallowed for all time; obey
10 him, the Lord, the God of your fathers,
and his fierce anger will be appeased.
11 When you have come back to the Lord,
the victors will relent, and allow your
banished sons and brethren to return
home; so gracious the Lord is, so merciful;
12 turn back to him, and his face shall
be hidden from you no more.
13 Swiftly the couriers went from city to
city of Ephraim and Manasses, right up to
Zabulon, meeting everywhere with scorn
and derision; but there were some tribes-
14 men of Aser, Manasses and Zabulon that
fell in with the proposal, and came. In
Juda, such was the Lord's enabling power,
they had but one thought, to obey the
15 Lord's will, obey the command of the king
and of his nobles. So it was a great throng
that came to Jerusalem to keep this feast
of unleavened bread in the second month.
16 First they set about destroying the altars
up and down Jerusalem, overthrowing all
the shrines at which incense had been
burned to false gods; and these they threw
17 down into Cedron valley. Then, on the
fourteenth day of the second month, they
slew the paschal victim. Priest and Levite,
cleansed of their defilement at last, offered
18 burnt-sacrifice in the Lord's house, keep-
ing their due order, according to the terms
of that law which God's servant Moses
gave. Only it was the Levites that must
hand over to the priests the blood which
19 was to be poured out, so many of the wor-
shippers were still uncleansed; for all those
who had not come in time to rid themselves
of their defilement, the Levites must slay
20 the victim. There were many from
Ephraim, Manasses, Issachar and Zabulon

that must overstep the bounds of the law
by eating their paschal meal while they
were yet defiled; but Ezechias made inter-
cession for these; surely the Lord, in his
goodness, would pardon such as made the
21 Lord God of their fathers their whole
heart's quest; cleansed or no, he would not
find fault with them. In answer to this
22 prayer, the Lord gave his people quittance.

So, amid great rejoicing, for seven days
23 together, all the Israelites assembled at
Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened
bread. Day by day priest and Levite stood
there praising the Lord as best their music
might; Ezechias himself spoke to hearten
24 them, sons of Levi that had such skill in
the Lord's service. All the seven days of
the feast they ate the victims of their own
welcome-offerings, giving thanks to the
Lord, their fathers' God. And now the
25 whole multitude resolved to keep festival
seven days more, and right gladly they did
it. A thousand bulls and seven thousand
26 sheep were given to them by king Ezechias,
a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep
by the nobles; task enough for the many
priests that had cleansed themselves by
now. Glad was Juda that day, glad were
27 priest and Levite, and new-comers from
Israel, and men of alien birth from Israel's
domain and Juda's alike; such high festival
was kept in Jerusalem as the city had never
seen since the days of David's son Solo-
28 mon, that was king of all Israel. Then
priests and Levites stood up to bless the
people, nor did their voices go unheard;
heaven's holy dwelling-place echoed to
their prayer.

31 When this was duly done, all the
Israelites there assembled went
about among the cities of Juda, breaking
the idols and cutting down the shrines
from forest and hill-side, and destroying
the altars; and this they did not only in
Juda and Benjamin, but all over the ter-
ritory of Ephraim and Manasses, till none
were left. Then the Israelites made their
way home to their own cities.

And now Ezechias assigned the various
29 companies of priests and Levites their
duties; for each his own task, attending
to burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering,
30 thanking and praising the Lord, or watch-
ing over his gates, where his tent was

3 pitched on earth. The offering of burnt-sacrifice each morning and evening, on the first day of the month and at other times when the law of Moses required it, should
4 be defrayed at the royal expense; it was for the citizens of Jerusalem to provide for the priests and Levites, so that they might devote all their time to the demands of the
5 Lord's law. No sooner was this decree made public, than the people began sending in the first-fruits of their corn, wine and oil; tithes, too, of their honey and of
6 all their lands produced; and all who dwelt in Juda's cities, men of Israel and of Juda alike, gave tithes of cattle and sheep, and of all the offerings they had vowed to the Lord. These tithes they brought themselves, and piled them up all around; from
7 the third month to the sixth, ever greater
8 grew these heaps, and when Ezechias and his nobles came to see them, they blessed the Lord's name, and blessed the people of Israel.

9 But when Ezechias asked the priests and Levites why the offerings were left to lie in
10 heaps thus, their answer was, they had eaten their fill ever since the first-fruits began to come in, and now, such plenty had the Lord granted to his people, much was left unconsumed; it was this surplus
11 that lay before him. So Ezechias bade them make granaries in the Lord's house; and in these granaries, once built, they bestowed carefully first-fruits and tithes and vowed gifts alike. They were in charge
12 of the Levite Chonenias, with his brother
13 Semei to aid him; and under Chonenias and Semei were ten others, Jahiel, Azarias, Nahath, Asael, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Elel, Jesmachias, Mahath and Banaias. But king Ezechias and Azarias, that was controller of God's house, had the
14 direction of all. Gifts that were freely made, and what was set apart for the priests and for holy uses, were in charge of Core, son of Jemna, the Levite that was door-
15 keeper of the eastern gate. Under him were Eden, Benjamin, Jesue, Semeias, Amarias and Sechenias; their office was to distribute portions to their brethren in the various priestly cities, young and old alike,
16 except men (and their sons of three years and over) who were on duty at the time in the Lord's house, and had portions as-

signed to them during their turn of office. The priests, family by family, the Levites of twenty years and more, company by company, together with all who belonged to them, wives and sons and daughters, had their food duly allotted to them out of the consecrated gifts. Other officers were appointed here and there to distribute the allowance to boys and men of priestly or Levitical race in the country-side, and in the precincts round each of their cities.¹

Such were the provisions Ezechias made for his whole realm, a king ever true and loyal to the will of the Lord his God; such loving care he bestowed on the Lord's house, its laws and observances, resolved to make God his whole heart's quest; and so doing he reigned prosperously.

32 After all this faithful service done, Juda was invaded by Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, who laid siege to its fortified cities, thinking to make them his own. Ezechias, warned by his approach that Jerusalem was the chief object of his attack, bade his nobles and commanders consider the plan of shutting in the water courses that ran beyond the city walls. To this all agreed, and he set a multitude of hands to work stopping up all the springs, as well as the stream that flowed through the open country; should there be water flowing freely for the kings of Assyria to profit by it? No pains did he spare to rebuild the wall where it had fallen into disrepair, with towers to crown it and a second wall within; Mello, too, in the Keep of David he fortified anew, and prepared shields and all other weapons of defence. Then he appointed commanders for his army; and these he bade assemble in the open space by the city gate, where he spoke to them for their encouragement. Play the man, he said, and keep your courage high; let there be no shrinking, no faint hearts, at the sight of the Assyrian king and the hordes that follow him; we have many more on our side than they on theirs. Theirs is but mortal strength; we have the Lord our God to aid us, and fight on our side. In such words from king Ezechias the hearts of the men of Juda found support.

Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, was lay-

¹ Verses 16-19 are obscure in the original, and their sense cannot be determined with certainty.

ing siege with his army to Lachis; and now
he sent envoys to Jerusalem with a message
for king Ezechias and for all the citizens;
10 Word to you, they said, from the king of
Assyria. What confidence is it that makes you
so bold, cooped up there in Jerusalem?
11 Will you die there of hunger and thirst,
deluded by Ezechias' promise that the
Lord your God will deliver you from the
12 power of the Assyrian king? Tell me, who
is Ezechias? Is he not the man who has
robbed this God of hill-shrine and altar,
leaving you but one altar to repair to, when
you would do worship and burn incense
before him? See how I and my fathers
13 have subdued the world, and the gods of
a whole world could not rescue it from me!
14 Tell me, in all these countries my fathers
and I have laid waste, was there ever a god
found could save his people from my
power, that you should trust this God of
yours when the same power threatens you?
15 Do not be deluded by the persuasions of
Ezechias; do not listen to him. All those
peoples and kingdoms my fathers and I
have conquered, their gods notwithstanding;
16 will your God do better? Much else
these courtiers said in dispraise of the
17 Lord God, and his servant Ezechias; there
was a letter, too, Sennacherib wrote, full of
blasphemy against the Lord God of Israel,
boasting that Ezechias' God could not save
his people from attack, where the gods of
so many other nations had failed them.
18 Nay, they must needs raise a cry in the
Hebrew tongue, to daunt the folk who sat
on Jerusalem walls, and persuade them to
19 yield up the city. Lightly did they speak
of Jerusalem's God, as if he had been all
one with those old gods the Chanaanites
worshipped, idols made by human hands.
20 Against such blasphemers, king Eze-
chias and the prophet Isaias, son of Amos,
fell to prayer, crying out to heaven for aid;
21 and with that, the Lord sent out his angel,
who smote down warrior and chieftain and
commander in the Assyrian king's camp,
so that he went home in sorry plight. And
there, when he was at worship in the tem-
ple of his god, two sons of his own body
drew their swords on him and slew him.
22 Thus it was the Lord rescued Ezechias and
the men of Jerusalem from the Assyrian
king's power, and of all else that assailed
them; on every side he kept them free from

alarm. Many were the victims and offer- 23
ings that were brought to the Lord at
Jerusalem; many were the gifts made by
Ezechias king of Juda, whom all the na-
tions held thenceforward in high renown.

And now Ezechias fell sick, and was at 24
death's door; but he prayed to the Lord,
and the Lord answered his prayer, giving
him a sign of his recovery. Yet it was an ill 25
return he made for all these benefits; his
heart was puffed up with pride, so that he
brought punishment upon himself, on
Juda, too, and Jerusalem; for this pride of 26
his, both he and the citizens of Jerusalem
afterwards humbled themselves, and it was
not in Ezechias' own time that the Lord's
vengeance fell. Great were the riches of 27
Ezechias and his fame; great was the store
of silver and gold, of jewels and spices, of
weapons for every purpose and of precious
ware, that king Ezechias laid up. He had 28
store-houses too, for corn, wine and oil,
stables full of beasts, and folds full of
flocks; new cities he must build, so many 29
were his herds of sheep and cattle, so
abundant were the possessions the Lord
had given him. It was this Ezechias that 30
blocked the upper waters of the Gihon
stream, and conveyed them under ground
into the western part of the Keep of David.
In all that he did, he prospered; and if, 31
when the princes of Babylon came to en-
quire about the portent that had happened
in his country, God left him to his own
counsel, it was but to try him, and test the
dispositions of his heart. What else Eze- 32
chias did, all his acts of piety, may be found
set down in the Vision of Isaias, son of
Amos, and in the Record of the kings of
Juda and Israel. So Ezechias was laid to 33
rest with his fathers, on the slope where
the tombs of David's sons are; and all Juda
and Jerusalem did honour to his funeral.
And the throne passed to his son Manasses.

33 This Manasses was twelve years
old when he came to the throne,
and his reign at Jerusalem lasted fifty-five
years. And he defied the Lord's will, by 2
courting the false gods of those nations
which the Lord destroyed to make room
for the sons of Israel. He restored once 3
again the hill-shrines which his father
Ezechias had overthrown; he raised altars
to the gods of the country-side, and set up

sacred trees, and gave to all the host of
 4 heaven worship and observance. Nay, he
 must set up these altars of his in the temple
 itself, where the Lord fulfilled his promise
 that Jerusalem should be the shrine of his
 5 name for ever; altars there must be for all
 the host of heaven in the two temple
 6 courts. He consecrated his own sons by
 passing them through the fire in the ravine
 of Benennom;¹ there was watching for
 dreams and taking of auguries, there was
 practising of magical arts; he surrounded
 himself with diviners and soothsayers,
 until this defiance of his provoked the
 7 Lord's anger. He carved an image, too,
 and cast a sheath for it, and set this up in
 the Lord's house. And this was at Jeru-
 salem, the Lord's choice among all the
 cities of Israel; this was in the temple that
 was to be the everlasting shrine of his
 name; so he had promised David and
 8 Solomon, Nevermore will I let the sons of
 Israel be dislodged from the land I gave
 their fathers, if only they will be true to
 law and observance and decree Moses en-
 9 joined on them in my name. The very
 nations which the Lord destroyed to make
 room for the sons of Israel were guilty of
 less wrong than Juda and Jerusalem did,
 when they were led astray by the example
 10 of Manasses. Warnings enough the Lord
 sent to him and to his people, but they
 11 went unheeded; and the next emissaries
 he sent to them were the captains of the
 Assyrian army, who made Manasses their
 prisoner, and carried him away, loaded
 12 with chains and fetters, to Babylon. It was
 to his own God, the Lord, that he turned
 in this time of distress; before him, the
 God of his fathers, he made humble
 13 amends, and sought his favour with earnest
 prayer. That prayer the Lord answered,
 and restored him to his throne at Jeru-
 salem. Such good proof had Manasses
 that the Lord only was God.
 14 It was after this that he built the wall
 beyond David's Keep, out in the ravine
 west of Gihon, all the way round from the
 Fishmongers' Gate to Ophel, raising it to
 a great height; set captains, too, on gar-
 rison duty in all the fortified towns of
 15 Juda. Meanwhile, there was an end of the
 false gods, of the idol that stood in the

Lord's house, of the altars he had set up
 on the temple hill and all over Jerusalem;
 he cast them away beyond the city walls.
 The Lord's altar must be restored; to this
 11 he brought his victims, his welcome-
 offerings and thank-offerings, and bade
 Juda serve the Lord, the God of Israel.
 None the less, men still sacrificed at the
 12 hill-shrines, but only to the Lord their
 God. What else Manasses did, the prayer
 16 he offered to his God, and the warnings
 that were given to him by prophets in the
 name of the Lord God of Israel, may be
 found set down in the Record of the Is-
 raelite kings.² The Chronicle of Hozai,
 19 too, tells of his prayer and how his prayer
 was answered; of his defiance, and of all
 the places where he set up hill-shrine and
 forest shrine and image, before the time of
 his repentance. So Manasses was laid to
 20 rest with his fathers, with his own house
 for his burying-place, and the throne
 passed to his son Amon.

This Amon was twenty-two years old
 21 when he came to the throne, and his reign
 at Jerusalem lasted two years; he defied the
 22 Lord like his father Manasses. No idol
 Manasses had made but Amon must sacrifi-
 ce and pay worship to it; nor did he ever
 imitate his father by making humble
 23 amends, rather he outwent him in guilt.
 He was slain in his own house, through a
 24 conspiracy among his own servants; but
 25 the common folk put them to death, and
 gave the crown to the son of Amon, that
 was called Josias.

34 Josias was eight years old when he
 came to the throne, and his reign
 at Jerusalem lasted thirty-one years;
 2 he was obedient to the Lord's will, and fol-
 lowed the example of his ancestor, king
 David, never swerving to right or left.
 1 It was while he was still a boy, in the eighth
 year of his reign, that he betook himself to
 the God his father David worshipped; and
 in the twelfth year of his reign he rid Juda
 and Jerusalem of hill-shrine and forest
 shrine, carved image and molten image.
 All the altars of the countryside gods must
 4 be destroyed in his presence; sacred trees
 and statues he cut down everywhere and
 broke in pieces, which he scattered on the

¹ See Jer. 19. 5. ² The prayer attributed to king Manasses, which is found in some manuscripts of the Latin version, is not admitted by the Church as part of the canonical scriptures.

5 tombs of their worshippers; and on the altars that were raised to false gods he burned the bones of their own priests, till Juda and Jerusalem were defiled no more.

6 Then he must carry out the same work of destruction in the cities of Manasses, Ephraim and Simeon, and all the way to Nephthali; altars were thrown down, images crushed to pieces, and shrines demolished, all over the land of Israel; and so he returned to Jerusalem.¹

8 Then, in the eighteenth year of his reign, the land and the temple now purged, he commissioned Saphan, son of Eselias, and Maasias that was governor of the city, and Joha son of Joachaz, that kept the records, to see that the house of the Lord their God

9 was put in repair. So they made their way to the high priest, Helcias, who handed over to them the offerings collected by Levites and door-keepers for the temple fabric; offerings from Manasses and Ephraim and all the rest of Israel, as well as Juda, Benjamin and Jerusalem. These they paid out to the overseers of the Lord's house, bidding them restore it and put it

11 in repair. And they, in their turn, gave it to the craftsmen and masons, that must buy stone from the quarries; wood, too, for joiner's work, and for roofing the buildings which earlier kings had left in ruins.

12 All this was faithfully carried out; the work was hastened on by these overseers, the Merarites Jahath and Abdias, the Caathites Zacharias and Masollam, Levites all

13 and musicians; the workmen that did but carry burdens at need were under the command of the secretaries and the chief door-keepers.

14 It was just when they came to take away the temple offerings that Helcias found a copy of the law which the Lord gave through Moses; and he told Saphan, the secretary, how he had found, there in the temple, a copy of the law, which he gave

16 him to read. Saphan took the book with him when he went to the king to report that the commission had been faithfully executed. They have collected all the money, said he, that was there in the temple, and paid it out through the overseers to crafts-

men and to masons. And here is a book the high priest, Helcias, has given me.

This book, then, Saphan read out in the royal presence; and the king, upon hearing the terms of the law, rent his garments about him. Then he gave orders to Helcias, and Ahicam son of Saphan, and Abdon son of Micha, and Asaas, one of his courtiers; Go and consult the Lord,² he told them, for me and all that is left of Israel and Juda, about this new-found copy of the law. What wonder if the Lord should rain down vengeance on us, a race that has left his warnings unheeded, his bidding undone? So Helcias and his companions went on the king's errand to the prophetess Olda. She was wife to Sellum, son of Thecuath, son of Hasra, that once kept the royal wardrobe; her dwelling was at Jerusalem, in the new part of the city. So they told her their business, and she, in return, gave them this message from the Lord God of Israel for the man that sent them; Thus says the Lord, For this city and its citizens I have punishments in store, all the punishments threatened in yonder book which has been read out to the king of Juda. The men of Juda have forsaken me, and offered sacrifice to alien gods; all they do is done in defiance of me; the fire of my vengeance must needs rain down on this city, and there is no quenching it. But to the king of Juda, who sent you here to consult the Lord, give this message from the Lord God of Israel: Well for thee thou didst listen to the warnings this book gave thee! Well for thee that thy heart failed thee, and thou didst humble thyself before God, at hearing him threaten city and citizens with doom; that thou didst make amends, by tearing thy garments about thee, and hadst recourse to me with tears. And thou hast won my audience, the Lord says; I will lay thee to rest with thy fathers, in quiet times thou shalt go to thy grave. Not for thy eyes the great calamities I mean to bring on city and citizens of thine.

When they brought the king his answer, he summoned all the elders of Juda and Jerusalem; then he went up to the Lord's temple, and all the men of Juda bore him

¹ These reforms are mentioned in IV Kg. 23 as if they had happened only after the rediscovery of the law in Josias' eighteenth year. It seems probable that the author of that book mentioned them out of their historical order, as a more logical arrangement.

² The Latin here has 'Intercede with the Lord', but the word used in the Hebrew text is the same as that used in IV Kg. 22. 13.

company, all the citizens of Jerusalem, priest and Levite and common folk high and low. There, in their hearing, he read the whole book out to them. Standing on the dais, he made a promise, there in the Lord's presence; they would make the Lord their leader, holding fast by command and decree and observance of his heart and soul, obeying all the terms of the law they had listened to. And he bound them by an oath, all the men of Jerusalem and of Benjamin. This pact with the Lord God of their fathers was kept loyally.¹

So Josias swept away from the whole realm of Israel all detestable worship, and made the remnant that were left in Israel obey the Lord their God. Never again did they forsake the Lord, their fathers' God, while Josias' life lasted.

35 And now Josias proclaimed a paschal feast at Jerusalem; the victims should be duly slain on the fourteenth day of the first month. To the priests, he assigned their several tasks, and put heart into them for their long ministrations in the Lord's house. And he had his word for the Levites, too, that must teach all Israel and hallow it to the Lord's service: Let the ark of God rest in its shrine, in the temple David's son Solomon, that was king of all Israel, built for it; no need any longer for you to carry it this way and that. You have tasks to perform for the Lord your God, and for his people of Israel. Range yourselves by the order of your clans and families, as David king of Israel and his son Solomon prescribed, each household, each company of Levites ready to do its own office in the sanctuary. Rid yourselves of defilement, to keep the pasch, and make all in readiness for your brethren, so that they can carry out the commands which the Lord gave them through Moses. For those who were present at this paschal feast, Josias provided the flocks they had need of, thirty thousand lambs and kids, as well as three thousand bulls, all of the king's bounty. Other gifts had been promised, for priests, Levites and people, by the men of his

The great Pasch kept under King Josias

court; the controllers of the Lord's house, Helcias, Zacharias and Jahiel, gave the priests, for their paschal victims, two thousand six hundred lambs and kids, and three hundred bulls; and there were five thousand lambs and kids and five hundred bulls for the Levites' pasch, from Chonenias, his brothers Semeias and Nathanael, and the Levite chiefs Hasabias, Jehiel and Jozabad. Thus preparation was made for the ceremony, and the priests stood ready for their task, with the Levites to aid them, ranged at the king's bidding in their several companies.

The paschal victims were killed; blood was sprinkled from priestly hands, Levites flayed the burnt-sacrifice, and victims were distributed to all the worshippers, clan by clan, household by household, ready to be offered to the Lord as Moses commanded, the bulls with the rest. The paschal victim itself was roasted over the fire, as the law enjoins; the welcome-offerings were cooked in pan and pot and caldron, and so divided among the people without more ado. This done, the Levites had still the paschal feast to make ready for themselves and for the priests; these had been busy over the burnt-sacrifice up to night-fall, so that Aaron's sons must be served last, and the Levites with them. All the musicians had kept their ranks, as David would have them, and his royal spokesmen Asaph, Heman and Idithun; all the door-keepers had remained on guard at their several gates, never released from duty for an instant; for these, too, their brother Levites must needs make ready the feast. Nothing of due observance was left unfulfilled that day; the pasch was kept, and burnt-sacrifice, too, was offered to the Lord on his altar, at king Josias' bidding. And all the Israelites who were present kept, at this time, not only the pasch but the feast of unleavened bread, for seven days together. Never was such a paschal feast as this in all Israel's history since the days of the prophet Samuel; never a king, of all who reigned in Israel, so kept it as Josias did, with priests and Levites and pilgrims from Juda and Israel,

¹ 17: 8-32, cf. IV Kg. 22: 3 to 23: 3.

² Some think that the ark had been removed from the temple in the idolatrous reign of Amon; but it is curious that this should not have been mentioned. It is perhaps better to understand Josias' words as an almost jocular allusion to the fact that the Levites, who carried the ark through the desert, have other duties now.

19 besides the citizens of Jerusalem. It was the eighteenth year of his reign when the pasch was so kept.

20 After Josias' restoration of the temple was finished, news came that Nechao, king of Egypt, was on his way to attack Charcamis, on the Euphrates. Josias marched
21 out to bar his way, whereupon he sent him a message, Nay, king of Juda, I have no quarrel with thee. At God's bidding I march, and with all speed, against another kingdom, not thine; God is on my side;
22 cross his will, and he will slay thee. But there was no turning Josias back from his warlike intent; listen to Nechao he would not, though it was God's own lips that warned him; he was for offering battle
23 in the plain of Mageddo. And there, wounded by a volley from the archers, he bade his men carry him out of the fight;
24 My hurt, said he, is grievous. He had a second chariot, as kings will, that followed behind him; into this they removed him out of his own chariot, and bore him away to Jerusalem. So he died, and was buried where his fathers lay. All Juda and Jerusalem mourned for him, but none so
25 grievously as Jeremias; to this day man and maid, singing the dirge for Josias, say. . . ,¹ till it has become a custom in Israel; it is all to be found in the book of Dirges.

26 What else Josias did, all his acts of piety in carrying out the terms of the divine
27 law, all his history, first and last, is set down in the Record of the kings of Juda and Israel.

36 The choice of the people now fell upon Josias' son Joachaz, whom they crowned at Jerusalem to succeed his father. He was twenty-three years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted but three months; then he was deposed by the king of Egypt, who marched to Jerusalem and levied a fine from the country, a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Joachaz he carried off with him to Egypt, and set up one of the other princes to rule Juda and Jerusalem, Eliakim, whose name he

changed to Joakim. This Joakim was
5 twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted eleven years, during which he defied the will of the Lord his God. Then he was
6 attacked by the king of Babylon, Nabuchodonosor, who led him off to Babylon in chains; he also carried off (some of) the
7 furniture of the Lord's house, and laid it up in his own temple there.² What else
8 Joakim did, all his idolatry and the story of the life he lived, may be found in the Record of the kings of Juda and Israel; he
9 was succeeded by his son Joachin. This Joachin was eight(teen)³ years old when he came to the throne, and his reign at Jerusalem lasted three months and ten days. He too defied the Lord's will, and when
10 the spring came round, Nabuchodonosor had him brought to Babylon, with all the most precious of the furniture that was left in the Lord's house. And he set up as king of Juda and Jerusalem Joachin's uncle Sedecias.

This Sedecias was twenty-one years old
11 when he came to the throne, and he reigned at Jerusalem eleven years. He
12 defied the Lord's will, nothing abashed by the prophet Jeremias, that carried threats to him from the Lord's own lips. He rebelled
13 against Nabuchodonosor, though he had pledged his allegiance to him in the name of God; refused ever the yoke, steeled ever his heart, and would not come
14 back to the Lord, the God of Israel. All the chief priests, too, and the common folk did heinous wrong by following the detestable ways of the heathen; desecrated that sanctuary the Lord had set apart for himself at Jerusalem. He, the God of their
15 fathers, sent messengers to warn them; never a day dawned but he was already pleading with them, so well he loved his people and his dwelling-place. And they?
16 They mocked the Lord's own messengers, made light of his warnings, derided his prophets, until at last the Lord's anger was roused against his people, past all assuaging. Then it was that he embroiled
17 them with the king of Babylon, who came and put their young men to the sword in

¹ It seems likely that some words have dropped out here, containing a quotation from the Dirge made by Jeremias. The renderings usually given, 'they speak it (Jeremias' dirge) in their lamentations over Josias', and 'they speak of Josias in their lamentations', are forced grammar, and yield an unnatural sense.

² 'Some of the furniture'; the Latin version has simply 'the furniture', but cf. verse 10 below.

³ The text here has 'eight years old', no doubt through a copyist's error; cf. IV Kg. 24. 8.

the sanctuary itself, pitying neither young man nor maid, old man nor cripple; none
18 might escape his attack. All the furniture of the Lord's house, great and small, all the treasures of temple and king and princes,
19 must be carried off to Babylon. Enemy hands set fire to the Lord's house, pulled down Jerusalem's walls, burnt its towers
20 to the ground, destroyed all that was of price. Those who escaped massacre were carried off to Babylon, where they must live as slaves to the king and his heirs until their empire should pass to the king of
21 Persia; then, at last, the Lord's prophecy through Jeremias would be fulfilled, then the land of Juda would have lain fallow

long enough. Fallow it must lie, until seventy years had come and gone.

So, in the first year of the Persian king, 21:1
Cyrus, the Lord made good the promise which Jeremias had uttered in his name. He put a resolve into the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia; who thereupon published a written decree all through his dominions; A message, it said, from Cyrus, king of 21:2
Persia. The Lord God of heaven has made me master of the world, and now he will have me rebuild his own temple for him at Jerusalem, a city of Judaea. Who is left among you of his own people? Let him go to the task, with the Lord his God to speed him.

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS

IN the first year of the Persian king, Cyrus, the Lord fulfilled the promise which he had made through Jeremias. He put a new resolve into the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia, who thereupon published a written decree all through his dominions; A message, it said, from Cyrus, king of Persia. The Lord God of heaven has made me master of the world, and now he will have me rebuild his own temple for him at Jerusalem, a city of Judaea. Who is left among you of that race? To Jerusalem let him go, in Judaea, with divine aid to speed him; and there let him help to build the temple of the Lord God of Israel, who is the true God.¹ And let all others take note, that such a man is to receive assistance from his neighbours; silver and gold, stores and beasts are to be put at his disposal, apart from the offerings they may make, of their own free will, to this temple of God at Jerusalem.

Thereupon the clan chiefs of Juda and Benjamin, with priests and Levites and all whom God had so inspired, set out for Jerusalem to rebuild the Lord's temple there; and all their neighbours lightened the task for them with presents of silver ware and gold, of stores, beasts and furniture, over and above the offerings that were freely made. King Cyrus himself brought the temple ornaments out again; these had been carried off from Jerusalem by Nabuchodonosor, who laid them up in the temple of his own god, but now, at the orders of the Persian king Cyrus, Mithridates son of Gezabar must bring them out again, and give full account of them to Sassabasar, chief of the tribe of Juda. And this was the count made: gold trays thirty, and silver trays a thousand, knives twenty-nine, cups of gold thirty, . . . baser cups of silver four hundred and ten, . . . and a

thousand other appurtenances;² in all, of gold and silver appurtenances, five thousand four hundred. All these were taken back to Jerusalem by Sassabasar and the exiles who returned with him from Babylon.

2 In what numbers, then, did they come back to Jerusalem, and to the various cities of Juda, these exiles that had been taken to Babylon by the Chaldaean king Nabuchodonosor, and were now on the march for home?³ Their leaders were Zorobabel, Josue, Nehemia, Saraia, Rahe-laia, Mardochai, Belsan, Mespar, Beguai, Rehun and Baana. These were the numbers the various clans of Israel provided: Pharos, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two, Sephatia, three hundred and seventy-two, Area, seven hundred and seventy-five, Phahath-Moab . . .⁴ Josue-Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve, Aelam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four, Zethua, nine hundred and forty-five, Zachai, seven hundred and sixty, Bani, six hundred and forty-two, Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three, Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two, Adonicam, six hundred and sixty-six, Beguai, two thousand and fifty-six, Adin, four hundred and fifty-four, Ather, coming from Ezechias, ninety-eight, Besai, three hundred and twenty-three, Jora, a hundred and twelve, Hasum, two hundred and twenty-three.

And the various townships provided: Gebbar, ninety-five,⁵ Bethlehem, a hundred and twenty-three, Netupha, fifty-six, Anathoth, a hundred and twenty-eight, Azmaveth, forty-two, Cariathiarim, Cephira and Beroth, seven hundred and forty-three, Rama and Gabaa, six hundred and twenty-one, Machmas, a hundred and

¹ The Latin is usually printed, unnecessarily, as if it meant 'let him help to build the temple of the Lord God of Israel, who is God there'.

² It seems clear that some items have fallen out of the list, which adds up to 2,499 instead of 5,400. Among these we should expect to find silver cups of better quality, by way of contrast with the 410 mentioned as being less valuable.

³ *iv.* 1-70. See Neh. 7. 6-73.

⁴ It is generally doubted whether the Hebrew text here is sound; the sons of Phahath-Moab to the sons of Josue-Joab has no obvious meaning in the context.

⁵ It is not quite clear whether Gebbar belongs to the list of clans or to that of townships; in Neh. 7. 25 it is replaced by Gabaon, and is perhaps only a faulty reading.

28 twenty-two, Bethel and Hai, two hundred
29 and twenty-three, Nebo, fifty-two, Meg-
31 bis, a hundred and fifty-six, (the other
Aelam, one thousand two hundred and
32 fifty-four),¹ Harim, three hundred and
33 twenty, Lod, Hadid and Ono, seven hun-
34 dred and twenty-five, Jericho, three hun-
35 dred and forty-five, Senaa, three thousand
six hundred and thirty...²

36 And the various priestly clans provided:
Jadaia, in the line of Josue, nine hundred
37 and seventy-three, Emmer, a thousand
and fifty-two, Phehur, one thousand two
38 hundred and forty-seven, Harim, a thou-
39 sand and seventeen.

40 And the various Levite clans provided:
Josue and Cedmihel, that came down from
41 Odovias, seventy-four, Asaph's sons, the
musicians, a hundred and twenty-eight,
42 Sellum, Ater, Telmon, Accub, Hatita and
Sobai, the door-keepers, a hundred and
thirty-nine in all.

43 The Nathinaeans included the sons of
44 Siha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, Ceros, Saa,
45 Phadon, Lebana, Hagaba, Accub, Hagab,
47 Semlai, Hanan, Gaddel, Gaher, Raai,
48 Rasin, Necoda, Gazam, Aza, Phasea, Be-
49 se, Asena, Munim, Nephusim, Bacbuc,
52 Hacupha, Harhur, Besluth, Mahida, Har-
54 sa, Bercos, Sisara, Thema, Nasia and Ha-
tipha; and Solomon's servants, including
56 Sotai, Sopheret, Pharuda, Jala, Dercon,
57 Geddel, Saphatia, Hatul, Phochereth from
Asebaim, and Ami; these Nathinaeans,
including those descended from the ser-
vants of Solomon, amounted to three hun-
dred and ninety-two in all.

59 Some of those who came back from
Thelmala, Thelharsa, Cherub, Adon and
Emer could not prove whence their an-
cestors came or whether they were of Is-
raelite stock; they were descendants of
60 Dalaia, Tobia and Necoda, amounting to
61 six hundred and fifty-two. Such, too,
among the priests were the sons of Hobia,
of Accos, and of that Berzellai who married
a daughter of Berzellai the Galaadite and

took his name;³ they could find no written
6 record of their ancestry, and were excluded
from the priesthood; they might not par-
6 take of the food reserved for the priests,
the governor told them, until there should
be a high priest that bore the touchstones
of wisdom and truth.⁴

The whole number, taken together,
6 amounted to forty-two thousand three
hundred and sixty, not counting the men
6 and women servants, of whom there were
seven thousand three hundred and thirty-
seven, with two hundred men and maids
that were singers. They had with them
60 seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two
hundred and forty-five mules, four hun-
6 dred and thirty-five camels, six thousand
seven hundred and twenty asses.

Some of the clan chiefs, upon entering
61 the Lord's temple at Jerusalem, made of
their own accord an offering for rebuilding
God's house where it stood; contributing
62 to that end, as their means allowed, sixty-
one thousand gold pieces, five thousand
silver pieces, and a hundred sets of vest-
ments for the priests. And now priests and
70 Levites (and some of the people), singers,
door-keepers and Nathinaeans were back
in their own precincts, and all Israel in the
cities that were their homes.⁵

3 And now, for the first time since
Israel's home-coming, it was the
seventh month of the year; the people,
with one consent, had gathered at Jeru-
salem. Josue son of Josedec and his bro-
2 ther priests, Zorobabel son of Salathiel and
his brother chiefs, must bestir themselves;
the God of Israel must have an altar built
for him, if the law given by his servant
Moses was to be obeyed, by the offering of
burnt-sacrifice. No more they dared to
3 do, with hostile nations threatening them
all around, than erect God's altar on its
ruined base;⁶ here, morning and evening,
burnt-sacrifice was offered, and with that
4 daily offering, with the due observance of

¹ It seems as if verse 7 had been accidentally repeated by a copyist's error, and 'the other' had been put in by an editor to hide the fault.

² An omission has been marked at the end of this verse, because the items in verses 3-63 do not add up to the total given in verse 64; it looks, therefore, as if there were a lacuna somewhere in the list.

³ The text says literally that he married one of the daughters of Berzellai and was called after 'their' name.

⁴ See Ex. 28. 30.

⁵ It seems likely that the Hebrew text in this verse is corrupt.

⁶ This seems the best account to give of a difficult phrase in the original, 'They set up the altar of God on its base, because they were afraid of the native population round about'. Fear of their neighbours accounted, not for the rebuilding of the altar, but for the rebuilding of the altar without walls or roof to shelter it; cf. verse 6. In the (uncanonical) book known as III Esdras, the neighbours are represented as coming in and helping to build the altar.

each day as it came, they held the feast of
 5 Tent-dwelling. After that, burnt-sacrifice
 went on uninterruptedly, on the feast days
 set apart for the Lord, and on other days,
 too, when gifts were brought to the Lord
 6 out of devotion. From the first day of this
 seventh month onwards the offering of
 burnt-sacrifice to the Lord began; and
 still they had not laid the very foundations
 of God's temple.

7 But meanwhile, money was being spent
 on quarrymen and stone-masons; on food,
 too, and drink, and oil for the men of Tyre
 and Sidon, who must convey cedar planks
 from Lebanon by sea to Joppe, in pur-
 8 suance of the Persian king's decree. And
 in the second month of the second year
 after their return to God's temple at Jeru-
 salem, Zorobabel and Josue with their
 brethren, priests and Levites and citizens
 returned from exile, began their task.
 Levites that were above the age of twenty
 were appointed to hasten on the execution
 9 of the divine command, and at the head of
 these Levites, clansmen of Henadad's clan,
 were Josue's clan and Cedmihel's (and
 the men of Juda), insisting that they should
 20 give the temple workmen no rest.¹ So at
 last the masons laid the foundation of the
 Lord's temple. There stood the priests in
 full array with their trumpets; there stood
 the Levites, come down from Asaph, with
 their cymbals, ready to praise God as
 David bade them, that long ago was king
 21 of all Israel. And as their hymn of praise
 went up to the Lord, The Lord is gracious,
 his mercy to Israel endures for ever, the
 whole people raised a great shout, thanking
 the Lord that now the foundation of his
 temple was laid.

22 Among the priests and Levites and
 chiefs of clans there were many older men
 who had seen the earlier temple when it
 stood built there. In their eyes, that was
 the Temple,² and they cried aloud in

lament, while these others shouted and
 huzza'd for joy. Shouts of folk rejoicing,
 and cries of folk lamenting, none could tell
 them apart; it was all a confused uproar of
 men's voices, that echoed far away.

4 When news reached the enemies of
 Juda and Benjamin that the returned
 exiles were rebuilding the temple of the
 Lord, the God of Israel, they had a request
 2 to make of Zorobabel and the chieftains.
 Let us help you to build it, they said; we
 too have recourse to the same God whom
 you worship; witness the sacrifices we have
 been offering to him ever since the As-
 syrian king Asar-Haddon settled us here.
 But Zorobabel and Josue and the clan
 3 chiefs told them, To build a house to our
 God can be no common task of yours and
 ours. The Lord is our God, and we alone
 must be the builders of it; such were the
 orders given to us by Cyrus, king of Persia.
 Nothing would serve the neighbouring
 4 folk after that but they must thwart Juda's
 purpose and interfere, as best they could,
 with the enterprise. All through the reign
 5 of Cyrus, and right up to the time when
 Darius came to the throne of Persia, they
 were still hiring pleaders to baulk the
 design.

At the beginning of Assuerus' reign,³
 they sent a letter which brought accusa-
 tions against the men of Juda and Jeru-
 salem; and when Artaxerxes came to the
 throne, Beselam, Mithridates and Thz-
 beel, with their partisans, addressed an-
 other to king Artaxerxes, in Syrian script
 and in the Syrian dialect. This letter about
 8 Jerusalem, sent by the procurator Reum
 and the notary Samsai to king Artaxerxes,
 is given below; it is addressed in the name
 9 of Reum and Samsai and their partisans,
 the Dinaeans, Apharsathachaeans, Ter-
 phalaeans, Apharsaeans, Erchuaeans, Ba-
 bylonians, Susanechaeans, Dievites and

¹ The text of this verse may well be corrupt, but cannot be restored with certainty. ² Or possibly, 'And now, before their eyes, this (new) temple had been founded'. The Hebrew text is difficult to reconstruct; it seems to run, 'There were many who had seen the earlier temple. And when it was founded (or, when he founded it), this temple, before their eyes, (they were) weeping with a loud voice, and many with a shout with joy to raise the voice'.

³ Some have understood Assuerus and Artaxerxes as titles used indifferently by all the Persian kings, and have identified the former here with Cambyses, the latter with Smerdis, the two immediate successors of king Cyrus. In that case, it must be understood that the enemies of the Jews accused them of rebuilding the fortifications, when in fact they were only rebuilding the temple. But it seems much more likely that Assuerus is Xerxes, the successor of Darius, and Artaxerxes is the prince, immediately following him, who is known to history by that name. If so, verses 6-23 can only be a parenthesis, anticipating the events of later times so as to illustrate the kind of persecution the Jews had to put up with, even in these earlier days under king Darius, when it was only a question of restoring the temple.

10 Aelamites, and men of other nations besides, settled anew by Asenaphar, of great and glorious memory, in the cities of Samaria, and elsewhere beyond the Euphrates. Peace be with us! (here the text of their letter begins). Greetings to king Artaxerxes from his subjects beyond the
 12 Euphrates. Be it known to the king's grace, that the Jews he sent here have betaken themselves to Jerusalem, a city ever infamous for its rebellions, where they have set about building up the ramparts and
 13 repairing the walls. We warn the king's grace that if this city is rebuilt, and its walls restored, there will be an end of all tribute, toll and custom, to the prejudice of the
 14 royal revenues. To us, beholden as we are to the royal bounty, the sight of any wrong done to the king is something not to be borne; that is why we are sending him this
 15 information. Let him consult the archives of the kings who went before him, and he will learn, from what is set down in their annals, that this is a rebellious city, the bane of king and governor; time out of mind, wars were ever brewing there, and for that
 16 very reason it was laid in ruins. We warn the king's grace, then, that once this city is rebuilt, and its walls restored, he must not look to have any dominions left on this side of the river.

17 Thereupon the king wrote to Reum, Samsai, and their partisans in Samaria and beyond Euphrates, wishing them health and peace. Your accusation (he said) has been read out in my presence, and its sense is clear to me. I have had research made, and it proves that this city rebelled ever against the royal allegiance, a nursery of wars and revolts. Time was when Jerusalem had kings most powerful, that were overlords of the whole country beyond Euphrates, receiving tribute, toll and custom from it. It is my pleasure that you should restrain these men from rebuilding
 22 their city, until I take further order. See that these commands of mine are not neglected, to the imperilling, by slow degrees, of the royal power.

23 No sooner had the text of this decree from king Artaxerxes been read out to them, than Reum, Samsai and their parti-

sans went post-haste to Jerusalem, and prevented the Jews by main force from any further enterprise.

And so it was now; even the raising of a temple at Jerusalem must needs be abandoned, nor was it ever resumed till the second year of Darius' reign over Persia.

5 But the God of Israel had still his prophets, Aggaeus, and Zacharias son of Addo, to give his message to the Jews, now that they had returned to their own country and city. With these prophets to aid them, Zorobabel son of Salathiel and Josue son of Josedec did set about providing the Lord with a temple of his own at Jerusalem; and all at once there were protests from Thathanai, who had charge of affairs west of the river, and Sthar-buzanai, and all their partisans; Who commissioned you, they asked, to rebuild this temple, and put its walls in repair? We must ask of you besides the names of those who are promoting the enterprise.¹ But there was no withholding the elders of the Jews, so sure were they of the divine protection; the matter must be referred to Darius himself before they would meet the charge against them.

Here is a copy of the letter sent by the governor Thathanai, by Sthar-buzanai, and their Arphasachite partisans west of the river, to king Darius. To king Darius, all peace (their message ran). This is to inform the king's grace that we have paid a visit to Judaea, where they are building a temple of rough-hewn stone in honour of the great God; timber is already being fitted into the walls; they are busily employed, and have the work well in hand. We summoned their elders, and asked who had given the commission for such building and such repairs, and also demanded, for thy better
 10 information, a list of their leaders, which is given below. Their answer was, The
 11 God we worship is the Lord of heaven and earth; the temple we are rebuilding is an edifice built by a great king of Israel, long ago. Years passed, and the God of heaven,
 12 goaded to anger by our fathers, left them at the mercy of Nabuchodonosor, the Chaldaean king who then ruled in Baby-

¹ Literally, 'remembering as we do the salt we ate in the royal palace', which is no doubt an Oriental metaphor.

² 'We must ask of you besides'; in the original, 'Our answer was to tell them', which is unintelligible; cf. verse 10.

lon; he it was laid the temple in ruins, and carried off as exiles to Babylon the men
 13 who worshipped there. Then Cyrus became king of Babylon; and Cyrus, in his first year, gave order that this house of God
 14 should be rebuilt. There was gold ware and silver in the temple of our God; all this Nabuchodonosor had carried off from Jerusalem and laid it up in another temple, there at Babylon. What did Cyrus? He stripped the Babylonian temple in his turn; all must be given over to one Sassabasar, the man he had appointed to rule
 15 us; Take these, he said, and lay them up in the temple at Jerusalem.¹ The house of God, he said, must be rebuilt on its old
 16 foundations. But all Sassabasar did, when he reached Jerusalem, was to lay the foundations of God's temple; it has been in building ever since, and remains unfinished.

17 May it please the king's grace to have research made in the royal archives, there at Babylon, to find out whether Cyrus did indeed give any orders for God's house at Jerusalem to be rebuilt; meanwhile, we await the royal pleasure.

6 Thereupon, at king Darius' orders, research was made in the archives laid
 12 up at Babylon; and at last in Ecbatana, a city of the Median province, a document
 13 was found to this effect: In the first year of king Cyrus a royal decree was made about the house of God at Jerusalem. It is to be rebuilt, for the better offering of sacrifice; foundations to be laid that will support a structure sixty cubits...high and sixty
 4 wide; upon these three rows of rough-hewn stone, and then courses of timber. For all this, the expense to be defrayed by
 5 the royal treasury. All the gold and silver ware from the temple at Jerusalem that was brought to Babylon by Nabuchodonosor is to be restored, and carried back to Jerusalem, to find its fitting place in the temple of God.

6 ...It is my will² that Thathanai, governor of the province beyond the river, and Stharbazanai, and the Apharsachites

beyond the river, their associates, should cease interfering with the Jews; the Jewish
 7 ruler and the Jewish elders must be allowed to go on with their temple-building, so that this house of God may be re-established on its ancient site. And to the intent that these elders of the Jews may be able to continue the said building without intermission, my will is that moneys should be paid to them with all diligence out of the royal chest, and namely out of the tribute that is collected beyond the river; moreover that if there is need of
 9 calves, lambs or kids for burnt-sacrifice to the God of heaven, or of corn, salt, wine and oil to perform the ceremonies practised at Jerusalem, supplies of these should be given them daily, without fail. So let
 10 them be enabled to make their offerings to the God of heaven, and let them pray for the welfare of the king and royal princes. My will is, further, that if any man presume to alter the tenour of this decree, a beam should be taken from his house, and himself nailed up on it; the said house to be confiscated.³ And may the God, who
 12 has made Jerusalem the shrine of his name, destroy every kingdom and people which attempts to injure or destroy this temple of his that is built there. I, Darius, am the author of this decree, and will have it carried out with all diligence.

Carry it out they did, and diligently,
 13 both Thathanai and Stharbazanai and all their partisans. As for the elders of the
 14 Jews, they built on, and all went favourably; true prophets were Aggaeus and Zacharias son of Addo; higher and higher the fabric rose, with the God of Israel for its speed, with Cyrus for its speed, and Darius, (and Artaxerxes), kings of Persia. It was on the third day of the month Adar,
 15 in the sixth year of king Darius, that they finished God's house; great joy had priest
 16 and Levite, great joy had all the returned exiles, as they consecrated God's house together. The offerings they made at the
 17 dedication were a hundred calves, two hundred rams, and four hundred lambs; besides twelve goats to atone for the faults

¹ The words of Cyrus are given as if he supposed the temple to be still standing; possibly he is not credited with understanding that so little was left of it. The decree quoted at the beginning of the next chapter is more precise. ² The reply of king Darius to Thathanai here begins, with no rubric to introduce it. No doubt the decree of Cyrus (verses 3-5) was incorporated in the text of king Darius' letter, and the author has passed on from quotation to text without adverting to the fact that he is doing so.

³ The Hebrew (or rather Aramaic) text has 'turned into a dung-hill'.

- 18 of all Israel, one for each of Israel's tribes. Row upon row the priests stood, turn and turn about the Levites ministered, as the law of Moses bade them, doing the Lord's errand there at Jerusalem.
- 19 Afterwards, on the fourteenth day of the first month, Israel's sons, returned from
- 20 captivity, kept the paschal feast. All the priests had rid themselves of defilement, and so had the Levites to a man; cleansed they must be, to slay the paschal victim for the returned exiles, and for their brethren
- 21 the priests, and for themselves besides. So the Israelites who had come back from Babylon at the pasch; and with them those others who had remained in the country, and been defiled by contact with its inhabitants; now they united with their brethren in having recourse to the Lord,
- 22 the God of Israel. And all through the week following they kept the feast of unleavened bread, glad at heart. Glad indeed the Lord had made them, Assyria's king¹ no more their enemy, their task so lightened for them in building a house for the Lord God of Israel.

- 7 Now turn we to the reign of Artaxerxes in Persia, and to Esdras. This Esdras was descended through Saraias,
- 2 Helcias, Sellum, Sadoc, Achitob, Amarias,
- 4 Azarias, Maraioth, Zarahias, Ozi, Bocci,
- 5 Abisue, Phinees and Eleazar from Aaron,
- 6 that was the first priest of all. He was a scribe, well versed in the law given to Israel by the Lord God through Moses; and now he came from Babylon armed, under God's favour, with all the powers he
- 7 had asked from the king. Some of the common folk made the journey to Jerusalem with him, as well as priests, Levites, singers, door-keepers and Nathinaeans.
- 8 This was in the seventh year of king Artaxerxes; they reached Jerusalem in the
- 9 fifth month of this seventh year, on the first day of the month, after leaving Babylon on the first day of the first month,
- 10 such was the favour God shewed him. His was a heart given up to study of the Lord's law, ready to hold fast by it and teach the men of Israel decree and award.

Here is a copy of the letter Artaxerxes sent with him, addressed to, The priest Esdras, a scribe well versed in the Lord's utterances, all the commands and observances he enjoined upon Israel. Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Esdras, a scribe most learned in the law of the God of heaven, health and greeting. My will is, that any Israelite, priest or Levite who desires it should have leave to accompany thee to Jerusalem. Thou art commissioned by the king and his seven counsellors to visit Juda and Jerusalem in the name of that divine law thou carriest with thee, and to convey thither such silver and gold as the king and his council are sending to the God who dwells there, the God of Israel, as their own free gift. Whatever silver and gold in all Babylon is at thy disposal, all that is willingly offered by people and priests for the temple of their God at Jerusalem, thou art free to accept; and so with all thy diligence buy calf and ram and lamb and all the offerings and libations that go with them, gifts, when you reach Jerusalem, for the temple of your God. Use what remains of the sum as thou and thy brethren, in obedience to the will of your God, shall see fit. There at Jerusalem, in the presence of thy God, consecrate those appurtenances of his worship thou hast with thee. All else thou must needs spend upon thy God's house shall be defrayed by the treasury and the royal purse, at my own cost.

King Artaxerxes to all that have charge of the royal revenues beyond Euphrates; My will and decree is, that if the priest Esdras, a scribe of the God of heaven, demands any payment of you, it should be made without more ado; so long as this payment does not exceed a hundred talents of silver, two hundred quarters of wheat, or six hundred and fifty gallons of oil; for salt, there is no limit prescribed. What the God of heaven needs for his temple worship, the God of heaven must receive; let there be no remissness, that may call down his vengeance on the king, and the king's heirs. We make it known to you further that priests, Levites, singers, door-keepers,

¹ The Persian dynasty which had ousted the Babylonian dynasty which had ousted the Assyrian dynasty is described in this way, presumably because the second class of people mentioned in verse 21 came (many of them) from the territory of the ten Israelite tribes. It was an Assyrian king who had conquered Samaria, and to them the great empire of the east was still 'Assyria'.

Nathinaeans, and other persons ministering in the temple of this God, are exempt from all tax, toll and custom of your imposing.

It is for thee, Esdras, who dost carry with thee the wise precepts of thy God, to appoint judges and magistrates, that will try the causes of all such persons beyond the river as are acquainted with thy God's law; and such as do not know it, you may instruct freely. If anyone neglects to observe that law, or the king's law either, these judges shall have power to pronounce sentence on him of death, exile, confiscation of his goods, or imprisonment.

Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, that moved the king so to honour his temple at Jerusalem, and deigned so to aid me when king and councillor and noble gave me audience! My task lightened by such favour shewn me, I set about finding men of name in Israel to bear me company.

8 The leaders, who took part with me in this migration under Artaxerxes, were descended as follows: Gersom was of the stock of Phinees, Daniel of Ithamar, Hattus of David. These were the numbers the various clans provided: Pharos (of the sons of Sechenias), a hundred and fifty under Zacharias; Pahath-Moab, two hundred under Elioenai, son of Zarehe; Sechenias, three hundred under . . . , son of Ezechiel; Adan, fifty under Abed son of Jonathan; Alam, seventy under Isaias son of Athalias; Saphatia, eighty under Zebdia son of Michael; Joab, two hundred and eighteen under Obedia son of Jahiel; Selomith, a hundred and sixty under . . . , son of Josphia; Bessai, twenty-eight under Bessai's son Zacharias; Azgad, a hundred and ten under Johanan son of Ecetan; Adonicam, sixty, under his last remaining sons, Elipheleth, Jehiel and Samaias; Begui, seventy under Uthai and Zachur.

We made a halt of three days by the Ahava river; and there I found that I had common folk with me and priests, but no Levites. So I despatched some of the chiefs, Eliezer, Ariel, Semeias, Elnathan, Jarib, (a second Elnathan,) Nathan, Zacharias and Moßollam, with two prudent counsellors, Joiarib and Elnathan, to

Eddo, who was in command at Casphia; I bade them ask Eddo and the Nathinaeans who were there with him to supply us with ministers for the house of our God. And they, by God's favour, sent us . . . , a Levite of Moholi's clan, with Sarabias and eighteen more of his kinsmen; also a Merarite, Hasabias, with Isaias and twenty more of his. There were also two hundred and twenty Nathinaeans; these Nathinaeans were men bound over by David and David's councillors to the service of the Levites. A list of all their names was supplied to us.¹

There, by the Ahava river, I proclaimed a fast; we would do penance, and ask of the Lord our God a safe journey for ourselves, for the children who went with us, and for all that was ours. I would have asked the king for an escort of horsemen to defend us from attack, but shame withheld me; had we not boasted in the king's presence that our God graciously protected all who had recourse to him, that only faithless servants of his brought down on themselves the constraining power of his vengeance? So fast we did, to win the favour we asked of God, and all went well.

Then I chose twelve of the leading priests, Sarabias and Hasabias with ten others, and handed over to them the offerings made by king, councillors, and nobles, and by such Israelites as came forward with gifts; the whole weight of silver and gold, and all the hallowed appurtenances of our God's temple. It was six hundred and fifty talents of silver I paid over to them, with a hundred pieces of silver ware; and a hundred talents of gold, with twelve bowls of the same metal, each of ten pounds' weight, and two pieces of the finest bronze ware, like gold itself for beauty. You are consecrated to the Lord, I told them, and here are consecrated things; here are silver and gold offered as a free gift to the Lord God of our fathers. Keep watchful guard over them; you are answerable for delivering them safely, in the presence of priest and Levite and clan chief there in Jerusalem, into the treasury of our God. So these priests and Levites took all that weight of silver and gold into their keeping, and the ornaments besides,

¹ In verses 16-20 it seems likely that some minor errors have been made in copying out the names.

that must be brought safely to the house of our God at Jerusalem.

- 31 We left the Ahava river on the twelfth day of the first month, bound for Jerusalem; and, with our God protecting us from all peril on the way, of open enemy
32 or secret, to Jerusalem we came. We had
33 been there but three days before silver, gold and ornaments, were delivered safe in our God's temple. Meremoth, son of the priest Urias, and Eleazar, son of Phinees, with two Levites, Jozabed son of Josue and
34 Noadaia son of Bennoi, handed it over, all counted and weighed, and its weight was
35 duly entered. And these exiles, restored now from captivity, offered the God of Israel burnt-sacrifice; twelve calves for the twelve tribes of Israel, ninety rams and seventy-seven lambs, besides twelve goats as an offering for fault. Such was the burnt-sacrifice they made in the Lord's
36 honour; then they delivered the royal edict to the governors, that were the king's officers; and now God's people and God's house were held in honour by all that bore rule in the country west of Euphrates.

- 9 When all this was done, a complaint was brought to me by the chieftains, against priest and Levite and common folk alike. They had not kept themselves apart from the old inhabitants of the land, Chanaanite, Hethite, Perezite, Jebusite, Ammonite, Moabite, Egyptian and Amorrhite, or from their detestable practices; foreign wives and daughters-in-law had contaminated the sacred stock of Israel, and the chief blame for this lay with
3 the rulers and magistrates themselves. At this news I tore cloak and tunic both,
4 plucked hair from head and beard, and sat there lamenting. Such as feared God's warnings, defied by these restored exiles, rallied to my side; and still I sat lamenting until the time came for the evening sacrifice.

- 5 Then, at the time of the evening sacrifice, I rose up from my posture of grief; cloak and tunic still torn about me, I fell
6 to the Lord my God. And thus I prayed: O my God, I am all confusion, I am ashamed to lift my eyes towards thee; so deep, head-deep, are we sunk in the flood

of our wrong-doing, so high, heaven-high, mounts the tale of our transgressions. Sinful fathers begot us, sinners are we to this day; in vain have we fallen a prey, we and our kings and our priests, to the power of Gentile kings, to massacre, exile, rapine, and the humiliation that is with us now. For a brief moment it seemed as if the Lord our God had listened to our prayers; he would leave a remnant of our race surviving, leave us a foot-hold¹ on this holy ground; some gleam of hope our God would afford us, some breath of life in our bondage. Slaves we were, but in our slavery the Lord did not abandon us; he deigned to win us the favour of the Persian king; we were to live still, the house of our God was to rise anew, restored from its ruins, Juda and Jerusalem should have a wall to defend them. And now, O Lord our God, after all this, what plea can we offer? Thy will stands defied.

That will of thine, through thy servants the prophets, thou hast made fully known to us. They warned us, The land in whose conquest you are engaged is a heathen land, like heathen lands everywhere, unclean; detestable rites have filled it to the brim with defilement. Never a daughter of yours for their sons, never a daughter of theirs for yours; never peace or good will between them and you, while time lasts! So you shall rise to greatness, so you shall enjoy all the blessings this land of yours can give, and bequeath them evermore to your sons for their inheritance. And now, after so much wrong-doing, such punishment for lives ill lived, such pardon for our sins, and the deliverance that is with us this day, should we turn back? Should we defy thy commandments, by mating with these, the abominable? Oh, then indeed thy patience is at an end; no remnant of us is to be left surviving! Lord God of Israel, the fault is not with thee; that we are alive to-day is proof of it. Ours is the fault; we stand before thee guilty, and without excuse.

10 While Esdras thus prayed for mercy, lying in tears before God's temple, a great throng of Israelites gathered round him, men, women and children alike, and loud was their lament.

¹ Literally, 'a peg', such as is used for fixing a tent down.

2 At last Sechenias the son of Jehiel, of Aclam's clan, said to him, We have offended our God by marrying foreign wives, women of the neighbouring peoples; but is there no hope of pardon for 3 Israel? Come, let us make a covenant with the Lord our God; let us send away these wives, and the children born of them. That is the Lord's counsel; that is the counsel of all who reverence his commands; let the 4 law be obeyed! With thee, Esdras, the decision rests; count on our obedience; up, 5 and go boldly about thy task. So Esdras rose up, and bound them by an oath, priests, Levites, and common folk, to do 6 their part. Then, leaving the temple forecourt, he betook himself to Johanan's lodging, that was son of Eliasib; but here too he would neither eat nor drink, so bitterly he grieved over the restored exiles and their faithlessness.

7 And now word went round Juda and Jerusalem, that all those who had returned from captivity must meet together in the city; it had been decreed by the rulers and the elders that any man who did not appear there within three days should be deprived of all his goods and should be cut off from the restored community. Meet together 9 they did, all the men of Juda and Benjamin, within the three days prescribed (that is, on the twentieth day of the ninth month), at Jerusalem. There they sat, a whole people, in the open space before the house of God, their spirits cowed by guilt, 10 and by the rain that was falling. And the priest Esdras rose up and spoke to them. There is guilt among you, he said; by mating with aliens you have made the reckoning against Israel heavier yet. Confess your fault to the Lord God of your fathers, and obey his will; separate yourselves from the peoples that live around you, from the foreign wives you have

married. At that, the whole multitude 12 gave a loud cry, At thy bidding it shall be done! Only, because the throng was so 13 great, and it was the rainy season, when there was no standing out of doors, because their task could not be performed in one day or two, so many were the faults thus committed, they would have their rulers 14 go bail for the rest.¹ Then, in each township, those who had married alien wives should meet the elders and judges of it at a fixed time, till at last no faults were left to earn their God's vengeance. So Jona- 15 than, son of Azahel, and Jaasia, son of Thecuc, took charge of this,² with two Levites, Mesollam and Sebethai, to help them; and the restored exiles kept their word, and separated themselves. The 16 priest Esdras, with the clan chiefs... family by family and man by man; they began making their enquiries on the first day of the tenth month,³ and by the first 17 day of the first month all the husbands of foreign wives had passed before them.

Some members of the priestly families 18 had made such marriages... and his brothers, Maasia, Eliezer, Jarib and Godolia, sons of Josue, son of Josedec; all these engaged themselves to send their wives away and sacrifice a ram as an offering for fault. Besides these, there were Hanani 20 and Zebedia, of Emmer's family, Maasia, 21 Elia, Semeia, Jehiel and Ozias, of Harim's, Elioenai, Maasia, Ismael, Nathanael, Jozabed and Elasa, of Psheshur's. The Levites were Jozabed, Semei, Celaia (or Calita), 22 Phataia, Juda and Eliezer; there was one of the singers, Eliasib, and three of the door-keepers, Sellum, Telem and Uri. Of 25 the common folk, there were Remeia, Jezia, Melchia, Miamin, Eliezer (Melchia), and Banea, of Pharo's family; Mathania, 26 Zacharias, Jehiel, Abdi, Jerimoth and Elia, of Aclam's; Elioenai, Eliasib, Mathania, 27

¹ Literally, 'let rulers be set up in the whole multitude', which may also be understood as meaning that commissioners were to be appointed, to see the resolution carried out. But both in the Hebrew text and in the Septuagint Greek the phrase is, 'Let our rulers for all the congregation stand'. Both here and in the two following verses it may be questioned whether our text is not corrupt.

² Literally, 'stood over (or, against) this'. Both in the Hebrew text and in the Septuagint Greek the sentence begins, not with 'therefore', but with 'only' (or, 'nevertheless'). Some would render, 'Nevertheless Jonathan and Jaasia opposed this'; but elsewhere 'to stand against' in this sense applies to people, not to things. There would be some temptation to render 'Only Jonathan and Jaasia were guilty of this offence', as at the end of chapter 9, where exactly the same words are used; but it is difficult in that case to see how the two Levites come in.

³ As it stands, this verse can be read so as to make a complete sentence: 'And the restored exiles kept their word; and they went away, the priest Esdras and the clan chiefs, into the houses of their fathers, and all by their names...'; etc.; but it is difficult to see how any meaning can be attached to the sentence unless we suppose that some such words as 'took the whole people in order' have accidentally fallen out.

- Jerimuth, Zabad and Aziza, of Zethua's;
 28 Johanan, Hanania, Zabbai and Athalai, of
 29 Bebai's; Mosollam, Melluch, Adaia, Ja-
 30 sub, Saal and Ramoth, of Bani's; Edna,
 Chalal, Banaias, Maasias, Mathanias,
 31 Beseleel, Bennui and Manasses, of Pha-
 hath-Moab's. Of Herem's family there
 were Eliezer, Josue, Melchias, Semeias,
 32 Simeon, Benjamin, Maloch and Samarias,
 33 and of Hasom's, Mathanai, Mathatha,
 Zabad, Eliphelet, Jermai, Manasses and
 Semei. Of Bani's family there were
 Maaddi, Amram, Uel, Baneas, Badaias,
 Cheliau, Vania, Marimuth, Eliasib, Ma-
 thanias, Mathanai, Jasi, Bani, Bennui,
 Semei, Salmias, Nathan, Adaias, Mechn-
 debai, Sisai, Sarai, Ezrel, Selemiau,
 Semeria, Sellum, Amaria and Joseph. Of
 Nebo's family, Jehiel, Mathathias, Zabad,
 Zabina, Jeddu, Joel and Banaia. All these
 had taken foreign wives, some of whom
 had already given birth to children.

THE SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS

OR THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAS

TH**E**SE are the memoirs of Nehemias, son of Helchias. One day in the month of Casleu, the year, the twentieth of Artaxerxes, in the royal city of Susa, I was visited by a kinsman of mine, Hanani, who brought with him certain travellers just come from Juda. So I asked them how it went with Jerusalem, and with the Jews still left there, survivors of the exiles who returned. Survivors there are, said they, in various parts of the province, left over from the days of the exile. But they are in great distress, and count for nothing; Jerusalem is but broken walls and charred gates.¹ For a long time after hearing this news I kept my house, all tears and lament; I fasted, and sought audience with the God of heaven in prayer.

Mercy, I cried, thou God of heaven, the strong, the great, the terrible! Thou who ever keepest thy gracious promises to the souls that love thee, and are true to thy commandments! Let thy ears be attentive, thy eyes watching still; listen to the prayer I offer thee now, thy servant, interceding day and night for my fellow-servants, the men of Israel. Listen to the confession I make of our sins; they, the men of Israel, have sinned, I and my father's race have sinned; led away by false aims, we have neglected decree and observance and award of thine, enjoined on thy servant Moses. But do not forget that this servant of thine, Moses, had a promise of thee too. Far and wide though thou shouldst scatter us among the nations, when we disobeyed thee, yet if we came back to thee, if we kept thy bidding in mind and performed it, then wouldst thou reunite us, though the furthest corner of earth were our place of banishment, and bring us home to that city which is the chosen shrine of thy name.

Are they not thy own servants, thy own people, won for thee by thy great deeds, by thy constraining power? Let not thy ears be deaf, Lord, I beseech thee, to thy servant's prayer, to the prayer of all these servants of thine who love to hold thy name in reverence. Speed thy servant well this day, and win for him the pity of a human heart.

It was of the king I spoke; I was the royal cup-bearer.

2 It was the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of king Artaxerxes' reign. The king sat at his wine, and as I took it up to hand it to him, I stood there sad of mien in the royal presence.² Why, what mean these pale looks? he asked. Ill I know thou art not; this can be nothing else than some sorrow gnawing at thy heart. At this, I was in an extreme of fear; and, wishing the king long life, I answered, Little wonder if my looks are sad, when the city where my father lies buried is but a wilderness, and its gates blackened with fire. What wouldst thou have of me? the king asked. And I, first praying to the God of heaven, made answer thus, Did I but stand so high in the royal favour, my request would be that thou wouldst send me to Judaea, to this city where my father lies buried, and give me leave to rebuild it. No question had the king to ask, or his consort that was there beside him, but how long my journey would last? When did I think to return? So the king was content to let me go, and it was for me to name the time of my absence. Then I said, May it please the king's grace to entrust me with letters for the governors of the country beyond Euphrates, bidding them see me safe on my way to Judaea; a letter, moreover, to Asaph, the ranger of the royal forest, bid-

¹ This verse is usually held to imply that the exiled Jews had already made some attempt to rebuild the city, as well as the temple, and that their enemies had destroyed such fortifications as they had raised; cf. I Esdras 4. 23.

² The Hebrew text here has 'And I was not evil before him', probably through some error of copying. The Septuagint Greek, reading a very slightly different text in the Hebrew, gives us 'and there was no other (that is, no other servant in attendance) in his presence'.

ding him supply me with timber for coping the gates of the temple palace and the city walls, and roofing my own house besides. All this, by God's favour, the king granted me.

- 9 So I made my way to the governors beyond Euphrates, with royal letters to give them, and a royal escort of captains and horsemen. Sick and sorry men were
10 Sanaballat the Horonite, and Tobias the Slave, one of the breed of Ammon, to hear of any visitor that had Israel's welfare at
11 heart. Then I went on to Jerusalem, and
12 waited three days before telling anyone what purpose God had put into my heart, to bring me there. When I stirred abroad, it was at dead of night, with only a few men to attend me, and none mounted but myself.
13 At dead of night, I went out by the Valley Gate, past the Dragon's Well, and on to the Scavengers' Gate, and all the way I found the wall of Jerusalem lying in ruins,
14 and its gates blackened with fire. The next gate I came to was that of the Well, and beyond that was the royal aqueduct; here the beast I was mounted on could find no
15 way to pass. So, at midnight, I passed along the ravine and examined the wall, returning home again by the Valley Gate;
16 none of the rulers knew whither I had gone, or on what errand; I had not opened my mind yet to the Jewish folk, priest or noble or ruler or any other whom the task
17 concerned. But now I called upon them to witness the sore strait we had been brought to, Jerusalem a wilderness, the gates blackened with fire; Come, I said, let us build Jerusalem walls, and endure content
18 tempt no longer! Then I told them what favour God had shewn me, what speech I had had with the king's grace; Up, I cried, to the task! And with the good news, courage came back to them.
- 19 When word came to Sanaballat the Horonite, and Tobias the Slave, that was of Ammon's breed, and Gosem the Arabian, all was mockery and disdain; Here are fine doings! they said. Are you for rebelling against the king's majesty? But
20 I had my answer ready for them: The Master we serve is the God of heaven; he

will be our helper. Leave us to set about our task of building; for you there is no right of possession, no privilege, no citizenship here at Jerusalem.¹

3 Up rose the high priest Eliasib, and his priestly brethren with him, and rebuilt the Shepherds' Gate; handselled it, and set up its doors, handselled the work all the way to Hundred-cubit Tower, all the way to the Tower of Hananeel. Next to him toiled, on this side, the men of Jericho; toiled, on that side, Zachur the son of Amri. The Fishmongers' Gate was restored by the sons of Asnaa, coping and doors, bolts and bars; then came Marimuth, son of Urias, son of Accus, then Mosollam, son of Barachias, son of Mesezebel; then Sadoc, son of Baana; then the folk of Thecue, though never a shoulder did their chieftains put to the Lord's work. The Old Gate was restored by Joiada son of Phasea and Mosollam son of Besodia, coping and doors, bolts and bars; then came Meltias of Gabaon and Jadon the Meronathite, (and the)² men of Gabaon and Maspha, but they were working for the governor of the country beyond Euphrates; then Eziel son of Araia, of the gold-merchants, then Ananias, of the apothecaries; these let out Jerusalem as far as the wall round the open square.³ Then came Raphaia, son of Hur, that was in charge of a whole district of the city; then Jedaia, son of Haromaph, for the part abutting on his own house; then Hattus, son of Hasebonias. Half of that district of the city, with the Furnace Tower, was restored by Melchias, son of Herem and, next to him, Hasub of the clan of Phathath-Moab; next him again came Sellum son of Alohes, that had half one of the districts of Jerusalem in his charge, and his daughters with him. The Valley Gate was restored by Hanun and the men of Zanoë, coping and doors, bolts and bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall besides, right up to the Scavengers' Gate. This was restored, bolt and bar and door, by Melchias son of Rechab, that had charge of the Bethacharam district; and the Gate of the Well

¹ 'No privilege', probably in the sense of spiritual benefits; 'No citizenship', literally. 'No memorial'—their names did not appear on any records.

² There is no 'and' in the original text, but it is difficult to see how the verse will make sense without it.

³ 'Let out', in the sense of enlarging its area; or possibly 'left out' in the sense of contracting its area. The phrase is awkward in either case, and some think the verb in the Hebrew text is from a different root, meaning 'to repair'.

by Sellum son of Cholhoza, chief of the Maspha district;¹ coping and door and bolt and bar he finished it, built the wall, too, of Siloe pool right up to the royal garden, and to the steps that lead down from David's Keep.

16 Nehemias son of Azboc, that had half the district of Bethsur in his charge, restored as far as David's tomb, and the artificial pool, and the House of the
17 Heroes. Then came the Levites . . . Rehum son of Benni; then Hesebias, along that part of the Ceila district which was in his
18 charge; then their brethren . . . Bavai son of Enadad, who had charge of the rest of the Ceila district. . . .²

19 Then came a second length of wall restored by Azer son of Josue, that was chieftain at Maspha, where the steps go
20 up by the great bastion; another second length by Baruch son of Zachai, from the bastion up to the door of the house where
21 the high priest Eliasib lived; and another by Merimuth son of Urias son of Accus, from the door all along the side of the
22 house. Then came some of the priests, men that dwelt in the plains of Jordan, then
23 Benjamin and Hasub for the part opposite their house, then Azarias, son of Maasias, son of Ananias, for the part opposite his.
24 Then Benui son of Enadad built a second length, from the house of Ananias to the
25 corner where the wall turns; then came Phalel, son of Ozi, for the part by the corner itself and the high tower of the royal palace that looks out on the prison yard;
26 then Phadaia, son of Pharos, and the Nathinaeans (who)³ lived in the Ophel quarter, for the part by the eastern water-gate, and the jutting tower. Then the men
27 of Thecue built a second length on the other side, from the great jutting tower to the temple wall. All the way up from the Stable Gate the priests restored, each along
28 the front of his own house. Then came Sadoc the son of Emmer, opposite his own house, then Semaia son of Sechenias, that
29 had charge of the eastern gate; then Hanania, son of Selemias, then Hanun, the sixth

son of Seleph, a second length, then Mosollam son of Barachias, opposite his store-room, then Melchias, of the goldsmiths, past where the Nathinaeans and the chapmen lived, opposite the Judgement Gate, right up to the room⁴ in the wall corner. And from the room in the wall
31 corner back to the Shepherds' Gate, the restoration was done by the goldsmiths and by the merchants.

4 Great was the rage of Sanaballat when news reached him that we were rebuilding the walls, and cruel were the taunts he uttered against the Jews in his anger. There among his kinsmen, there
2 before a throng of Samaritan folk, he taunted us: What are they about, these starveling Jews? Do they think we Gentiles will let them have their way? Or do they think to handsel their work at dawn and have it finished by nightfall? From those charred ashes can they make stones to build with? Let them build, said his
3 gossip, Tobias the Ammonite; come a fox by, he will leap over all the stones they can put together.

Mark it well, Lord God, how they turn
4 us into a laughing-stock; on their own heads let the mockery recoil; exile and ignominy be their own lot! Do not hide
5 away their guilt; imperishable in thy presence be the record of the wrong they did, in flouting such a design as this!

Meanwhile we did not cease building,
6 and now we had completed the whole circuit of the wall up to half its full height, so eagerly did the people set about their task. And when this news came, that the breach
7 in Jerusalem walls was healing, and the gaps were being filled, great was the indignation of Sanaballat and Tobias, of Arab, Ammonite and Philistine alike; and
8 now, making common cause, they would attack Jerusalem and throw all into confusion. But still we asked help of our God,
9 and set watchmen on the walls, day and night, to defeat their purpose. Already the
10 Jews were complaining that they had no

¹ The 'Maspha district', like the other 'districts' mentioned in this chapter, seems to have been one of the quarters of Jerusalem; in verse 19, Azer is presumably the man who has charge of the town of Maspha.

² In verses 17-18, it seems likely that there is some break or fault in the text. That the list of names as we have it is incomplete, is suggested by the ensuing verses, where several people not hitherto mentioned are described as making themselves responsible for a second length of wall.

³ It is difficult not to believe that the word 'who' has dropped out of the text; a mere parenthesis about the district where the Nathinaeans lived seems wholly out of place.

⁴ In the Hebrew text, 'the ascent'.

strength left for carrying burdens, that the
 11 ground was choked with rubble; our task
 would never be finished; and now our
 12 enemies thought to steal upon us unawares,
 and put an end to it by taking our lives. On
 ten several occasions Jews that lived near
 13 them came back to us from different parts
 with the same news; and at last I must
 array a force, armed with sword and lance
 and bow, behind the wall round its whole
 14 circuit. That provision made, I set about
 encouraging them, nobles and chiefs and
 common folk alike; Fear no assault, I told
 them; bethink you how great, how fear-
 some the Lord is, and fight well each for
 his own kindred, for son and daughter and
 15 wife, for house and home. And so, when
 word came to our enemies that we had
 been forewarned, God threw all their plot
 into confusion.

Back we went to our several posts at the
 16 wall; and thenceforward the warriors
 among us were divided into two com-
 panies; one of these remained at work,
 while behind them, under the clan chiefs
 of Juda, the rest stood arrayed for battle,
 with lance and shield, bow and breast-
 17 plate. And even while they were at work,
 built they or loaded or carried loads, it was
 one hand to work with, and one closing still
 18 on a javelin;¹ nor was there ever a work-
 man but must build with his sword girt at
 his side. And the men that blew the trum-
 19 pets were close beside me; I had warned
 nobles and chiefs and common folk, Here
 is a task for many to do; spread wide apart,
 we are sundered far here on the wall and
 20 there; rally, all of you, to any point where
 you hear the trumpet sound, and our God
 21 will be our speed. We officers² too must
 take our share in the work, only half of us
 standing by with our spears, from dawn
 22 till the stars rise. And to the common folk
 I said, Each of you, and his manservant
 with him, must lodge here in Jerusalem
 itself, taking turn and turn about, day and
 23 night. As for myself, and my clansmen
 and servants, and the men of my body-
 guard, we never took our garments off
 all the while, save when we stripped for
 washing.

5 And now there was a great outcry of
 the common sort, men and women,
 against their richer neighbours, that were
 Jews too. Poor folk, who had sons and
 daughters in great number, had bethought
 themselves of bartering these for the corn
 they must have if they would live; some,
 in the great scarcity, had been ready to
 pledge lands, vineyards and house in
 return for corn; some had offered vineyard
 or lands for a pledge when they would
 borrow money to pay the royal tribute.
 And now they complained, These men are
 our brothers; of one race, they and we, of
 one race, their sons and ours; and here are
 we, with some of our daughters bond-
 women already, giving up sons and daugh-
 ters to slavery still, and no hope of
 ransoming them; here are lands and vine-
 yards of ours given over to the enjoyment
 of others!

Great was my anger when I heard such
 cause of complaint was theirs. I took deep
 thought over it, and then taxed nobles and
 rulers with their fault; would they play the
 usurer with their own brethren? Sum-
 moning a great assembly of the citizens to
 confront them, I reminded them that we
 in Babylon had been at pains to ransom our
 Jewish brethren who were enslaved to the
 heathen; must we now ransom them anew,
 from masters of their own flesh and blood?
 At this, there was silence; nothing could
 they find to say.³ Here are sorry doings,
 I told them. Have you no fear of God's
 vengeance, of the reproach this will earn
 from our heathen neighbours? You are
 11 not the only creditors; I myself, my kins-
 men and my servants have been lending
 money and corn on all sides. Come, let us
 conspire to forgo our rights, let us all remit
 the debt due to us; and do you restore,
 11 here and now, lands, vineyards, olive-yards
 and houses; restore, too, the interest
 charge you claim of a hundredth, for
 money and corn, wine and oil alike. Re-
 12 store it we will, they answered, and make
 no further claim; thy bidding shall be
 done. Thereupon I summoned the priests,
 and would have this undertaking secured
 by an oath. I shook the dust, too, from the
 13

¹ In the Latin version, 'sword', but cf. verse 18. It is possible that the picture of men actually building with a weapon held in the left hand is a rhetorical exaggeration to express the measure of their preparedness.

² The word 'officers' is not in the original, but the emphasis thrown on the word 'we' seems to indicate that this is the sense intended.

³ The interpretation of this verse in the Hebrew text is not certain; but the rendering above, which follows the Latin, seems to give the best sense.

folde of my lap, and cried out: God give no gentler handling than this to the man who plays me false; sweep away house and lands, and leave him a beggar! Amen, answered the whole assembly, and gave praise to God. And loyally the agreement was kept.

- 14 For twelve years, ever since Artaxerxes gave me my commission in Juda (that is, from the twentieth to the thirty-second year of his reign) my kinsmen and I refused to take the allowance which was granted to the governors. My predecessors, by accepting corn, wine, and money, at the rate of forty sicles a day, had been a burden to the people, who suffered also from the exactions of their servants. Not so I, God's
- 15 fear preventing me; instead of buying lands, my care was to help build the wall, and there was no servant of mine but took
- 16 his place among the workmen. A hundred and fifty Jews, (the rulers,¹ and those) who came in to help us from the country round
- 17 about, fed at my expense; every day an ox and six fat rams, and fowls besides, were dressed for me, and every tenth day brought a fresh supply of various wines; yet for this and much else I would take no allowance as governor in return; to such straits had the men of Juda been brought.
- 18 Not unremembered, Lord, not unwarded, be these services done to thy people.

6 And now news reached Sanaballat and Tobias and the Arabian, Gosem, and the rest of our enemies, that I had finished building the wall, and never a gap was left in it; although in truth I had not yet been able to set up doors in the gateways. Thereupon Sanaballat and Gosem sent a message proposing that I should meet them in some unfortified town on the plains of Ono, and there make a treaty; it was their design to do me some mischief.

3 But I bade my own messengers answer, It is a hard task I must perform here; I am not for the plain. There would be folk standing idle here, while I came down to meet you. Four times they sent word to the same purpose, and ever had the same answer from me; and once more Sanaballat repeated it, but this time the servant

who brought it had a letter in his hand. And this was the tenour of it: The Gentiles will have it, and Gosem says the tale is true, that thou and the Jews are rebuilding the walls because you are plotting rebellion. It is said that thou wouldst be king thyself, and to that end hast put forward prophets to preach thee up in Jerusalem, and announce that Juda has a king. All this will reach the ears of Artaxerxes; come hither thou must, and we will devise measures between us. But I sent word back, There is no truth in the tale; it is of thy own imagining.

It was but a conspiracy to frighten us; their thought was we would cease building, and bide our time; but I pressed on the harder. I went once to visit Semaïas, son of Dalaïas, son of Metabee; he was then keeping his house. Nay, said he, let us go to the temple and there hold converse, there in the heart of the temple, behind shut doors. They are coming to murder thee; this very night they are coming to murder thee. What, I answered, I take flight? I am not the man to save my life by skulking in God's house. The temple is not for me. And well I knew that his was no errand from God, though he spoke to me as one inspired to prophesy. It was Tobias and Sanaballat that had him in their pay; they had bribed him, hoping that through terror I would commit a fault, and they would have ill tales to spread about me. Not unremembered, Lord, be all this that I suffered on account of Tobias and Sanaballat; of the prophet Noadia, too, and all those prophets that would have daunted me!

The wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul; it had taken fifty-two days a-building. And when this reached the ears of our enemies, fear overtook all the nations round about us; their stature fell in their own eyes, and they doubted no longer that it was God who had inspired the enterprise.

Tobias, at this time, was exchanging letters with many of the Jewish nobles; he had married the daughter of Sechenias, son of Area, and wedded his son Johanan to the daughter of Mosollam, son of Barachias, and so had a great following in

¹ There is no mention of rulers in the Septuagint Greek; it seems possible that the word has crept into the Hebrew text through an error.

19 Judaea. Still they sang his praises to me, still sent him news of all I did; this very Tobias who was writing letters to fill me with alarm.

7 When the wall was finished, and I had set up the gates, I made a register of the door-keepers; of the singers, too, and the Levites. Then I entrusted the defence of the city to my kinsman Hanani, and to Hananias, who was controller of the temple palace at Jerusalem, and eminent, as it seemed to me, in honour and piety; these I made answerable for seeing to it that the gates should never be opened till the sun was up. At nightfall, the gates must be bolted and barred in their presence. And such citizens of Jerusalem as had houses facing the wall must take their turn at keeping watch.

4 Far and wide the city stretched, and its citizens were few and far between; the houses in it had not yet been repaired. But I, God putting such a resolve into my heart, mustered them all, nobles, rulers and common citizens alike, to make a register of them. I found the old register, with the names of those who first returned from exile, and their numbers, it proved, were as follows.

6 These were the numbers in which they came back to Jerusalem, and to the various cities of Juda, these exiles that had been taken to Babylon by the Chaldaean king Nabuchodonosor, and afterwards returned home. Their leaders were Zorobabel, Josue, Nehemias, Azarias, Raamias, Nahamani, Mardocheus, Belsam, Mespharath, Begoai, Nahum and Baana. These were the numbers the various clans of Israel provided: Pharos, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two, Saphatia, three hundred and seventy-two, Area, six hundred and fifty-two, Phahath-Moab. . . Josue-Joab, two thousand eight hundred and eighteen, Aelam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four, Zethua, eight hundred and forty-five, Zachai, seven hundred and sixty, Bannui, six hundred and forty-eight, Bebai, six hundred and twenty-eight, Azgad, two thousand three hundred and twenty-two, Adoniam, six hundred and sixty-seven, Beguai, two thousand and sixty-seven, Adin, six hundred and fifty-five, Ater, coming from Hesecias, ninety-

A Register of the Families that returned

eight, Hasem, three hundred and twenty-eight, Besai, three hundred and twenty-four, Hareph, a hundred and twelve.

And the various townships provided: Gabaon, ninety-five, Bethlehem and Netupha, a hundred and eighty-eight, Anathoth, a hundred and twenty-eight, Bethazmoth, forty-two, Cariathiarim, Cephira and Beroth, seven hundred and forty-three, Rama and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one, Machmas, a hundred and twenty-two, Bethel and Hai, a hundred and twenty-three, (the other) Nebo fifty-two, (the other) Aelam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four, Harem, three hundred and twenty, Jericho, three hundred and forty-five, Lod, Hadid and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-one, Senaa, three thousand nine hundred and thirty. . .

And the various priestly clans provided: Idaia, in the line of Josue, nine hundred and seventy-three, Emmer, a thousand and fifty-two, Phashur, a thousand two hundred and forty-seven, Arem, a thousand and seventeen. Levites there were, named after Josue and Cedmihel, that came down from Oduias, seventy-four; singers, after Asaph, a hundred and forty-eight; door-keepers, after Sellum, Ater, Telmon, Accub, Hatita and Sobai, a hundred and thirty-eight.

The Nathinaeans included the sons of Soha, Hasupha, Tebbaoth, Ceros, Siaa, Phadon, Lebana, Hagaba, Selmai, Hanan, Geddel, Gaher, Raaiia, Rasin, Necoda, Gezem, Aza, Phasea, Besai, Munim, Nephussim, Bacbuc, Hacupha, Harhur, Besioth, Mahida, Harsa, Bercos, Sisara, Thema, Nasia, and Hatipha, Solomon's servants, Sothai, Sophereth, Pharida, Jahala, Darcon, Jeddell, Saphatia, Hatil, Phochereth, son of Sabaim, son of Amon; these Nathinaeans, including those descended from the servants of Solomon, amounted to three hundred and ninety-two in all.

Some of those who came back from Thelmela, Theiharsa, Cherub, Addon and Emmer could not prove whence their ancestors came or whether they were of Israelite stock; they were descendants of Dalaia, Tobia and Necoda, amounting to six hundred and forty-two. Such, too, among the priests were the sons of Habia, of Accos, and of that Berzellai who married

4 a daughter of Berzellai the Galaadite and took his name; they could find no written record of their ancestry, and were expelled 5 from the priesthood; they might not partake of the food reserved for the priests, the governor told them, until there should be a high priest that bore the touchstones of wisdom and truth.

6 The whole number, taken together, amounted to forty-two thousand three 7 hundred and sixty, not counting the men and women servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-eight, with two hundred and forty-five 8 men and maids that were singers. They had with them seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five 9 mules, four hundred and thirty-five camels, six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.¹

(End of the register. The narrative of Nehemias continues.)

10 ... Some of the chief families made contributions to help the enterprise. The governor handed over to the treasury a thousand gold pieces, fifty bowls, and five hundred and thirty tunics for the priests; the heads of clans, twenty thousand gold pieces, and two thousand two hundred silver pieces, the rest of the people, twenty thousand gold pieces, two thousand silver pieces, and sixty-seven tunics for the priests. And now priests and Levites, singers and door-keepers (and the rest of the people) and the Nathinaeans and all Israel were back in the cities that were their homes.

8 When the seventh month had come after the return of the Israelites to their cities, the whole people gathered, like one man, in the open space before the Water-gate; and there they would have the scribe Esdras go and fetch the book in which the law of Moses, the Lord's prescription to Israel, was written down. So there and then, on the first day of the seventh month, the priest Esdras fetched out the book, in the presence of a great throng of men and women, with such children as were old enough to understand it.

And there in the open space before the 3 Water-gate he proclaimed the law, before men and women and such younger folk as could take it in, from daybreak to noon, and all listened attentively while the reading went on. A wooden pulpit had been 4 erected to carry the sound better, and at this the scribe Esdras stood; with him were Mathathias, Semeia, Ania, Uria, Helcia and Maasia on his right, Phadaia, Misael, Melchia, Hasum, Hasbadana, Zacharia and Mosollam on his left. Esdras was 5 plainly seen, as he opened the book, by all the people underneath. When he had opened it, all rose; and when he blessed the name of the Lord, the great God, all 6 lifted their hands and answered, Amen, amen; and with that they bowed down and worshipped with their faces close to the ground. Then the Levites came forward, 7 Josue, Bani, Serebia, Jamin, Accub, Sebtai, Odia, Maasia, Celita, Azarias, Joza-bed, Hanan and Phalaia; these enjoined silence on the people, as they stood there in their places for the reading of the law. And they read out the book of the law, 8 clear and plain to give the sense of it, so that all could understand the reading. And 9 now the governor, Nehemias, with Esdras, priest and scribe, and these Levites who interpreted to the people what was read, must needs remind them that it was a feast-day set apart to the Lord; there must be no lamenting and weeping; already the whole multitude were in tears, as they listened to the words of the law. Go home, 10 said Nehemias, and regale yourselves with rich meat and honeyed wine, sharing your good things with those who have none. There must be no sadness on this day, the Lord's feast-day. To rejoice in the Lord, there lies our strength. The Levites, too, 11 called for silence everywhere; Peace there, no lamenting, they said, this is a day of rejoicing. So all the throng dispersed, to 12 eat and drink and share their good things with glad hearts, the message of the law made plain to them.

Next day, all the clan chiefs and priests 13 and Levites thronged about the scribe Esdras, to hear him interpret the law's

¹ *vs.* 6-69, cf. I Esdras 2. 1-67. It is evident from the slight variations which will be noticed among the figures that our text of the sacred scriptures is not always immune from occasional errors in copying.

² The note here given is only found in the Latin version. It will be observed that verse 73 here is nevertheless a repetition of I Esdras 2. 70, and seems to belong to the register-document.

14 meaning. And there they found it set down, as the Lord's injunction through Moses, that the sons of Israel, at the feast of the seventh month, should make their dwelling in tents. They were to proclaim it far and wide at Jerusalem and in all their cities, Go out to the mountain-side, and bring in boughs of olive, or of some favourite tree, branches of myrtle and palm, leafy boughs, to make arbours, as the law prescribes. So the men of Juda went out, and brought green boughs home; arbours they made everywhere, in their own dwellings and fore-courts, in the courts of the Lord's house, and in the open spaces before the Water-gate and the Gate of Ephraim. Thus the whole body of those who had come back from exile made arbours and lodged in them; since the days of Josue son of Nun the rite had fallen into abeyance, and now there was great rejoicing. Day after day while the feast continued Esdras read out the book of God's law to them. So for seven days they kept high festival, and on the eighth there was a gathering of the whole people, held with due solemnity.

9 Then, on the twenty-fourth day of this same month, the men of Israel met together, fasting, and with sackcloth about them, and sprinkled with dust, and the whole breed of Israel severed itself from all contact with alien folk. They met to confess their sins, and all the guilt their fathers had brought on them. The day was divided into four parts; first they would stand in their places, while the terms of the Divine law were read to them, then they would make confession, and offer worship to the Lord their God. It was for the Levites to mount upon the pulpit, Josue, Bani, Cedmihel, Sabania, Bonni, Sarebias (Bani), and Chanani, and cry out in a loud voice to the Lord their God.

5 . . . This was the prayer offered by the Levites, Josue, Cedmihel, Bonni, Hasebnia, Serebia, Odaia, Sebnia and Phatahia. Up, friends, and bless the Lord your God, as blessed he must be from the beginning to the end of time! Blessed be thy glorious name, O Lord, that is beyond all blessing, and all praise! Heaven is of

thy fashioning, and the heaven of heavens, and all the hosts that dwell there, earth and sea, and all that earth and sea hold; to all these thou givest the life they have; none so high in heaven but must pay thee worship. It was thou, Lord God, that didst make choice of Abram, and beckon him away from Chaldaea, from the City of Fire.¹ And now thou wouldst call him Abraham; a loyal servant thou didst find him, and didst make a covenant with him, promising that his race should inherit the lands of Chanaanite and Hethite, Amorrhite and Pherezite, Jebusite and Gergesite. That promise, in thy faithfulness, thou didst make good. Thou hadst an eye for the affliction our fathers suffered in Egypt, an ear for their cry of distress at the Red Sea; the pride of Pharao and Pharao's court and all his people had not passed unregarded; there were portents, and marvels, and thy name won renown, as it has won renown this day.

Thou didst part the waters at their coming, so that they crossed the sea dryshod, didst hurl their pursuers into the depths of it, so that they sank like a stone beneath the rushing waves. Thou thyself didst lead thy people on their journey, hidden by day in a pillar of cloud, by night in a pillar of fire, to light the path they must tread. There, on mount Sinai, thou didst keep tryst with them; thy voice came from heaven to teach them thy just decrees, thy abiding law with all its observances, all its wholesome bidding. There thou didst reveal to them how thy sabbath should be kept holy; law and observance and award thou, through Moses, didst hand down to them. When they were hungry, thou didst give them bread from heaven; when they were thirsty, thou didst bring water out of the rock; and for the goal of their journey didst beckon them on to take possession of this same land, which thou hadst sworn to give them.

But now our fathers sinned through pride in their turn; spurned the yoke, and would not listen to thy commandments. No memory of the wondrous protection thou hadst given them could win their obedience; they would spurn the yoke, and take their own defiant path, the path that

¹ That is, Ur. It is not clear why, in this passage, the Latin version has translated the name, as if it were a common noun. 'A furnace' is used in Deut. 4. 20 and elsewhere to describe a land of exile.

led back to slavery. But thou, a God so indulgent, so kind, so merciful, so patient, 18 so pitying, wouldst not abandon them; not even when they made a molten calf, and hailed it very blasphemously as the God 19 that had rescued them from Egypt; still in thy great mercy thou wouldst not cast them off in the desert. Never lacked they by day the pillar of cloud that led them, never by night the pillar of fire that shone 20 upon their path; still thy gracious spirit gave its warnings, still thou wouldst not refuse manna to feed them, water to 21 quench their thirst. All those forty years in the desert thou didst feed them, and nothing did they lack; never a garment threadbare, never a foot sore with travel.

22 Whole kingdoms, whole nations thou didst subdue before them, to allot them lands of their own; nothing Sehon possessed, that reigned at Hesebon, or Og, that was king in Basan, but should be 23 theirs. By now, thou hadst given increase to their race till they were countless as the stars in heaven; it was the fathers thou hadst first bidden to invade the land and 24 take possession of it, but it was their sons that reached the goal. At their coming, thou didst crush the pride of the Chanaanites that dwelt here, kings and people alike were a prey for the conqueror, left at 25 his mercy. So it was that our fathers gained cities well fortified, lands well tilled; houses full of all they needed, wells other men had dug for them, vineyard and olive-yard and orchard already planted. Now they might eat their fill, glut their appetites with all the good things thy mercy had bestowed.

26 Then it was they defied thy anger, thy worship forsaken, thy laws forgotten, and slew the prophets that adjured them to come back to thee. And thou, in return 27 for such foul impieties, didst give their enemies the mastery over them, till they fell into sore distress. But when, in their misery, they cried out to thee, thou, in heaven, didst not refuse them audience; ever thou wouldst send, of thy great mercy, a champion to bring them rescue. 28 Still the days of peace saw them defying thy will, until thou must needs put them at their enemies' mercy; still their repentant cries reached thy hearing, and won 29 them merciful deliverance. And thou, all

the while, wast pleading with them to return to thy allegiance, while they, too proud to heed thy bidding, transgressed the commandments that bring man life; always the unwilling shoulder, the stubborn neck, the deaf ear. Through long 30 years thy patience lasted, and thou wast content to warn them through inspiration given to thy prophets; then at last, when these went unheard, thou didst give thy people up into the hands of the Gentiles. And even so, in thy clemency, thou 31 wouldst not make an end of us; even now thou hast not abandoned us, so pitying, so merciful a God thou art.

To thee, then, we turn, who art our 32 God, to thee, the great, the strong, the terrible God, who dost not forget thy covenant, or the mercy thou hast promised. Do not think scorn of all the misery that has come upon us, king and prince, priest and prophet, in our fathers' time and since, from the day when the king of Assyria became our enemy. The fault 33 was never thine, if all this has overtaken us; thine the faithfulness, ours the unnatural rebellion. King and prince and 34 priest together, our fathers have neglected thy law; the decrees thou hadst enjoined, the warning thou gavest, went alike unheeded. The royal majesty, the blessings 35 showered on them, the wide domains thou didst subdue at their onslaught, were not enough to win obedience from them, or recall them from their rebellious ways. Here are we, this day, living as slaves; here 36 are the wide lands, the rich lands thou gavest to our fathers, to till and to enjoy, and we are living on them in slavery. The 37 harvests ripen for alien kings, our masters now in punishment of our guilt; our bodies, our beasts are theirs, to treat as they will, and oppression is all about us. In such a plight we turn to thee, binding 38 ourselves by a covenant; that covenant we here record in writing, rulers and Levites and priests have set their names to it.

10 At the head of those who signed this covenant was the governor, Nehemias the son of Hachelai; then came Sedecias, Saraias, Azarias, Jeremias, Phe- 2 shur, Amarias, Melchias, Hattus, Sebena, 4 Melluch, Harem, Merimuth, Obdias, 5 Daniel, Genthon, Baruch, Mosollam, 6

8 Abia, Miamin, Maazia, Belgai and Se-
 9 meia, all priests. Then the Levites, Josue
 son of Azanias, Bennui of Henadad's clan,
 10 Cedmihel, Sebenia, Odaia, Celita, Pha-
 11 laia, Hanan, Micha, Rohob, Hasebia,
 12 Zachur, Serebia, Sabania, Odaia, Bani and
 13 Baninu. Then the clan chiefs of Pharos,
 Phathath-Moab, Aelam, Zethu, Bani,
 15 Bonni, Azzgad, Bessai, Adonia, Begoai,
 17 Adin, Ater, Hezecia, Azur, Odaia, Hasum,
 19 Besai, Hareph, Anathoth, Nebai, Meg-
 21 phias, Mosollam, Hazir, Mesizabel, Sadoc,
 22 Jeddua, Pheltia, Hanan, Anaia, Osee,
 24 Hanania, Hasub, Alohes, Phalea, Sobec,
 25 Rehum, Hasebna, Maasia, Echaia, Hanan,
 27 Anan, Melluch, Haran and Baana. The
 oath was taken by the whole people,
 priests, Levites, door-keepers, singers,
 Nathinaeans and the rest, all who had
 broken off their contact with the Gentiles
 to keep the law of God. Wives as well as
 husbands took it; sons and daughters, too,
 29 where these were of age to understand its
 import. Their leaders did but go bail for
 the rest; all alike entered into a sworn
 undertaking that they would obey God's
 law, given through his servant Moses.
 Never a decree or award or observance the
 Lord our God had enjoined but they would
 keep it sacred and live by it.
 30 Never shall our children mate with the
 children of Gentile parents, or theirs with
 31 ours. Never shall Gentile wares, exposed
 on sabbath or feast-day, furnish our needs.
 Every seventh year the land shall lie
 32 fallow, and all debts shall be remitted. We
 impose upon ourselves a tax, of one third
 33 of a sicle yearly, for our God's temple; for
 the loaves that must be set out, and the
 continual offering, the burnt-sacrifice on
 sabbath and new moon and feast-day,
 welcome-offering and offering for fault
 that win Israel mercy, and all the needs of
 34 our God's house. For the provision of
 wood, we have cast lots between priests,
 Levites and the people at large so that each
 clan must take its turn, season and season
 about, bringing in logs to burn on the altar
 of the Lord our God, as the law of Moses
 35 enjoins. Year by year, too, we will bring
 to the Lord's house the first-fruits of all
 36 that our lands or fruit-trees yield; due

offering shall be made there of all our first-
 born, man or beast, ox or sheep, as the law
 bids, before the priests that minister there
 in the Lord's house; food and drink, 37
 the fruit of all our trees, our grapes and our
 olives, shall be taxed by the priests that
 have charge of our God's treasury. Our
 lands shall be tithed, too, for the Levites;
 in all our cities the Levites themselves shall
 collect a tithe from all our crops. 38
 A priest of Aaron's line shall accompany the Le-
 vites when they make the collection, and
 the Levites themselves shall contribute a
 tithe of their tithe to the house of our God,
 to the treasury where his wealth is stored.
 To that treasury all alike must contribute, 39
 Levites and people out of their corn and
 wine and oil; that house must have its furni-
 ture of worship, priest and singer, door-
 keeper and ministrant. It is the house of the
 Lord our God; shall we leave it forsaken?

11 The rulers must needs have their
 dwelling in Jerusalem; the com-
 mon folk had their residence assigned by
 lot, every tenth man going to live in the
 holy city, while the other nine remained in
 the country parts; whoever offered of his
 2 own free will to be a Jerusalem-dweller
 earned the blessings of his fellow-citizens.
 And these were the leading men of the
 colony that lived at Jerusalem, leaving the
 rest, the people at large, the priests, the
 Levites, the Nathinaeans, and the line of
 Solomon's servants, to occupy the country
 parts, each in the cities allotted to them. 4
 In Jerusalem, the population was mixed, men
 of Juda and men of Benjamin living side
 by side.

The chief men of Juda were Athaias,
 descended through Aziam, Zacharias,
 Amarias and Saphatias from Malaleel. . . .
 5 and for the line of Phares, Maasia, de-
 scended through Baruch, Chohzoa, Ha-
 zia, Adaia, Joiarib and Zacharias from
 Silonitess; altogether, there were four
 6 hundred and sixty-eight fighting men at
 Jerusalem that came down from Phares.
 The chief men of Benjamin were Sellum,
 descended through Mosollam, Joed, Pha-
 daia, Colaia, Masia and Ethael from Isaia,
 and next to him Gebbai. . . . Sallai. . . . nine 8

¹ It looks as if there had been an omission made here by a copyist; we should expect to hear that Athaias led the clan of Zara (as opposed to Phares) and to be given some account of their numbers.

² The two names here given are most reasonably accounted for by supposing a manuscript defect.

9 hundred and twenty-eight in all. All these were under the charge of Joel son of Zechri; Judas son of Senua was next in command of the city.

10 Among the leading priests were Idaia
11 son of Joiarib, Jachin, and Saraia, the temple prefect, that came down through Helcias, Mosollam, Sadoc and Meraioth
12 from Achitob; their clansmen, engaged in the service of the temple, amounted to eight hundred and twenty-two. Also Adaia, that came down through Jeroham, Phelelia, Amsi, Zacharias and Psheshur
13 from Melchias, with two hundred and forty-two heads of families, his clansmen. Also Amassai, descended through Azreel, Ahazi and Mosollamoth from Emmer,
14 with the clansmen of his line, a hundred and twenty-eight, valiant men all. And these were in charge of Zabdiel; his fathers, too, were valiant men before him.

15 The Levite chiefs were Semeia, descended through Hasub, Azaricam and
16 Hasabia from Boni, and Sabathai and Jozabed, these were in charge of the work the Levites did beyond the temple precincts; Mathania, descended through Micha and Zebedei from Asaph, led the music of praise and thanksgiving and prayer, with his kinsman Becbecia to aid him, and Abda, descended through Samua and Galal from Idithun. There were two hundred and eighty-four of these Levites in the city; and door-keepers besides, Accub and Telmon, with a hundred and seventy-two clansmen of theirs who shared their watch at the gates. The rest of Israel, priests and Levites included, had their homes in the various cities of Juda, but the Nathinaeans, with Siaha and Gaspha over them, all lived together in the Ophel quarter. The Levites at Jerusalem were in charge of Azzi, that came down through Bani, Hasabias and Mathanias from Michas. He was of the clan of Asaph, that were musicians in the service of the temple by royal command, taking their turns, day in, day out, with the chant.¹ The king's representative in all that concerned the citizens was Phathahia, son of Mesezebel, of Zara's clan, that was son to Juda.

All over the countryside the men of Juda
25 had their homes, at Cariatharbe, Dibon and Cabseel, with their daughter townships, at Jesue, Molada, Bethphaeath,
26 Hasersual, Bersabee and its neighbourhood, Siceleg, Mochona and its neighbourhood, Remmon, Saraa, Jerimuth,
27 Zanoa and Odollam and the towns near them, Lachis and its district, Azeca, too,
28 and its neighbourhood. Their territory stretched all the way from Bersabee in the south to the valley of Ennom. The Benjaminites, with Geba for their capital, were spread about at Mechmas, Hai, Bethel and its daughter townships, Anathoth, Nob,
29 Anania, Asor, Rama, Gethaim, Hadid, Seboim, Neballat, Lod and Ono, down in the Valley of the Craftsmen. And the precincts of the Levites were spread over Juda and Benjamin alike.

12 Here is a list of the priests and Levites who came back from exile with Zorobabel, Salathiel's son, and Josue. Saraia, Jeremias, Esdras, Amaria, Mel-luch, Hattus, Sebenias, Rheum, Merimuth, Addo, Genthon, Abia, Miamin, Madia, Belga, Semeia, Joiarib, (Joiada),² Sellum, Amoc, Helcias and Idaia were the chief priests who had the preeminence among their brethren in Josue's time. The chief Levites were Jesua, Bennui, Ced-mihel, Sarebia, Juda and Mathanias, who, with their clansmen, had charge of the music; also Becbecia and Hanni, whose clansmen had various other offices assigned to them. The high priesthood passed from Josue through Joacim, Eliasib, Joiada and Jonathan to Jeddoa. In Joacim's time the clan of Saraia was represented by Maraia, that of Jeremias by Hanania, and the other twenty by Mosollam, Johanan, Jonathan, Joseph, Edna, Helci, Zacharia, Mosollam, Zechri, Phelti (who represented both Miamin and Madia), Sammua, Jonathan, Mathanai, Azzi, Celai, Heber, Hasebia and Nathanael. There was a list made, at the time when Darius was king of Persia, of all who had been heads of the Levitical and priestly clans in the days of Eliasib, Joiada,

¹ It is difficult to see why a note should have been given here about the duties of the Asaphite clan, but still more difficult, if we put a full stop after Asaph, to make out of the words which follow a sentence relevant to the context. ² The Latin here reads 'Idaia', which seems to be a copyist's mistake for 'Joiada', see next verse, where Idaia appears.

Johanah and Jeddoah.¹ In the book of Annals, the Levite chiefs are only entered down to the days of Eliasib's grandson Jonathan.

- 24 . . . The duties of the Levite chiefs were thus divided; Hasebia, Serebia, Josue, (Bennui), Cedmihel and their clansmen took their turn in due order at singing of praise and giving of thanks, as David bade,
- 25 that was God's servant; Mathania, Becbecca, Obedia, Mosollam, Telmon and Accub must keep the gates and the courts
- 26 before the gates. These held office in the days of Joacim, son of Josue son of Josedec, when Nehemias was governor and Esdras was priest and scribe.

- 27 At the time when the wall of Jerusalem was dedicated, the Levites, from all their scattered homes, were summoned up to Jerusalem; theirs to interpret the joy and thanksgiving which this dedication brought, with song and cymbals, with harp
- 28 and zither. From the lowlands about Jerusalem they came, these makers of music,
- 29 from the townships of Nethuphati, from their residence at Galgal, from Geba and Azmaveth, and wherever there were colonies of singers at a distance from Jerusalem itself. Priests and Levites rid themselves of all defilement, then did as much for the people, and for the walls and gates themselves.

- 31 And I, Nehemias, would have the chief men of Juda mount on the wall, and two choirs of singers to escort them with chants of praise. One choir went along the wall to the right, in the direction of the Sca-
- 32 vengers' Gate, with Osaias and half the chiefs of Juda behind it; then Azarias,
- 33 Esdras and Mosollam; then (half) the men of Juda and Benjamin;² then Semeia and
- 34 Jeremias; then some of the priests with trumpets, led by Zacharias, that came down through Jonathan, Semeia, Ma-
- 35 thanias, Michaias and Zechur from Asaph himself; the others were Semeia, Azareel, Malalai, Galalai, Maai, Nathanael, Judas and Hanani. So they went, and with them went the music planned by God's servant

David, and the scribe Esdras marched at their head. When they reached the Gate of the Well, an upward climb confronted them; up the steps of David's Keep they went, and up the slope that passes David's palace, till they reached the Water-gate in the east wall.

The second choir, with the same chant of praise, marched in the other direction, I myself and half the people accompanying it; climbed the wall and the Furnace Tower, and so went on where the wall was broadest, past the Gate of Ephraim, and the old gate, and the Fishmongers' Gate, and the Tower of Hananeel and the Tower of Emath, and on to the Shepherds' Gate. At last they reached the Watch-tower Gate, and came to a halt there. Then the two choirs stood together at God's house giving praise. I, too, and the chiefs who were with me had priests with trumpets for our escort, Eliachim, Maasia, Miamin, Michea, Elioenai, Zacharia and Hanania; also Maasia, Semeia, Eleazar, Azzi, Johanah, Melchia, Aelam and Ezer. Loud sang the singers, and loud sang Jezraia at their head. Great was the slaughtering of victims that day, and greatly they rejoiced, women and children with the rest, at the signal mercy the Lord had shewn them; such a cry of triumph went up from Jerusalem as was heard far away.

At this time they appointed certain priests and Levites to take charge of the treasury, and receive offering and first-fruit and tithe from the city chiefs, in honour and gratitude; so well content were the men of Juda with the ministrations of priest and Levite both.³ And ever they kept true to the old observances, God honoured, defilement cleansed away, singers and porters fulfilling the duties which David, and David's son Solomon, enjoined upon them. Ever since David's time and Asaph's there had been masters of the choir to give praise and thanks; and now, in the times of Zorobabel and of Nehemias, men assigned a daily portion

¹ *vv.* 10-23. The list or lists, incorporated in verses 10-23, apparently go down later than the time of Nehemias himself; the Darius mentioned in verse 23 seems to be the Darius defeated at Arbela in 331; not the Darius defeated at Marathon in 490. Verses 43-46 also seem to come from a period when Nehemias' governorship was already past history.

² It seems unlikely that 'Juda and Benjamin' here are the names of prominent individuals; if the two tribes are meant, it would appear that only half of the Judaean population marched with the first choir, cf. verse 37 below.

³ The Hebrew text here is very obscure, the Latin version, which seems to be based on a different tradition, yields the sense given above.

both to choristers and to door-keepers; Israel honoured Levi with gifts, and Levi Aaron.

13 And now a new discovery came to light, while the law of Moses was being read out to the people. It was found set down there, that no Ammonite or Moabite might be admitted to the Lord's assembly. And this was a disability they had incurred for all time, by refusing to provide food and drink, when Israel came by; it was they, too, that hired Balaam to curse Israel, only our God transformed that curse into a blessing. No sooner was this injunction made known, than the Israelites began to rid themselves of all contact with alien folk.

14 Till now, it had been otherwise; here was the high priest Eliasib, that had the treasury of our God's temple in his keeping, a close friend of Tobias;¹ and so Tobias had one of the great store-rooms put at his disposal. (It was the room where at one time they used to store up the bloodless offerings, and the incense, and certain ornaments, and the tithe or corn, wine and oil, given to Levite, singer and door-keeper, and the first-fruits that belonged to the priests.) All this had happened while I was away from Jerusalem. During the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes' reign I went to court, and it was only at the end of the year that I had leave to return. When I was back at Jerusalem, and learned what harm had come of Eliasib's love for Tobias, that he would give him a store-house in the very temple of God, I cried shame on him; out went all Tobias' furniture from the treasury, and I gave orders besides that the treasure-rooms should be cleansed, and put back the furniture of God's house there, the offerings, too, and the incense.

15 And now I learned that the Levites were not having their portions granted them; Levite and singer and all the ministrants had gone back to their homes in the country-side. So I attacked the rulers, asking them whether the house of God was to be left deserted; and I brought the Levites back, and reinstated them; from

all over Juda, tithe of corn and wine and oil flowed into their store-houses once more; and we gave the charge of these store-houses to men whose honour we could trust, the priest Selemias, the scribe Sadoc, the Levite Phadaia, and Hanan, son of Zachur, son of Mathanias. My God, let not this go unremembered; do not blot out the record of the service I have done to thy temple, my God, and to thy ceremonies.

Even now I found Jewish folk treading out their wine-presses and carrying burdens on the sabbath day. On the sabbath day they would load their asses with wine-skins, or grapes, or figs, or some other freight, and bring them to Jerusalem for sale. These I warned that they must find some other day for selling their wares; but there were still traders from Tyre in the city itself, importing fish and all manner of goods, who sold them to their Jewish neighbours on the sabbath, there in Jerusalem. So I took my complaint to the Jewish rulers; Here are fine doings of yours, I said, that profane the sabbath day! All these late afflictions that God brought on us and on our city were a punishment for such disobedience as this; would you crown Israel's guilt by breaking the sabbath? When the sabbath came, and the traffic of the market-place had died away, and the gates were shut, I gave orders that they should not be opened till the sabbath was over; I set a guard there, too, of my own men, to make sure that no load came in that day. That week and the next, the merchants waited beyond Jerusalem walls and did all their trading there; but that would not serve; I warned them not to loiter about the walls, and threatened to use force if they did the like again; so there was no more trafficking on the sabbath. Meanwhile, I bade the Levites rid themselves of defilement and keep watch over the gates, for the better hallowing of the sabbath day. For this too, O my God, let me not go unremembered; as thou art rich in mercy, grant me pardon still.

Even now I found men of Juda that had married wives from Azotus, or Ammon, or Moab, with children that spoke half in the

¹ The Latin here might be interpreted as meaning that Eliasib, at the time of this incident, was himself responsible for seeing that the aliens were expelled; but there is nothing in the Hebrew text or in the Septuagint Greek which suggests this.

Philistine dialect, not like true Jews; they would use the speech first of one race and then of another.¹ I remonstrated with such men, and called down a curse on them; with some I came to blows, and plucked the hair from their heads. Then I made them take an oath in God's name; there should be no more alien sons-in-law, 26 or daughters-in-law, or wives. Why, I said, was not this king Solomon's undoing? Here was a man that had not his like on earth, the favourite of his God, that gave him all Israel for his kingdom; yet such a man alien women could bend to sinful 27 ways. Here is heinous rebellion, and great

despite done to our God, if we take wives of another race, as Solomon did. Eliasib himself, the high priest, had a grandson, one of the sons of Joiada, that had married a daughter of Sanaballat the Horonite; of his company I soon rid myself. Not unremembered, O Lord my God, be their profanation of the priesthood, unworthy sons of Aaron and of Levi both.

Thus it was mine to rid Israel of the alien-born, to marshal priests and Levites for their due service, to plan the offering of wood at appointed times, and of the first-fruits. Not unremembered, my God, be all this, not unrewarded.

¹ This verse is very obscure; it is not clear whether half the children spoke in a strange dialect, or all the children spoke in a half-strange dialect; nor whether the last clause refers to half-Jewish children who spoke wholly in the dialects of Moab, Ammon, and other neighbouring countries, or to half-Jewish children whose speech alternated between that of other countries and that of Judaea. On the analogy of I Par. 12. 33, we should expect 'race and race', like 'heart and heart', to mean an alternation of usage.

THE BOOK OF TOBIAS

THERE was a man of Nephthali dwelling in the city of that name, which lies in the hill-country of Galilee, beyond Naasson, by the road leading westwards with Sephet on the left of it. His name was Tobias; and when he was carried off as a prisoner by the Assyrians under king Salmanasar, he would not make his exile an excuse for deserting true religion. Every day he would share whatever means he had with his fellow-captives, that were men of his own clan.

Even when he was a boy, and was of least regard among the men of Nephthali, no boyish levity did his acts display. While the rest had recourse to the golden calves Jeroboam had set up when he reigned in Israel, Tobias shunned their company and went his own way; went up to Jerusalem to the Lord's temple, and worshipped the Lord that was God of Israel. First-fruit and tithe he duly offered, and every third year he tithed his goods afresh, for the needs of wanderers and homeless folk. By such acts as these he shewed, even in boyhood, what loyalty he had for the law of God; when he grew up it was a maiden of his own tribe, called Anna, that he wedded, and their son, called by his father's name, was brought up to fear God and keep clear of every fault.

Such was he, when, like all his tribe, he was carried away, with his wife and his son, to Nineve. All the rest might share the food of the Gentiles, he would not lose his innocence, he would not defile himself by eating what the law forbade. And God, finding his heart so loyal to the divine commands, won him favour with king Salmanasar. From this king he had leave to go where he would, and spend his time as he would; so he made a round of all his fellow-exiles, giving them such good counsel as might avail them. Once he was at a Median city called Rages, and had with him ten talents of silver, a gift from the

king's bounty. To what use should he put it? He found there a fellow-tribesman of his own, called Gabelus, who was in great need; to him, then, he lent the aforesaid silver under a bond.

Time passed; Salmanasar died, and the throne passed to his son Sennacherib, who was no friend to the Jews; and now it was Tobias' daily task to visit his own clansmen, comforting them and providing for each of them as best he could, out of what store he had; it was for him to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to honour with careful burial men that had died of sickness, and men slain. When Sennacherib came home from Judaea, escaping while he might from the divine vengeance his blasphemies had brought upon him, he killed many an Israelite in his anger; and these too Tobias would bury. When this came to the king's ears, he gave orders that Tobias should be put to death, and seized all his property; but he escaped, with his wife and son, into safe hiding; destitute as he was, he had many friends. And then, forty-five days later, Sennacherib was murdered by his own sons, whereupon Tobias came back home, and had all his goods restored to him.¹

2 Soon after this, one of the Lord's feast-days came round, and Tobias, his table richly spread, would have his son go out and invite fellow-tribesmen and fellow-worshippers of theirs, to share the banquet. Go out he did, but came back bearing ill news; he had found an Israelite lying murdered in the open street. His father, without more ado, sprang up from where he sat, leaving his dinner untasted; he would not break his fast till he had found the body, wrapped it about and carried it home with him, to bury it in secret when night fell. A sad and anxious meal was his, with such a guest hidden under his roof; he remembered those words the Lord had put into the mouth of

¹ Both in the Hebrew and in the Greek versions which survive to us, Tobias speaks in the first person throughout this chapter, and the whole story is differently told, though its substance is the same.

Amos, Your feast-days shall end in lamentation and sad thoughts. Night fell at last, and the body was buried in safety; but his neighbours shook their heads over it, Here was sentence of death passed on thee for such doings of thine; from that sentence thou wast barely reprieved, and art thou back at thy grave-digging? But still Tobias feared God much, and the king little; still the bodies of murdered men were stolen away, hidden in his house, and at dead of night buried.

But toil brought weariness, and one morning, when he came home, he threw himself down in the shadow of the wall, and quickly fell asleep. As he slept, warm droppings from a swallow's nest fell into his eyes, and he became blind. This was but a trial which the Lord allowed to befall him, so that he might leave to later ages, as God's servant Job did, a document of patience. Here was a man that had feared God and obeyed his commandments from infancy; he was smitten with blindness; did he thereupon complain, God was using him ill? No, he remained as stout-hearted a worshipper of God as before, and never a day passed but he returned thanks for the gift of life. Kinsman and clansman might taunt him, as Job was taunted by his fellow chieftains; might call him a fool for his pains, and ask whether this was the reward he had hoped for when he gave alms, and went a-burying; Tobias took them up short. Nay, said he, never talk thus; we come of holy stock, you and I, and God has life waiting for us if we will but keep faith with him. His wife Anna went every day to work at the loom, bringing home what earnings she could; and one day it was a kid that was given her for her wages. When she brought this home, and its bleating reached her husband's ears, he made great ado for fear it had been stolen; Nay, he said, this must be restored to its owner; never shall it be said that we ate stolen food, or soiled our hands with theft! Fine talk,¹ said she, but the like hopes have played these false already; what hast thou

to shew, now, for all thy almsgiving? With such taunts as these even his wife assailed him.²

So at last Tobias fell a-sighing, and he prayed still, but wept as he prayed. Lord, he said, thou hast right on thy side; no award of thine but is deserved, no act of thine but tells of mercy, of faithfulness, and of justice. Yet bethink thee, Lord, of my case; leave my sins unpunished, my guilt, and the guilt of my parents, forgotten. If we are doomed to loss, to banishment and to death, if thou hast made us a by-word and a laughing-stock in all the countries to which thou hast banished us, it is because we have defied thy commandments; it was fitting punishment, Lord, for the men who neglected thy bidding, and were half-hearted followers of thine. And now, Lord, do with me as thy will is, give the word, and take my spirit to thyself in peace; for me, death is more welcome than life.³

Now turn we to Rages,⁴ a city in Media, and another soul that must undergo taunts on this same day, Sara, the daughter of Raguel. It was one of her father's maid-servants that taunted her; and the ground of it was that she had been married seven times, but each of her husbands in turn had been killed, at the time of his bedding with her, by an evil spirit that was named Asmodaeus. This maid, then, upon being reproved for some fault, had answered, God send we never see son or daughter of thine brought to light! Murderess, where are those husbands of thine? Wouldst thou make as short work with me as thou didst with those seven? At that, Sara withdrew to an upper room of the house, and for three days and nights would neither eat nor drink; all this time she spent in prayer, begging with tears that God would free her of the suspicion.

And at last on the third day, her time of prayer ended, she blessed the name of the Lord after this fashion: Blessed is thy name, O God of our fathers, who, though

¹ These words are not in the original; they have been inserted to elucidate the train of thought, which is here much confused. It seems probable that Anna meant, 'Why should you make such a point of being honest, when Providence has given you such a poor reward for being charitable?'

² In this chapter the Hebrew and Greek versions still give the story in the first person. But here they correspond more nearly with the Vulgate Latin (and with the Aramaic text from which it was translated): the chief difference is the omission of verses 12-18.

³ The Hebrew and the Greek versions are still in the first person, but the substance of Tobias' prayer is the same. ⁴ All the other versions here have Ecbatana as the name of the Median city, 'Rages' is probably a copyist's error, cf. 1. 16 and 9. 3.

thy anger be roused, shewest mercy still,
 who dost pardon the sinner that cries out
 14 to thee in time of need! To thee, Lord,
 15 I turn; on thee my eyes are fixed; and,
 Lord, my prayer is that thou wouldest
 either rid me of this clogging suspicion, or
 16 else take me away from earth. Thou, Lord,
 canst bear me witness that I lusted never
 after man; still have I guarded my soul
 17 from shameful desire, nor kept company
 with the wanton, nor cast in my lot with
 18 the lovers of dalliance. If I consented to
 take a husband, law of thine was my rule,
 19 not lust of mine. It seems I was unworthy
 of these men's love, or perhaps they of
 mine; it may be thou wast reserving me for
 20 another husband; thy designs are beyond
 our human reach. But this at least all thy
 true worshippers know; never was a life of
 trials but had its crown; never distress
 from which thou couldst not save; never
 punishment but left a gateway to thy
 22 mercy. Not thine to plot eagerly for our
 undoing; the storm passes, and thou grant-
 est clear weather again; tears and sighs are
 over, and thou fillest the cup with re-
 23 joicing; blessed be thy name, God of
 Israel, for ever!¹

24 Two prayers that day reached the bright
 25 presence of the most high God; and
 Raphael, one of the Lord's holy angels,
 was sent out, bearing common deliverance
 to the suppliants of a single hour.

4 And now, thinking that his prayer for
 death was to be granted, the elder
 2 Tobias called his son to him and gave him
 a charge; Let these rules of mine, said he,
 be the frame-work of thy life, my son.

3 When God takes my soul to himself,
 give thy body of mine burial, and give thy
 4 mother her due² while her life lasts; do not
 forget what hazard she underwent to bear
 5 thee in her womb; and when she, too, has
 lived out her allotted span of years, bury
 6 her at my side. And do thou, while thou
 hast life, think ever upon God, nor lend

thyself to any sinful design, nor leave the
 commandments of the Lord our God un-
 fulfilled. Use thy wealth in giving of alms;
 7 never turn thy back on any man who is in
 need, and the Lord, in thy own need, will
 have eyes for thee. Shew to others what
 8 kindness thy means allow, giving much, if
 9 much is thine, if thou hast little, cheerfully
 sharing that little. To do this is but to lay
 10 up a store against the day of distress; alms-
 11 deeds were ever a sovereign way of escape
 from guilt and death, a bar against the
 soul's passage into darkness; none has less
 12 to fear when he stands before the most
 high God than he who does them.

Keep clear, my son, of fornication; save
 13 for thy wife, never let woman's name be
 linked with thine. In thought and word of
 14 thine, pride must never bear rule; thence
 it was all our undoing came. There and
 15 then pay thy workman his wages; do not
 let the hire he has earned remain in thy
 keeping; never use another as thou wert
 16 loth thyself to be used. Share thy bread
 17 with the hungry and the poor; in thy gar-
 ments let the naked go clad. Bestow thy
 18 meat and thy drink upon a just man's
 burying, never share them with sinners.³
 Still take a wise man's counsel over thy
 19 doings; but praise God all the while, and
 20 ask him to guide thy paths aright; let all
 thy designs repose in him.

This too I would have thee know, my
 21 son, that long since, when thou wert but
 a child, I lent ten talents of silver to a citizen
 of Rages in Media, called Gabelus, and I
 have his bond still. Do thou find means to
 22 reach his home, and so recover from him
 the sum I speak of, in return for his bond.
 Never lose heart, my son, though we lead,
 23 thou and I, the life poor men lead. Fear we
 but God, shun guilt, and do the good we
 can, blessings shall be ours in abundance.⁴

5 Father, answered the young Tobias,
 I will do all thy bidding; but as for
 2 recovering the money, I have little hope.

¹ The prayer of Sara is given in a quite different form by the other versions, including our present Aramaic text. From this point onwards, all the versions tell the story in the third person. ² Literally, 'honour'; but this was, according to St Jerome, a regular idiom among the Jews. ³ The meaning of this verse is very obscure, and some think there is a corruption in the text. The versions have, not 'bestow', but 'pour out'; it was a common heathen practice to pour libations of wine over the tombs of the dead, but the mention of bread would in that case be confusing, and the Septuagint Greek has simply 'Pour out thy loaves' without any mention of wine. It is possible there is some reference to providing entertainment for the mourners at a pauper funeral, but the allusion seems far-fetched. For the custom of providing the mourners at a funeral with food, cf. Jer. 16. 8. ⁴ The other versions differ greatly in the account they give of Tobias' advice to his son, the Aramaic text being nearest to the Vulgate.

Here is one who is a stranger to me, and I to him; what proof can I bring forward? Meanwhile, I must find my way to Rages, and of that I have no experience. Nay, said his father, I have the man's bond here; do but shew him that, and he will restore the money without more ado. Up then, and find some man of credit, that will go with thee upon condition of a due reward; must I die before thou bring the money back to me? With that, his son went out, and at the door stood a young man of noble mien, all girt about, as if he were ready for a journey. Little he knew that this was an angel of God, as he gave him welcome; Fair sir, he asked, whence comest thou? And on hearing that he had been among the men of Israel, Why then, said he, thou knowest the road from here to Media? I know it well, he answered; no step of it but I have marched often enough, when I would visit a fellow-countryman of ours who lives there; one Gabelus. The city where he dwells, Rages, is in Media, in the hill-country about Ecbatana.

Wait for me here, Tobias asked of him, while I give my father news of this. Then he went back, and told the story to his father, who was all astonishment, and would have the stranger brought in. So in he came, and wished him abiding happiness. Happiness! Tobias said; little happiness for me, that sit here in the dark, and see never the light of day! Take courage, the stranger said, God means thy soon recovery. Then Tobias asked, Wilt thou take my son with thee, and guide him to Media, to Rages, and so to the house of Gabelus? There shall be a reward awaiting thee on thy return. I will take him there, said the angel, and bring him home again besides. Then Tobias would know of what household or tribe he came. It was indeed no other than the angel Raphael that spoke to him; What, he answered, is it my lineage, not myself, thou wouldst have for thy son's escort? But set thy mind at rest; my name is Azarias,¹ and a man of renown, Ananias, was my father. Forgive me,

Tobias said, for doubting thy lineage; thou comest of good stock indeed.

Raphael, then, promised to conduct the boy safely and bring him safely home, and Tobias bade them good speed; God be with you, said he, on your journey, and may his angel bear you company! Then, when his pack was ready, the young Tobias bade his father and mother farewell, and the travellers set out together. Now that the boy had gone, his mother fell a-weeping; Here was the only support of our old age, said she, why hast thou passed him on into other hands? Would to God the money thou hast sent him to claim had never been thine! We were content in our poverty; the very sight of the lad was riches enough. Dry thy tears, Tobias answered; safe will he fare, this son of ours, and safe return; those eyes shall have sight of him again. I hold it for truth that some good angel of the Lord escorts him, to see that all goes well with him and grant him happy return. Thus comforted, the mother dried her tears and complained no more.²

Tobias, meanwhile, was on the march, with his dog at his heels; they did not make their first halt until they reached the river Tigris. And when he went down to wash the dust from his feet, up came a monstrous fish as if it would have devoured him. At this, he cried out in an extreme of fear, Help, sir; he means mischief. But the angel bade him catch it by the gill and pull it towards him; so catch it he did, and brought it out on to the dry land, where it lay struggling at his feet. This fish, the angel told him, is worth the bowelling; heart and gall and liver of it thou must keep by thee, sovereign remedies all. This done, he roasted part of the meat, which they ate on their journey, and salted the rest, to serve them for provisions till they should reach Rages in Media.

And now Tobias had a question to ask of the angel; Tell me, good Azarias, said

¹ The name Azarias means 'God has brought aid', and the name Ananias 'God has been merciful', as if the angel had chosen a name to signify the nature of his office. St Athanasius explains that he was actually wearing the appearance of the living Azarias and was appointed by divine Providence to represent him; he was, so to speak, Azarias' second self. The purpose of concealing his angelic nature was evidently so as to make proof of the elder Tobias' faith (cf. verse 27 below). ² The outlines of the story are the same here in all the versions, but there is enough difference of detail to make it clear that they do not follow a single manuscript source.

he, what healing virtue lies in those parts
of the fish I must needs keep by me? Its
heart, answered he, has this virtue, that if
a morsel of it be laid on the coals, the
smoke will rid man or woman of the fiend's
harassing, and that for ever. As for the
gall, it is a sovereign salve for healing eyes
that have a white film binding them.¹ And
for our journey, said Tobias, what is the
next stage of that? Our host's name is
Raguel, the angel told him, a tribesman
and a kinsman of thy own. He has a
daughter called Sara, and neither chick nor
child besides. Of all he possesses thou
mayest be heir, if thou wilt claim his
daughter's hand in marriage; thou hast but
to ask him, and she is thine.

I hear stories told of this maid, Tobias
answered; how she has been betrothed
seven times, and to every bridegroom it
brought death; how it was a fiend, if the
tale be true, that made away with them.
If the like befall me too, it would go hard
with those parents of mine; I am all the
children they have, they are old now, and
this were to give them a cheerless passage
to the grave. Heed me well, answered
Raphael, and thou shalt hear why the fiend
has power to hurt some and not others.
The fiend has power over such as go about
their marrying with all thought of God
shut out of their hearts and minds, wholly
intent on their lust, as if they were horse or
mule, brutes without reason. Not such be
thy mating, when thou hast won thy bride.
For three days deny thyself her favours,
and the time you spend together, spend all
in prayer. The first night, burn the liver of
yonder fish, and therewith the fiend shall
be driven away. On the second night,
union thou shalt have, but with the com-
pany of the holy patriarchs.² The third
night, thy prayer shall win thee a blessing,
of children safely born to thee and to her.
Then, when the third night is past, take
the maid to thyself with the fear of the
Lord upon thee, moved rather by the
hope of begetting children than by any
lust of thine. So, in the true line of
Abraham, thou shalt have joy of thy
fatherhood.

To Raguel, then, they went, and right
gladly he welcomed them; he no
sooner caught sight of Tobias than he said
to his wife Anna,³ Here is a young man has
the very look of my cousin Tobias! Then
he asked them, Whence come you, fellow-
countrymen? And, upon hearing that they
were of Nephthali's tribe, exiles dwelling
at Nineve, Do you know my cousin,
Tobias? Yes, they said, we know him well.
With that, Raguel fell to singing his
cousin's praises, but the angel cut him
short: Thou dost well to ask about Tobias;
this is his son. Thereupon Raguel threw
his arms about him, and wept, and kissed
him, and wept again; A blessing on thee,
my son, cried he; 'tis a good man, a good
excellent man, thou hast for thy father!
And there stood his wife Anna, and their
daughter Sara, in tears like himself.

When they had spent some time in talk,
Raguel would have a ram killed, and a feast
made. But it was in vain he urged them to
fall to; Neither eat nor drink will I in this
house, Tobias said, until thou dost grant
a request of mine. And my request is for
the hand of thy daughter Sara in marriage.
Upon hearing this, Raguel was much taken
aback; he had not forgotten what befell
those other seven men that went near her
bed; and the fear assailed him, What if this
one fares no better? But while he hummed
and hawed over his answer, the angel said,
Do not be afraid to give him thy daughter's
hand; for his pious care she was destined,
that is why those other wooers could not
gain their suit. Why then, answered Rag-
uel, all those prayers and sighs of mine
were not wasted; God has granted them
audience; and I doubt not his design in
bringing you here was to have my daughter
matched with one of her own kin, as the
law of Moses bade. Then he said to Tobias,
Have no fear, she is thine. And so, taking
his daughter's right hand and putting it
into the right hand of Tobias, he gave them
his blessing: May the God of Abraham,
Isaac and Jacob be with you and himself
join you in one, and fulfil his merciful
purpose in you.

So they took paper, and signed a con-

¹ The fish called by the ancients callionymus, or uranoscopus, was supposed to be a specific in cases of leucoma; it was, however, a salt-water fish. In verses 1-9 the other versions vary hardly at all, but from this point onward they show considerable difference, and have nothing corresponding to verses 16-22 of the Vulgate. ² The meaning of this mystical allusion is unknown. ³ This seems to be a mistake in the Latin; the other versions call Raguel's wife Edna.

tract of marriage; then they sat down to their feasting, and gave thanks to God. 17
 18 Meanwhile Raguel called Anna aside, and bade her have a fresh room in readiness. 19
 20 Into this she brought her daughter Sara, weeping as she did so; then she said, Do not lose heart, daughter; thou hast had sadness enough; may the Lord of heaven give thee gladness in exchange.¹

8 When the feasting was over, bridegroom was led to bride-chamber. 2
 2 And now, remembering what the angel had said, he took out from his wallet a piece of the fish's liver, which he burnt on 3
 3 live coals. With that, the evil spirit fled; it was overtaken by the angel Raphael in the waste lands of Upper Egypt, and there 4
 4 held prisoner. Next, Tobias must plead with his bride; Leave thy bed, Sara; today, and to-morrow, and the day after, let us pray God for mercy. These three nights are set apart for our union with God; when the third is over, we will be joined in one, 5
 5 thou and I. We come of holy lineage; not for us to mate blindly, like the heathen 6
 6 that have no knowledge of God. Side by side they kept vigil, and prayed together that no plague should mar their mating. 7
 7 Lord God of our fathers, Tobias said, praise be to thee from heaven and earth, from seas and fountains and rivers, and from all creatures of thine that make in these their homes! When Adam was made of earth's clay, it was by thy hand; when Eve was sent to cheer him, it was of thy 8
 8 gift. Thou, Lord, art my witness that I wed this sister of mine not from love of dalliance; only in the dear hope of leaving a race behind me, a race in whose destiny, 9
 9 Lord, may thy name be ever blessed! And thus Sara prayed, Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us; safe from all harm grow we old together, he and I!

11 And now it was cock-crow, and Raguel had all his men out betimes to help him dig the grave; Like enough, thought he, this one will have fared no better than the 12
 12 other seven that took her to wife. Their digging done, he went back to his wife, and bade her send one of her maids to find out if Tobias were dead; it were best to have

him in his grave before the sun was up. So the maid went on her errand, and ventured into the bride-chamber, where both lay asleep together, safe and sound. When she returned with that good news, Raguel and Anna fell to praising the Lord; God of Israel, said they, we thank thee that our fears were vain! Great mercy hast thou shewn us, in ridding us of the fiend's pursuit; great mercy hast thou shewn on these two, Tobias' only child and ours. Ever may their hearts, Lord, swell with thankfulness, ever may these lives thou hast preserved be a sacrifice of praise to thee, till all the Gentiles around them know thee for the only God that rules on earth!

With that, Raguel bade his men fill up the newly dug grave before sunrise; bade his wife spread a feast, and prepare such food as the travellers needed. Two fat heifers and four rams must be slaughtered and a banquet made for all his neighbours and friends. And now he was urgent with Tobias to be his guest for two whole weeks; half of all his goods he bestowed upon him there and then, while the rest, as he declared in writing, should follow when he and Anna died.²

9 And now Tobias took the angel aside and, though he still did not guess this was more than man, spoke as follows: Pray bear with this request of mine, friend Azarias. No return could I make for all thy watchful care of me, though I should dedicate myself to be thy slave. Instead of that, I am still asking thee for a favour; that thou wouldst journey on to Rages in Media, with what beasts, what retinue thou wilt, and seek out Gabelus there. Give him back his bond, recover the debt, and bid him to my wedding-feast. Thou canst guess how my father is counting the days till my return; no fresh day of my absence but brings with it a fresh sorrow; yet thou seest how earnestly Raguel pleads with me to stay on, and that plea I cannot bring myself to refuse.

So Raphael took with him four of Raguel's men, and two camels; went to Rages in Media and sought out Gabelus there; gave him the bond, and recovered the debt

¹ The correspondence between the various versions is fairly close in this chapter, but the Vulgate is not a direct translation from any of the others. ² The course of the story is the same in the other versions, except that they represent Tobias' marriage as having been consummated on his wedding night.

7 in full. Then he recounted to him the
younger Tobias' history, and brought him
back to take part in the wedding-feast.
8 Tobias, who was sitting at table when Gabelus entered the house, sprang up to welcome him; and when they had embraced, Gabelus wept, and praised God
9 for their meeting. The God of Israel bless thee, he cried, for the son of an excellent honest man, his true worshipper, and a
10 great giver of alms! May the name of this thy bride, the names of her parents and thine, be used for an example of blessedness! May you live to see sons of yours, and sons of theirs again, and a fourth generation to succeed the third! May your posterity win a blessing from the God of
12 Israel, that reigns everlastingly! All said Amen to that, and so they fell to and feasted; yet was there no merry-making over this wedding but such as became God's worshippers.

10 While the younger Tobias lingered thus over his marriage, his father fell into an extreme of anxiety. What means this long delay on my son's part? he asked.
2 What has detained him? Can it be that Gabelus is dead, and there is no recovering the debt? Great lament he made, and his wife Anna with him, and fast fell the tears of both, that the appointed day was over
4 and their son not yet returned. The mother's grief there was no consoling; My son, my son, she cried, why did we ever let thee go on thy travels? The light of our eyes, the support of our old age, our comfort in life, our hope of posterity when we
5 are gone; all this thou wert, and thou alone; how could we let thee leave our
6 sight? In vain did Tobias try to comfort her, with, Peace, woman; never disquiet thyself; there is nought amiss with our son; it was a trusty companion we sent
7 with him. Comfort she would have none; no day passed but she would rise from her place and view the landscape all about, or roam the streets, hoping she might get some rumour, some distant glimpse of his return.

8 Meanwhile, Raguel was pressing his son-in-law to stay on; I will send a message

to thy father, said he, to assure him of thy safety. But Tobias would have none of it;
9 No question, said he, but my father and mother are counting the days, and tormenting their hearts over me. Still Raguel
10 plied him with entreaties, and still could not win his consent. So at last he gave Sara into Tobias' keeping, and with her half his goods, men and maid servants, sheep and camels and cows, and of money a great sum, and let him go his way, safe
11 and content. The Lord's holy angel, said he, go with you on your journey, and bring you home without scathe, to find that all is well, Tobias and Anna both. And may my life be spared to see children born of you. So Raguel and Anna embraced their
12 daughter, and kissed her, and set her on her way, full of good counsel to the last;
13 how she was to give father-in-law and mother-in-law their due, love her husband, be mistress in her own house, order it well, and prove herself the perfection of a woman.

11 On the eleventh day of their homeward journey, they halted in the middle of it at a place that looks out towards Nineve (called Charan).¹ And
2 here the angel said, Friend Tobias, remember how eagerly thy father awaits thee. How sayest thou? Should not we
3 two hurry on together, and leave thy wife to follow at leisure with the servants and the beasts? When this was agreed upon,
4 he bade Tobias take some of the fish's gall with him, for he would need it; take it he did, and they set out together.

There sat Anna, where she sat every
5 day, on the brow of the hill, whence she could scan the country far and wide. From
6 that seat of hers she saw them coming, a long distance away, and knew at once it was her son that came. Back home she ran, and told her husband, Thy son! He is coming!

7 Thy home once reached, Raphael said to Tobias, pay worship to the Lord thy God first, and return thanks to him. Then
8 go up to thy father, and embrace him, and rub on his eyes, without more ado, some of the fish's gall thou hast with thee. I pro-

¹ The name of the place reached by the travellers is variously given in the different versions. If it was really Charan, it must have been quite different from the well-known city of that name, which stood miles away to the west.

mise thee it will not be long before his eyes are opened; once more he will look on the light of day, and have a father's joy at the sight of thee.

9 Yet he was not to reach the house first.

The dog that had accompanied him on his travels ran on before him, heralding the good news with the caress of his wagging tail. Up sprang the father, blind though he were, and made for the door, running and stumbling as he ran. A servant must take him by the hand before he could go
11 out to meet his son; but meet him he did, embraced and kissed him, and his wife too must embrace the boy and kiss him, and then they both wept over him; but they
12 were tears of joy. So they paid God worship, and gave him thanks, and sat down together.

13 Then it was that Tobias took out the fish's gall, and rubbed it on his father's
14 eyes. He waited, maybe, for half an hour, and then a white film, like the white of an egg, began to separate itself from the eyes;
15 he took hold of this and pulled it away, and immediately his father's sight was restored. How they praised God, he and his
17 wife and all who knew them! I thank thee, Lord God of Israel, the old man cried; from thee my chastisement, from thee my deliverance came; I thank thee for eyes that see, and eyes that see Tobias, my son!

18 It was a week before his daughter-in-law Sara reached Nineve, with all her retinue safe and sound; the farm stock, too, she brought with her, and the camels, and all the money she was dowered with, besides the sum paid over by Gabelus.
19 Meanwhile, her husband told his parents the whole story; all the mercies God had shewn him through the man that was his guide. Tobias' cousins, Achior and Nabath, came with glad hearts to congratulate him over the blessings he had received;
21 and for a whole week they all kept high festival, and rejoiced together.

12 And now Tobias took his son aside and asked him, What payment shall we make to this heaven-sent companion of thine? Payment? answered he; why, what reward can ever suffice for all

the services he did me? He it was that
3 escorted me safely, going and coming; recovered the debt from Gabelus; won me my bride; rid her of the fiend's attack; engaged the gratitude of her parents; rescued me from the fish's onslaught; and to thee restored the light of day. Through
4 him, we have been loaded with benefits; is it possible to make any return for all these? Do this, father, at least; ask him to
5 accept half of all the wealth that has come to us.

So both of them, father and son, beckoned him aside, and would have prevailed on him to accept half of their new-found wealth. But he, with a finger on his lip,
6 bade them give their thanks to the God of heaven. To him, he said, offer your praises for all men to hear; he it is that has shewn
7 mercy to you. Kings have their counsel that must be kept secret; God's ways are open, and he honours them best who proclaims them openly.

Prayer, fasting, and alms, said he, here
8 is better treasure to lay up than any store of gold. Almsgiving is death's avoiding, is
9 guilt's atoning, is the winning of mercy and of life eternal; the sinners, the wrong-
10 doers, are enemies to their own souls. Come, let me tell you the whole truth of
11 the matter, bring the hidden purpose of it to light. When thou, Tobias, wert praying,
12 and with tears, when thou wert burying the dead, leaving thy dinner untasted, so
as to hide them all day in thy house, and at night give them funeral, I, all the while,
13 was offering that prayer of thine to the Lord. Then, because thou hadst won his
14 favour, needs must that trials should come, and test thy worth. And now, for thy
15 healing, for the deliverance of thy son's wife Sara from the fiend's attack, he has
chosen me for his messenger. Who am I? I am the angel Raphael, and my place is
among those seven who stand in the presence of the Lord.

Upon hearing this, they were both
16 mazed with terror, and fell down trembling, face to earth. Peace be with you, the
17 angel said; do not be afraid. It was God's
18 will, not mine, brought me to your side; to him pay the thanks and praise you owe.
I was at your side, eating and drinking, but

¹ Literally, 'in secret', but as the three had already gone apart, it seems best to understand the words as referring to some *gesture* of secrecy.

only in outward show; the food, the drink
 10 I live by, man's eyes cannot see. And now
 the time has come when I must go back
 to him who sent me; give thanks to God,
 11 and tell the story of his great deeds. With
 that, he was caught away from their eyes,
 12 and no more might they see of him.¹ For
 three hours together, face to earth, they
 gave thanks to God; and when they rose
 up, it was to tell the story of all these
 marvels.

13 It was thus, when he found utter-
 13 ance, that the elder Tobias sang
 praise to the Lord: Great is thy name,
 Lord, for ever; thy kingdom cannot fail.
 14 Thine to scourge, thine to pity; thou dost
 bring men to the grave and back from the
 grave; from thy power there is no deli-
 15 verance. Sons of Israel, make his name
 known, publish it for all the Gentiles to
 16 hear; if he has dispersed you among
 heathen folk who know nothing of him, it
 was so that you might tell them the story
 of his great deeds, convince them that he,
 17 and no other, is God all-powerful. He it
 is that has scourged us for our sins; he it
 is that will deliver us in his mercy. Look
 18 and see how he has dealt with us, and then
 give thanks to him, but with trembling awe
 in your hearts; let your own deeds acclaim
 19 him, king of all the ages. I, at least, in this
 land of exile, will be the spokesman of his
 praise, tell the story of his dread dealings
 20 with a sinful race. Come back, sinners, and
 do his will; doubt not that he will shew you
 21 mercy. Here at least, while I live, is a soul
 that finds content in him. Bless the Lord,
 22 souls whom the Lord has chosen; keep
 high festival in his honour.

Jerusalem, city of God, what divine
 23 punishments thy own ill deeds have
 brought on thee! Yet thank the Lord for
 the blessings that are thine, praise him,
 the eternal God. So may he rebuild thy
 24 dwelling-place, recall thy exiles, give thee
 joy that shall last for ever. Thou shalt yet
 shine with dazzling brightness, for all the
 25 ends of the world to worship thee. From
 far away, nations shall come bringing their

gifts, to worship the Lord within those
 walls of thine; shall reckon thy soil holy
 ground, so great the name they shall invoke
 15 within thee. Cursed shall they be that
 16 despise thee, condemned shall they be that
 blaspheme thee, blessed shall they be that
 build thee again. What joy wilt thou have
 17 of thy children, a blessed race, gathered in
 the Lord's fold anew! A blessing on all
 18 that love thee, on all that welcome thy
 good news! Give thanks, my soul, to the
 19 Lord, the Lord our God who has deli-
 vered Jerusalem, his own city, from all the
 afflictions she endured; happy I count
 20 myself, if any posterity of mine is left to see
 Jerusalem in her splendour. Sapphire and
 21 emerald Jerusalem's gates shall be, of pre-
 cious stones the wall that rings her round;
 shining white and clean the pavement of
 22 her streets; no quarter of her but shall echo
 the Alleluia-chant of praise. Blessed be
 23 the Lord, that has set her on the heights;
 may he reign there for ever, reign for ever
 as her king. Amen.²

14 Such was the song of Tobias. He
 lived forty-two years after recover-
 ing his sight, lived to see his great-grand-
 children; then, dying at the age of a
 2 hundred and two, he was buried with due
 honour in the town of Nineve. He lost his
 3 sight at the age of fifty-six, recovered it at
 the age of sixty, and lived out the rest of
 4 his life in great content, his course ever
 untroubled, his conscience ever more
 tender towards God.

On his death-bed, he called his seven
 5 grandsons to him, with their father To-
 bias, and spoke thus: The Lord's words
 6 must needs come true; it will not be long
 before Nineve is destroyed. After that, our
 exiled brethren will be able to return to the
 land of Israel; the deserted country-side
 will be populous once again, and its tem-
 7 ple, long since destroyed by fire, will be
 built anew, and all those who fear God will
 find their way back to it. Then the Gen-
 8 tiles, too, will forsake their false gods; will
 betake themselves to Jerusalem, and find
 9 a home there; all the kings of the earth will

¹ In the Aramaic text we now have, Raphael goes away without disclosing his identity. ² The Aramaic text has nothing corresponding to this chapter. Some think that verses 11-23 are a separate psalm, which has been attached accidentally to the canticle of Tobias. If we understand these sentiments as having been expressed by Tobias, it must have been by way of prophecy; the dates given in the next chapter shew that he cannot have been alive at the time when Jerusalem was sacked by the king of Babylon.

take pride in it, as they pay worship to the king who reigns in Israel.¹

- 10 This, then, my sons, is your father's
 testament: Keep true to the Lord's service,
 11 studying ever to carry out his will; and
 hand on this charge to your children, that
 they should do what the law enjoins and
 give alms freely, that they should keep God
 ever in mind, offering him faithful praise
 at all times, and with all their strength.
 12 And you, my sons, heed well this warning
 of mine; do not linger in this country, but
 leave it as soon as you have laid your
 mother to rest at my side, to share my
 13 grave; there is guilt at Nineve, I see well,
 that must needs bring it to ruin.

So, when his mother died, Tobias, with
 his wife, sons and grandsons left Nineve.
 He betook himself to his wife's parents in-
 stead, and found them thriving still, well
 content in their old age. Tenderly he cared
 for them, and when they died it was he
 that closed their eyes in death. Then he
 became heir to all Raguel possessed, and
 himself lived to see a fresh generation yet,
 descendants of his own. Ninety-nine years
 he lived in the fear of God, and with full
 hearts they buried him. No kith or kin
 of his but persevered in uprightness and
 holy living; God's favour they had and
 man's alike, well loved by all their neigh-
 bours.

¹ Tobias' prophecy in verses 6-9, like many in the Old Testament, foreshortens the perspective of history; relating first to the conquest of Assyria by Babylon in 612, then to the conquest of Babylon by Persia in 539, and the restoration of the Jewish exiles, then to the Messianic kingdom. In the Greek text, the destruction of Jerusalem by Nabuchodonosor is explicitly mentioned.

THE BOOK OF JUDITH

ARPHAXAD, king of Media, the conqueror of many nations, built a princely city, which he called Ecbatana. Of stones cut and squared he built it, with walls seventy cubits thick and thirty cubits high, and towers reaching the height of a hundred cubits. Each of these towers was twenty feet square, and at the foot of them he set gates to match their height.¹ And he boasted much of his great army, of his fine chariots; till at last war was levied upon him by the Assyrian king Nabuchodonosor,² then in the twelfth year of his reign, with his capital at Nineve. This Nabuchodonosor defeated him in the great plain called Ragau, where Euphrates flows, and Tigris, and Jadason, in the lowland country belonging to Erioch, king of the Elici.

Thus to Nabuchodonosor in his turn, came power and pride. To distant lands he had sent out his demand for aid; to Cilicia, Damascus, and the Lebanon, to Carmel, and Cedar, and Galilee about the wide Esdrelon plain, Samaria, and all the country beyond Jordan as far as Jerusalem, and the land of Gessen³ right up to the borders of Ethiopia. And of all the peoples to whom Nabuchodonosor, the Assyrian king, sent out his messengers, there was not one but had refused, and sent them away thwarted and despised. So now, in anger, Nabuchodonosor swore by his royal throne to avenge himself on these countries, one and all.⁴

2 It was on the twenty-second day of the first month, in the thirteenth year of his reign, that this resolve was taken at Nabuchodonosor's court. He summoned all his councillors, chieftains and commanders, and put before them his secret

design; his thought, he told them, was to bring the whole world under his allegiance. With this, all agreed; whereupon he summoned Holofernes, that commanded his forces, and said, March out and make war on the western kingdoms, those especially that made light of my summons. Nowhere let pity melt thy eye; no fortified town but must be brought under my dominion.

Thereupon Holofernes summoned all the chieftains and commanders of the Assyrian army, and mustered a force to march out and do the king's bidding, a hundred and twenty thousand that went on foot, and twelve thousand mounted archers. And his baggage-train he sent on beforehand, a long array of camels, well laden with all his army needed, herds of oxen, too, and flocks of sheep, past all counting. A supply of corn from the whole of Syria was to meet him as he passed, and he had great store of gold and silver from the royal treasury.

Then he himself set out at the head of his forces, chariots and horsemen and archers and the rest, that swarmed like locusts on the ground.

Leaving Assyria, he first reached the high mountains of Ange, on the left-hand side of Cilicia, scaling all their fastnesses and reducing all their garrisons. Then he broke into the city of Melothi, that resisted him stubbornly, and ravaged all the country which belonged to the sons of Tharsis, and to the Ismaelites, facing the desert, to the south of Cellon. Then he crossed Euphrates into Mesopotamia, and stormed every stronghold between the river Mambre and the sea. All the land of Mesopotamia he overran, from Cilicia on the north to the frontier of Japheth on the south, drove the Medianites from their

¹ The measurements here are uncertain, since the Greek gives a different account of them. ² No Nabuchodonosor king of Assyria is known from other sources. Probably the story relates to some conqueror known to history under another name, but there is no agreement among scholars about his identity. We cannot, therefore, be certain what is the period in which the action of the book takes place. ³ 'Gessen'; this is given in the Vulgate as 'Jesse', probably through a copyist's error; Gessen is mentioned in the Septuagint Greek. ⁴ Here and in the following chapters the story is told in different language and at somewhat greater length in the Septuagint Greek.

homes and plundered their goods, putting
 17 all who resisted him to the sword.¹ And
 at last he came down on to the plain of
 Damascus, in harvest time, burnt all the
 crops there and had all the trees and vine-
 18 yards cut down. And a great dread of him
 fell upon the whole country-side.

3 And now from every city and pro-
 vince, from the Syrians of Meso-
 potamia and Sobal and from (Libya² and)
 Cilicia, king and chieftain sent envoys to
 2 Holofernes. Spare us thy further ven-
 geance, they said; better we should live as
 slaves to the great king Nabuchodonosor,
 under thy commands, than be reduced by
 slaughter, undergoing massacre and sla-
 3 very both. Cities and lands, mountain and
 hill and plain, ox and sheep and goat and
 horse and camel, all that we have, and our
 own households too, lie at thy mercy;
 4 dispose of them all as thou wilt; we, and
 6 our children with us, are thy slaves. Come
 to us as our master, so thou come to us in
 peace, and make what use thou wilt of our
 surrender.

7 Then, with his horsemen and all his
 armed strength, he came down from the
 hill-country and made city and citizen his
 8 own, levying from their townships all the
 bravest men, all the picked warriors, for his
 9 own service. Such dread of him lay on
 these provinces, that chiefs and nobles
 came out from every town, with the com-
 10 mon sort at their heels, to meet him, wel-
 coming him with crowns and processions
 by torch-light, dancing in his honour to
 11 the music of tambour and flute. Yet might
 they not, even so, win over that relentless
 heart; cities must be razed to the ground,
 12 and forest-shrines cut down; king Nabu-
 chodonosor had bidden him destroy all
 traces of the countryside gods, so that the
 nations overpowered by Holofernes might
 acknowledge no other god but himself.
 14 Then, after traversing the Syrian country
 of Sobal, and Apamea, and Mesopotamia,
 he reached the Idumæans that dwelt in the
 15 land of Gabaa. Their cities surrendered
 to him, and he made a halt of thirty
 days there, during which he bade all the
 forces under his command rally to his
 side.

4 Consternation fell on all the Israelites
 that dwelt in Juda, at the news of his
 coming; fear struck deep at their anxious
 hearts, that Jerusalem and its temple might
 fare as other cities and temples had fared.
 So they sent the word round all the Sa-
 3 maritan country, and back again to Jericho,
 that all the mountain-heights were to be
 occupied; the villages on them were put in
 4 a state of defence, and corn stored up in
 readiness for the campaign. Nay, the high
 5 priest Eliachim sent letters even further
 afield; the hill-folk that lived facing Es-
 dreion across the wide plain around
 Dothain, controlling the passes to the
 south, must occupy all the hill-paths lead-
 6 ing to Jerusalem, standing ever on guard
 where the defile was narrowest. Such
 7 orders from Eliachim, the Lord's high
 priest, the Israelites faithfully carried out.

Meanwhile, in good earnest, the whole
 nation made appeal to the Lord, doing
 penance, men and women alike, with fast
 and prayer. Garb of sackcloth the priests
 9 wore, and bade the very infants lie pro-
 strate before the temple gates; in sackcloth
 they veiled the Lord's own altar; and so
 10 with one voice they made appeal to the
 Lord, the God of Israel. Were they to see
 their children slaves, their women-folk
 allotted as spoil, their cities razed, their
 sanctuary profaned? Were they to become
 the scorn of the Gentiles? And Eliachim,
 11 the Lord's high priest, went about every-
 where among the Israelite folk with words
 of comfort. Be sure, said he, that the Lord
 12 will listen to your plea, if you pray on, fast
 on, in his presence. Remember how
 Amelec, long ago, boasted of their over-
 13 whelming strength, of their great army,
 shields and chariots and horsemen; and it
 was by the holy prayers he offered, not by
 the sword, that the Lord's servant Moses de-
 14 feated them.³ So shall it be with all Israel's
 enemies, will you but persevere in your
 undertaking. Thus encouraged, they kept
 15 their posture of entreaty, there in the Lord's
 presence; the very priests who offered him
 16 sacrifice, did so in sackcloth, with ashes
 on their heads; and with all their hearts
 17 they prayed, every one of them, that God
 would bring deliverance to his people of
 Israel.

¹ The place-names given in verses 12-16 cannot be identified with certainty: many of them differ in the different versions. ² Perhaps a copyist's mistake for 'Lebanon' or 'Lycia'. ³ Ex. 17. 12.

5 When news reached Holofernes, the Assyrian commander, that the Israelites were for offering resistance, and had secured the mountain passes, he broke out into a great fury of indignation. He summoned all the chiefs of Moab and Ammon to his presence; What folk are these, he asked, that would hold the mountain-heights? Are their cities so prosperous or so well defended, are they so brave or so numerous, have they a commander so skilled in war, that they alone defy us, and will not come out to meet and welcome us, like the other nations around them?

5 It was Achiur, chief paramount of the Ammonites, that answered him. My lord, said he, if thou wilt hear me out, I will tell the whole truth to thy face, about these mountain-folk; never a false word shalt thou hear from me. They come of Chaldaean stock, but they made their abode in Mesopotamia, because they had no mind to worship the old gods of Chaldaea; gods a many their fathers' worship owned, but they forsook it, to worship one God only, the God of heaven. He it was bade them remove thence, and dwell in Charan. At a time when famine overspread the world, they took refuge in Egypt; and there, when four hundred years had passed,¹ they had grown so numerous that there was no counting the muster of them. The king of Egypt oppressed them, forcing them to make bricks of clay and build cities for him; so they cried out to this Lord of theirs, and he smote the whole land of Egypt with plagues of every sort, till at last the Egyptians were fain to be rid of them. But not for long; plagued no more, they tried to capture the men of Israel and make slaves of them anew. To these, as they fled, the God of heaven opened a path through the sea, whose waves stood firm as a wall to right and left while they marched across its floor dry-shod; and when a great army from Egypt sought to follow them, it was overwhelmed in those waters, so that never a man escaped to tell his children the story.

4 The Red Sea once passed, they took for their own the desert country about Sinai, that never yet gave man a home, gave wanderer a resting-place; there from brackish fountains fresh water sprang,

there, for forty years, heaven itself sent them nourishment. Go where they would, without bow or arrow, shield or spear, God fought for them, and won the victory; there was no beating down such a people as this, save when they forsook the worship of the Lord their God; only when they worshipped some god other than himself, their own God, would he let them be plundered, and slaughtered, and treated with insult. Even then, did they but repent of their revolt from his allegiance, the God of heaven would give them strength to resist their assailants. So it was they overthrew kings a many, Chanaanite and Jebusite, Pherezite and Hethite and Hevite; the Amorrite king, too, and all the warrior chiefs of Hesebon; took possession of their lands, and garrisoned their cities.

All went well with them, so long as no sin of theirs offended his eye, the God that is an enemy to all wrong. But there was a time, these many years back, when they forsook the old paths God had given them to follow; then, in battle after battle, nation after nation defeated them, and a multitude of them were borne away as captives into an alien land; it was but lately that they turned to their God again, and he reunited the scattered remnants of them. So they returned to these hills, and took possession anew of Jerusalem, where their sanctuary is. Of this, then, my lord, assure thyself first; has any guilt of theirs lost them the favour of their God? Then indeed march we against them; none more ready than this God of theirs to hand them over to thee, fit subjects for thy overmastering yoke. If fault he has none to find with his own people, then meet them in battle we may not; he himself will be their defender, and ours will be a plight for all the world to mock at.

At these words of Achiur's, Holofernes' lords were full of indignation, and thought to make an end of him. What talk is this? they said to one another. Can the men of Israel, without arms, without valour, without skill in war, hold out against king Nabuchodonosor and his troops? Scale we yonder heights, to prove Achiur a liar, and when we have mastered the defenders, let Achiur be put to the sword with the rest.

¹ The four hundred years are probably reckoned as elapsing between Abraham and Moses; cf. a similar calculation in Ac. 13. 20.

29 Let us prove to the whole world that Nabuchodonosor rules it, and other god there is none.

6 When their talk had died down, Holofernes himself, in a transport of rage, 2 said to Achior, This, then, is thy prophecy, that the race of Israel will find protection in their God? Thou hast a lesson still to learn; that Nabuchodonosor is god, and 3 he only. So be it; when the Israelites fall like one man, thou too shalt feel the sword of Assyria, and share their utter ruin. 4 Proof thou shalt have first, that Nabuchodonosor is the world's supreme lord; then, no more breathing-space given thee, thou shalt perish with the rest, shalt lie where Israel lies, with Assyrian steel between thy ribs. What, does thy face fall, 5 sir Oracle? Why those pale cheeks, if thou 6 knowest all my threats are vain? Nay, be assured thou shalt learn the truth when the Israelites learn it, no sooner. Henceforth thy lot shall be thrown in with theirs; only when my sword falls on them shalt thou feel my vengeance.

7 With that, Holofernes bade his men lay hold of Achior and bear him off to Bethulia,¹ and so hand him over to the men 8 of Israel. Lay hold of him they did, and set out on their journey across the plain, but when they reached the mountain 9 spurs, out came slingers to meet them. So they let the mountains alone, tied Achior hand and foot to a tree, and went back to their master, leaving Achior there with the 10 ropes round him. But now the men of Israel ventured down from Bethulia, and came to his side; he was set free and taken back to the town with them. There he must stand up before the general assembly of the people and satisfy their questioning: what moved the Assyrians to leave him thus bound?

11 The chieftains there at this time were the Simeonite, Ozias son of Micha, and Charmi, who was also called Gothoniel. 12 Before these and all the elders, in full view of the people, Achior told them what answer he had made to Holofernes' question; how the bystanders had been for 13 killing him outright; in what angry fashion Holofernes had given orders for his sur-

render to Israel, only so that he too, in the hour of their defeat, might be doomed to execution; and of all the punishments he was threatened with, only for saying, They have the God of heaven to defend them. When Achior had finished his story, the 1 people bowed down with one accord, face to earth, offering the Lord worship and entreaty; all was weeping and lament. Lord, they cried, God of heaven and earth, 1 leave not this insolence unregarded, our distress unrelieved, the prayer of thy chosen servants unheeded! Give proof, now, that those who trust in thee are never forsaken, that the presumptuous, who boast of their own strength, are ever brought low! So they made an end of 1 weeping; and now, their day of public prayer over, they offered Achior consolation. The God of our fathers, they told 1 him, will give thee thy reward. Thou hast been the herald of his great deeds, and thou shalt live to see the downfall of thy enemies. Then, when the Lord our God 19 has granted his servants deliverance, may he still be with thee, thy own God, here in our midst; thou and thine shall be made free of our company.

And now Ozias, dismissing the as- 11 ssembly, bade Achior to his house and made a great feast for him; all the elders, too, 20 were bidden, and together they refreshed themselves, now the fast was over. But 21 afterwards all the people were summoned from their homes anew; and in solemn assembly, the whole night long, they prayed to the God of Israel, to win deliverance.

7 Next day, Holofernes ordered his troops to march on Bethulia. He had 2 a hundred and twenty thousand foot and twenty-two thousand horse under his command, besides forced levies from the manhood of all the regions and cities he had overrun. This whole army now pre- 11 pared to attack the Israelites, advancing up the mountain-slopes to a height which commands the Dothian plain, all the way from Belma to Chelmon, near Esdremon. Face to earth the men of Israel bowed 4 down, and threw dust on their heads, as they saw the enemy's numbers, beseeching

¹ No town called Bethulia is elsewhere mentioned. Some think that the names, both of persons and of places, have been deliberately replaced by fictitious ones throughout this book.

God with one accord to grant his people
5 deliverance; then, taking up their arms,
they mounted guard over the approaches
of the narrow defile that leads between the
mountains, where they kept watch day and
6 night. Holofernes, looking for a devious
path to circumvent them, came upon the
springs which fed their aqueduct, south of
the city and beyond its enclosure; so he
gave orders that their supply of water
7 should be cut off. A few springs remained,
not far from the wall, from which they still
drew water, enough to revive their spirits
but scarce enough to quench their thirst.
This they did by stealth, but not unob-
8 served; and now the men of Ammon and
Moab offered their advice to Holofernes.
Not in bow or lance, said they, do the Is-
raelites put their trust; it is the hill-
country that befriends them; these moun-
tains with their headlong slopes are all the
9 defence they need. Wouldst thou defeat
them without battle joined? Then set a
guard over these springs of theirs, and let
them draw water no longer. Either thou
wilt compass their deaths, and no blood
shed, or, worn down at last, they will yield
into thy hands the city they think im-
pregnable.

10 This advice commended itself to Holo-
fernes and his lords, and he set a hundred
men to guard each of the wells all about.
11 When this watch had been kept for twenty
days together, the people of Bethulia had
no water left in tank or cistern, not a full
supply for one day; for now a daily allow-
12 ance was made to each. Thereupon all of
them, husbands and wives, young men and
children, gathered about Ozias, all uttering
13 a single cry of complaint. God give judge-
ment, they said, between us and thee; an
ill turn thou hast done us, in refusing to
come to terms with the Assyrians. Now
God has given them the mastery over us;
14 none brings aid; we lie at their mercy,
cruelly undone by thirst. Come, muster
15 all the citizens, and let us all surrender at
discretion to the army of Holofernes.
16 Better we should be prisoners, still thank-
ing the Lord for our lives spared, than
ourselves be slaughtered, first winning the
whole world's reproaches by letting our
wives and little ones be slaughtered before

our very eyes. We adjure you by heaven
17 and earth, and by the God of our fathers,
who now takes such vengeance on us for
our sins, to surrender the town to Holo-
fernes' army. If we must die, let it be a
swift death at the sword's point, not a
lingering death from this parching thirst.

All this was said, and with that the whole
18 throng fell to weeping and lamenting bit-
terly; and for many hours together they
cried out to God as with a single voice:
We have taken part in our fathers' sins;
19 we are guilty men, rebels against thee. Do
thou, in thy great love, take pity on us; or
if punished we must be, let it be under thy
own rod; do not abandon us, that still
acknowledge thy name, to the mercy of
men who never knew thee! Wouldst thou
21 have the heathen asking, What has become
of their God? At last they grew weary of
22 their clamour; they had wept enough; and
when silence was restored, Ozias rose from
23 his place, bathed in tears, and spoke to
them. Brethren, said he, be calm and
patient. These five next days, let us still
look to the Lord for deliverance; perhaps
24 his anger will relent, perhaps he means to
win himself fresh renown. If at the end of
25 those five days no help has reached us, rest
assured we will act on the counsel you have
given.

8 Now turn we to one whom all this
news concerned; a widow called Ju-
dith, that was descended (from Ruben)¹
through Merari, Idox, Joseph, Ozias, Elai,
Jammor, Gedeon, Raphaim, Achitob, Mel-
chias, Enan, Nathania, Salathiel and
Simeon. She had been married to one
2 Manasses, but lost him when the barley
was a-reaping; he must needs be hurrying
3 his men on as they bound the sheaves on
his farm, while the sun beat fierce on his
head, and of that stroke he died, and was
laid to rest with his fathers, there in his
native town of Bethulia. Judith had now
4 been left a widow these three years and six
months past; ever she dwelt cloistered
5 among her maid-servants, in a secret
bower she had made for herself on the roof
of her house, wearing sackcloth about her
6 waist and keeping fast continually, save on
the sabbath and the new moon and what

¹ 'Son of Ruben' can hardly be taken literally, unless the names are deliberately fictitious. The phrase does not appear in the Septuagint Greek, which differs here in several other features.

other holidays were observed in Israel.

7 She was a woman very fair to see, and her husband had left her great wealth, a full household, and lands well stocked with cattle and sheep; a woman of high repute

8 everywhere, and the Lord's devout worshipper; no man had a word to say in her dispraise.

9 This Judith, then, when she heard how Ozias had promised to surrender the city in five days' time, would have two of the elders, Chabri and Charmi, pay her a visit.¹ And thus she greeted them, Is it true Ozias has promised he will hand the city over to the Assyrians, if in five days no rescue comes to you? By what right, sirs, do you put the Lord's goodness to such a test? This is no way to win it; rather, we shall earn his displeasure, add fuel to his vengeance. What, would you set a date to the Lord's mercies, bid him keep tryst with you on a day of your own appointing? Well for us that he, at least, is patient; repent we, and with flowing tears ask his pardon!

15 He will not overwhelm us with reproaches, as men do; not his the human anger that bursts into flame. Abate we our pride, and wait on him with chastened spirits; entreat him with tears to grant us relief at a time of his own choosing. Then shall we, who stand aghast now at the pride of our enemies, triumph in the reward of our humility. It is something that we have not followed the evil example of our forefathers, who forsook their own God and worshipped alien gods instead, dooming themselves thus to massacre, to plunder, and to insult at the hands of their enemies. At least we acknowledge one God, and him only. Wait we humbly till he sends us relief; he will avenge our wrongs by bringing misfortune on our enemies; he, the Lord our God, will bring the invader low, and disappoint him of his prize.

21 You, brethren, are among the elders of the people; their lives are in your charge. Yours to hearten them, by reminding them what trials our fathers underwent, to shew whether they were God's worshippers indeed; how Abraham was put to the proof, tested by long endurance, before he be-

came God's friend; how Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and all who won God's favour, must be loyal to him under great affliction first. And what of those others, who could not hold out, submitting to the divine will, under these trials; who bore themselves impatiently, and did the Lord despise by complaining against him? These were the men the destroying angel slew, the men who fell a prey to serpents. It is our turn to suffer now, and never a word said in remonstrance; think we the Lord's rod too light a punishment for our sins, believe we that he is punishing us as his servants, to chasten, not to destroy.

All thou sayest is true, Ozias and the elders confessed, beyond cavil. Pray for us, holy woman as thou art, and the Lord's true worshipper. Why then, said Judith, if you recognize the words I say as God's words, judge for yourselves whether the deed I mean to do is of God's ordaining; and pray him to bring my design to effect. Stand at the gate this night, while I pass beyond it with my handmaid for company, and pray that the Lord bring Israel relief within the five days you spoke of. But what my design is, never ask me; till I come back and give you news, I would have nothing of you but your prayers to the Lord our God. Go in peace, Ozias said, and the Lord be with thee, to the confusion of our enemies. And with that they left her, and withdrew.

9 When they had gone, Judith went to her place of prayer, sackcloth her garb, ashes sprinkled over her head, and thus, falling down before the Lord, she cried for mercy: Lord God of my father Simeon, thou didst put a sword in his hand to punish the alien for foul wrong done, for a virgin stripped and shamed;² thou didst mark down their wives for spoil, their daughters for slavery, their goods as forfeit, to reward the men who had thy honour at heart. Listen now, O Lord my God, to a widow's prayer. Thine are the deeds of long ago; that this event should succeed that, was of thy contriving; all thy

¹ The Greek text says she sent for Ozias as well (cf. verses 28 and 34).

² The murder of the Simeonites by Simeon and Levi is apparently condemned by Jacob (Gen. 34. 30; 49. 5-6). But evidently the Simeonites only preserved the tradition that their ancestor had shewed a laudable zeal for God's service, in taking vengeance for the contamination of the Israelite stock with alien blood.

designs are long a-brewing, all thy awards made in full foreknowledge.

6 Turn thy eyes now to yonder Assyrian camp, as thou didst let them fall long ago on the Egyptians, the armed host that went in pursuit of thy servants, boasting so proudly of its chariots and horsemen, its warrior strength. One glance from thee, and on that camp darkness fell; their feet were sucked down into the depths, and the waters closed above them! So be it, Lord, with these others, that boast of their great array, now of chariots, now of pike and shield, of arrow and lance, and know not the name thou bearest, thou, our God, crushing the invader still. Lift up thy hand, as it was lifted up long ago; break power of theirs with power of thine! Helpless may they lie beneath thy vengeance, who now think to profane thy holy place, dishonour the very shrine of thy name, violate, at the sword's point, the sanctity of thy altar.

12 The sword of Holofernes! Lord, if it might be his own pride's undoing! Be the eyes he casts on me a lure to catch himself, the professions of love I make, his death-blow! Too bold be my heart to fear, too resolute to spare him! Let him fall by a woman's hand, and all the glory of it will be ascribed to thy name. Not in the mustering of great armies, Lord, thy power is shewn; not on the well-horsed warrior thy choice falls; never did boasting earn thy favour. Still from a humble soul, an obedient will, the prayer must come that wins thee. God of the heavens, maker of the floods, Lord of this universal frame, listen to the defenceless plea of one who trusts only in thy mercy. Bethink thee, Lord, of thy covenant; grant my lips utterance, my heart firm resolve; so shall thy temple ever remain inviolate, so shall all the Gentiles learn that thou art God, and hast none to rival thee.

10 Then, her plea for the divine succour ended, Judith rose from the ground where she lay prostrate in the Lord's presence, called her maidservant to her, and went downstairs into her house. Flung aside, now, the sackcloth, folded away her widow's weeds; she bathed herself, anointed herself with the finest myrrh, parted and tied her hair. The gar-

ments of happier days she donned anew, put on her sandals, took bracelet and anklet, ear-ring and finger-ring; decked herself with every ornament she had. The Lord himself lent grace to her mien; manly resolve, not woman's wantonness, was the occasion of her finery, and he would enhance her beauty till all beholders should vow there was never woman so fair. A bottle of wine she bade her serving-maid carry, and a phial of oil, parched corn and dry figs, and bread, and cheese, and so she went out on her journey. When they reached the gates, they found Ozias and the elders of the city awaiting them there; and no sooner did these catch sight of her, than they fell into a great wonderment of her beauty. Still they did not question her, but let her pass; May the God of our fathers, they said, grant thee his favour, and his strength speed whatever design is in thy heart. Cause may Jerusalem have to be proud of thee; may thy name live among the holy and the just! And all the bystanders, as with one voice, said Amen to that.

So, with a prayer to the Lord, Judith passed out at the gate, and her maidservant with her. At break of day, she was yet making her way down the mountain-slope, she fell in with the advance-guard of the Assyrians, who stopped her, and asked whence she came, whither she was bound? A Hebrew, she said, but I have given my fellow-countrymen the slip, well knowing that the city must fall into your hands. Why did they defy you, and refuse to surrender, instead of throwing themselves on your mercy? What was I to do? I determined to win audience with your general, Holofernes, and tell him of their secret plans; shew him, too, means by which he may reduce the city without losing a man of his army. Her story told, they must next scan her face; and now their eyes dazzled with the admiration they had of her beauty. It has been the saving of thy life, they told her, this plan thou hast formed of betaking thyself to our master yonder. Of this be well assured, once thou hast found thy way to his presence he will use thee well; none so welcome as thou. And so they led her to Holofernes' tent, and advised him of her coming.

17 No sooner did she stand before him,
 than Holofernes' eyes made him her prisoner. Meanwhile, his lords were saying
 18 to one another, Who shall belittle the Hebrew folk, or doubt they are worth the attacking, when for prize there are such
 19 women as this? As for Judith, she saw only Holofernes, as he sat there with a canopy over him, a canopy of purple, with gold and emeralds and other precious
 20 stones worked into it. She looked him full in the face, then did reverence, bowing down to earth, until his servants raised her to her feet, at their master's bidding.

11 Compose thyself, Holofernes said; no need thy heart should misgive thee. None ever yet came to harm through me, that would do homage to my lord
 2 Nabuchodonosor; never had lance of mine been raised against thy own people, if they
 3 had not defied me. Tell me, what moved thee to part from their company and betake
 4 thyself to us? My lord, said Judith, I have counsel for thee; do but take the advice this handmaid of thine offers, and the Lord
 5 shall do great things with thee. By the life of Nabuchodonosor I swear it,¹ by the power of Nabuchodonosor, committed to thee here and now for the punishment of rebellious spirits! All men, nay, the brute
 6 beasts themselves, thou tamest to his will; of thy unwearied labours all nations know; a world
 7 acclaims thee for the best and greatest of his subjects; no province but speaks of thy wise government.

8 It is common knowledge among us what Achior said to thee, and what doom thou
 9 hast pronounced in return. His words have come true; God is indeed angered by our sins, so angered that he has sent
 10 warning through his prophets, he means to put our guilty race in thy power, and if the Israelites tremble at thy coming, it is
 11 because they know they have lost their God's favour. And now, with famine threatening them, doomed to perish from
 12 lack of water, they have taken a worse resolve. They mean to kill their cattle and drink the blood; they mean to satisfy their own needs with the hallowed corn, wine, and oil offered to the Lord their God,

tasting what they are forbidden to touch. This done, it is certain they will involve themselves in ruin. Hearing such news,
 what marvel if I shun their fellowship? Thy handmaid now; the Lord has sent me to tell thee of all this. Thy handmaid, but
 my own God I must still worship, though I be dwelling in thy camp. Suffer me, my lord, to go beyond its bounds, and offer
 prayer to God; so he will make it known to me, when he means to punish their guilt, and I will come and tell thee. Then I will
 take thee into the heart of Jerusalem, and thou wilt find the whole people of Israel defenceless as strayed sheep, not a dog to bark at thee. It is God's providence has
 advised me of all this; his vengeance that has sent me to warn thee of it.

This was welcome hearing for Holofernes and all that served under him; what
 11 prudence was hers! They told one another, Never was a woman such as this, so
 12 fair to look upon, so wise to listen to. And Holofernes said to her, God has been good
 indeed, sending thee here in advance of thy people, so as to give them up into our
 2 hands. These are fair promises thou makest; will he but bring them to fulfilment, thy God shall be my God too, and
 3 thou thyself, at Nabuchodonosor's court, shalt be held in high honour; wide as the world shall be thy renown.

12 And now Holofernes would have her repair to the tent where he kept his treasures, and lodge there; and he was for sending food to her there from his own table. But Judith told him, Eat I may not
 4 of the portion thou wouldst assign me; that were a grave fault; I have brought my own provisions with me. Ay, thou hast
 5 brought them, Holofernes said, but how if they should not suffice? How shall we fend for thee? My lord, answered Judith, as
 6 thou art a living man, God will prosper thy handmaid's undertaking before ever these are spent. So his servants shewed her to the tent he had designed for her; but as she
 7 entered it, she asked that she might be allowed to leave it each night, before day
 8 broke, and, praying, make her peace with the Lord. So he gave orders to his cham-

¹ This refers, presumably to what has gone just before. Both the Latin and the Septuagint Greek imply, on the contrary, that it refers to what follows; but in the Hebrew original Judith is more likely to have given emphasis to the promise in verse 4, than to a string of conventional compliments.

berlains, that for the next three days she should be allowed to come and go as she would, for the worship of her God; each night she went out to the vale of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain there, and prayed, as she came up out of the water, the God of Israel would speed her errand for his people's deliverance. Then she guarded herself against defilement by keeping her tent all day, till she made her meal at sun-down.

On the fourth day, Holofernes made a banquet for his own attendants, and sent his chamberlain Vagoa with an invitation to her. Prevail if thou canst, said he, on this Hebrew woman to grant me, of her own free will, her favours. (Great shame the Assyrians hold it in a man, if any woman fools him, and contrives to escape from his company unmolested.) So Vagoa waited on Judith, and said, Fair lady, make no scruple to appear as an honoured guest in my master's presence, to eat with him, and make merry over the wine. It is not for me, Judith answered, to gainsay my lord in this. Whim and will of his shall be whim and will of mine; I ask no better, all my life, than to obey his pleasure. With that, she rose up and threw her robe about her, and so made her way into Holofernes' presence; fast beat his heart within him, such was his longing for her charms. Drink with me, he said; fall to, and make merry; thou art right welcome. And Judith answered, Drink I will, my lord; never was a day in my life so proud as this. So she ate and drank with him, but only what her serving-maid had prepared for her. And Holofernes, basking in her smiles, drank ever deeper; never drank Holofernes as on that night.

13 And now it was late; his attendants were fain to make for their beds, leaving Vagoa, the last of them, to shut the doors of the banqueting-room; the wine had made drowsy men of them. In the banqueting-room, Judith was now left alone, save for Holofernes, that lay full length on his couch by the table, in drunken sleep. Her maid she left at the door, to keep watch; she herself, standing by the couch, wept silently, and silently moved her lips in prayer. Lord God of Israel, she said, give me strength! Now

guide these hands aright, and give Jerusalem the relief thou hast promised; now be the task performed, but for the hope of thy aid, undreamed of! With that, she went to the head of the couch, and unfastened the scimitar that hung there; unsheathed it, and caught the sleeping man by the hair; Lord God, she said, strengthen me now! Twice the scimitar fell on his neck, and cut clean through it; down came the canopy from the pillars, down fell the headless body to the earth, and ere long she was at the doors, giving the severed head to her maid-servant and bidding her thrust it away into the wallet she carried. Then they went out, both of them, right through the camp, as if bound on their customary errand of prayer; but this time they took the winding path along the valley, right up to the city gates.

Far away rang the cry of Judith to the watchmen on the city walls, Open the gates! God is on our side. Open the gates! His power yet lives in Israel. These, upon hearing her voice, ran to tell the elders of the city, and all, high and low, went out to meet her; they had thought never to see her again. There, by torch-light, they gathered round her, and she, mounting on to higher ground, bade them keep silence. Silence was made, and thus Judith began, Praise the Lord our God; he does not forsake those who put their trust in him. Through me, his handmaid, deliverance has come to Israel's race, as he promised; through me, this night, the enemy of his people lies slain. With that, she took Holofernes' head out of the wallet where it lay hidden. Look upon this head, she cried, and know that the Assyrian army has lost its general. Look upon this, the canopy he lay under, in drunken sleep, when the Lord our God smote him, and by the hand of a woman. And, as the Lord is a living God, well did his angel watch over me, thither going, there abiding, and thence returning. The Lord would not have his own handmaid stained with sin; he has brought me back to you inviolate, to glory in his triumph, my preservation, and your deliverance. One and all, then, give thanks to the Lord; the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever!

Thereupon all of them offered the Lord

worship; and to her they said, With his own power the Lord has blessed thee, and by thy means has brought our enemies to nothing! And Ozias, that was the Israelites' commander, said to her, Blessing be thine, my daughter, from the Lord God, the most high, such as no other woman on earth can claim! Blessed be the Lord, maker of heaven and earth, for sending thee out to wound the head of our arch-enemy. Such high renown he has given thee this day, that the praise of thee shall never die on men's lips, so long as they hold the Lord's power in remembrance. Thy own life thou wouldst not prize, when thy countrymen were in need and great affliction; thou wouldst avert our ruin, with our God to speed thee. And to that all the people said Amen.

Then Achior was summoned, and thus Judith greeted him: No credit hast thou lost, by averring that the God of Israel did not spare his enemies; by my hand, this night, he has cut down the chief of those who gave thee the lie. Was it not Holofernes that defied the God of Israel, in his proud insolence, and threatened thyself with death? When Israel was conquered, thou too, he said, shouldst be put to the sword. To prove which was the truer prophet, here is his head. Upon seeing the head of Holofernes, Achior was in such a great taking of fear that he fell to earth in a swoon. Then, coming back to his senses and taking heart again, he did reverence, bowing low at her feet; Wherever the sons of Jacob dwell, said he, God has made thy name a name of blessing; wherever thy renown reaches through the world, the God of Israel shall be glorified in the telling of it.

14 Hang we this head from the battlements, Judith said to the people; and now, brethren, here is my plan. At sunrise, arm all of you, and go out to the attack; but this attack of yours will be a feint, you will not go down into the plain. It will suffice to make the advance guards retreat, and rouse their general; and when their leaders hasten to the tent of Holofernes, to find his headless body lying in a pool of blood, they will be overcome by terror. Then, once assured that they are ready for flight, go out after them undis-

mayed, and the Lord will beat them to dust under your feet.

(Meanwhile Achior, such visible proof before his eyes of what Israel's God could do, cast heathenry aside and learned to believe in God. He would be circumcised, and reckoned among Israel's folk, and so his posterity remain to this day.)

No sooner was day dawned, and Holofernes' head raised aloft on the battlements, than all took up their arms, and sallied out with a great stir and noise of shouting, whereupon the enemy's advance guard hastened back to Holofernes' tent.

The guards there went to the door of the banqueting-room and bustled to and fro; rouse their lord they must, but they had rather make this show of commotion and disturb him with their din, than wake him outright; never a man in all the Assyrian army durst knock at the door or go in. But now chief and captain and commander in the Assyrian king's service were waiting there, and they said to Holofernes' attendants, Go in and rouse him; these Israelite rats have left their holes, and are boldly offering battle. Upon this, Vagoa went into the room where he lay, and stood behind the curtain clapping his hands; no doubt had he but Holofernes was there with Judith for his bed-fellow. Then, when his ears told him that the sleeper had not moved, he went closer to the curtain and lifted it. And when he saw the headless body of Holofernes lying there on the ground, weltering in its own blood, he gave a loud cry of lament, and tore his garments about him. Making his way to Judith's tent, and finding her gone, he ran out to where the others stood; Here is great despite done, he cried, to the court of king Nabuchodonosor, and one Jewish woman its author! Holofernes lies there felled to the earth, and no head on his body!

At this news, all the Assyrian leaders tore their garments; a craven fear fell on them they could not master, and their spirits were cowed utterly; never was such a cry as went up then from the heart of the Assyrian camp.

15 When word of this outrage upon Holofernes spread through the army, plan and purpose had they none;

taking counsel only of the fear that shook their limbs, they sought refuge in flight. 2 None might say a word to his neighbour, none might lift his head; they left all behind, and hastened to make good their escape from the rumoured onslaught of the Hebrews, some taking the roads across 3 the plain, some the mountain tracks. The Israelites, when they saw their backs turned, went in pursuit, and swept down the hill-side with blowing of trumpets and 4 a great shouting at their heels. The Assyrians, in their headlong flight, could not hold together, and their enemies, pursuing them in orderly array, need only 5 catch them to overpower them; so Ozias sent out messengers to all Israel, city-dwellers and country-dwellers alike, and none but sent out the flower of their manhood, ready armed for the pursuit. At the sword's point they followed them, to the 7 very frontiers of their domain. As for the folk who had been left behind in Bethulia, they made their way into the Assyrian camp, whence they carried off all the Assyrians had left behind when they fled, and it was no light load they brought 8 home with them. When the victorious army returned, with the spoils taken from their enemies, there was no counting the cattle and the pack-beasts and the plunder of all sorts; none, high or low, but was enriched with the booty.

9 And now the high priest Joacim¹ came to Bethulia, with all that were his fellow elders at Jerusalem, asking to see Judith; and when she answered his summons, all with one voice began to extol her; Thou art the boast of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the pride of our people; thou hast played a man's part, and kept thy courage high. Not unrewarded thy love of chastity, that wouldst never take a second husband in thy widowhood; the Lord gave thee firmness of resolve, and thy name shall be ever 12 blessed. And to that all the people said Amen.

13 Scarce did thirty days suffice for the men of Israel to gather the Assyrian spoils. 14 Among these, all that proved to be Holofernes' own went to Judith herself, gold and silver, clothes and jewels, and furni-

ture of every sort; all these the people handed over to her, keeping high festival, while man and maid, wed and unwedded, 15 played flute and harp together.

16 Then Judith herself sang to the Lord, and this was Judith's song: Strike up, tambour, and cymbals beat in the Lord's honour, sound a fresh song of praise; high enthrone him, call aloud upon his name! What power divine crushes the enemy, but the Lord's great name? Here 4 in the midst of his people he lies encamped; come what enemy may, he grants deliverance.

Came the Assyrian from the northern 5 hills in his great strength, the valleys choked with his marching columns, the mountain glens black with his horses; 6 to send fire through our country-side, put our warriors to the sword, mark down our children for slavery, our maidens for spoil. Great despite the Lord Almighty did him, 7 that he should fall into a woman's power for his death-blow. Not by warriors' hands the tyrant fell; not giants smote him, not heroes of the old time barred his path; it was Judith, Merari's daughter, Judith's fair face that was his undoing. Laid aside, 9 now, her widow's weeds; festal her array must be; a feast waits for the sons of Israel. Ointment, there, for her cheeks, a band for her straying locks, a robe new-wrought to ensnare him! Her very sandals thrall'd 11 his eyes; he lay there, his heart beauty's prisoner, while the sharp steel pierced his neck through. Stood Persian, stood Mede aghast at the boldness of her resolve; loud 13 rang the cry of the Assyrian camp, when the hard-pressed defenders sallied out against them, parched with thirst! Slaves, 14 did they call us? But we gave them cold steel; cut them down where, like slaves, they ran; one glance from the Lord our God, and the battle was lost.

A hymn, a new hymn, sing we to the 15 Lord our God. Great and glorious thou art, Lord Adonai; there is no outmatching thy wondrous power. Let all thy creatures 17 do thee service; were they not made at thy word, fashioned by a breath from thee? When thou commandest, none but must

¹ The only high priest we know of as bearing this name held office during the early days of the Persian empire, long after the fall of Assyria (Neh. 12. 10). Once more, the suggestion seems possible that the names in the story have been artificially supplied.

18 obey. Rain-swept, the mountains quake
 from their depths, the rocks melt like wax
 19 at thy coming. Yet great, by thy measure,
 are those that fear thee, in all their doings
 20 great. Woe to the nations that levy war on
 my people; when the time comes for
 judgement, the Lord Almighty will execute
 vengeance on them; he will not spare.
 21 Their flesh the fire shall scorch, the worm
 shall devour; lament they must and bear
 their pain for ever.
 22 And now, their victory won, all went to
 Jerusalem to worship the Lord there; once
 they were cleansed of defilement, burnt-
 sacrifice was done, vow and promise were
 23 paid by all alike. As for Judith, she kept
 none of Holofernes' spoil, that the people
 had given her, nor the canopy she had
 carried off from his banqueting-room, for
 herself; she offered them up as a thing
 24 forfeit.¹ High festival the people kept,
 there before the sanctuary; for three whole

months they solemnized their victory, and
 Judith among them. Then they dispersed
 21 to their homes, and Judith, back at Bethulia,
 was held in great renown; in all
 Israel, none so honoured as she. So well,
 22 in her, did chastity mate with valour; once
 her husband was dead, she never had
 knowledge of man again. When she left her
 23 house on festival days, great reverence was
 hers indeed. And for the serving-maid,
 24 Judith let her go free.

There, then, Judith lived on in her
 husband's dwelling-place, and a hundred
 and five years had passed before she was
 laid to rest at his side at Bethulia; and
 26 the whole people bewailed her for seven days
 together. All the while she lived, and long
 after her death, was never enemy that dis-
 27 turbed the peace of Israel. In the Hebrew
 calendar, a day of rejoicing commemorates
 28 her victory; in such honour have the Jews
 held it from that day to this.

¹ Literally, 'as an anathema of forgetfulness'; in the Greek, 'as an offering'. If the Vulgate rendering is right, the phrase probably alludes to the proceedings mentioned in Deut. 13. 16, Jos. 7. 24.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

Now turn we to the days of Assuerus,¹ that was lord of a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India on this side to Ethiopia on that, and was firmly established on the throne of his kingdom, with the city of Susan for his capital. It was now the third year of his reign, and he held high feast for all his lords and vassals; Persian warriors, Median notables, and the governor of every province, were his guests. All should have proof of his royal splendour, of the power and pride that were his; and long they kept holiday, for a hundred and eighty days together. And when the festivity drew to an end, he would entertain all the folk of Susan, high and low; for a whole week a banquet was spread for them at the gates of his garden, amid trees planted by art at the royal bidding. On every side, fastened by ivory rings to marble columns, hung canopies, some white, some flaxen, some violet, with cords of fine linen and purple thread; couches of gold and silver were set here and there on a floor of malachite and marble, wondrously patterned. From golden cups they drank, and the very trenchers on which the meat was served were ever of new design. Wine they had in plenty, and of rare vintage, as befitted a king's state; nor was any man compelled to drink; the king had set one of his nobles at the head of each table, bidding him see that each man drank as drink he would. For the women the queen, Vasthi, held a banquet too, in Assuerus' own palace.

The seventh day had come; the king's heart was merry, warmed by long draughts of wine; and now he had a errand for the seven chamberlains that waited on him, Maumam, Bazatha, Harbona, Bagatha, Abgatha, Zethar and Charchas. They were to bring queen Vasthi into the king's presence, wearing the royal crown, so that he might display her person to the rabble as well as to his lords; hers was no common

beauty. Vain was the royal summons the chamberlains brought her; she would not come. Whereupon the king broke out into a great passion of rage, and was fain to take counsel of the wise men that were ever about his person, after the fashion of courts; theirs was still the advice he followed, theirs the knowledge of ancient law and precedent. (The chief of them, and the nearest to his person, were Charsena, Sethar, Admatha, Tharsis, Mares, Marsana and Mamuchan; these seven princes of Persia and Media attended on him always, and had places next himself.) What sentence should he pass on queen Vasthi, to whom he, king Assuerus, had sent a summons through his chamberlains, and in vain?

Thereupon, in the hearing of the king and his nobles, Mamuchan thus spoke: Queen Vasthi has put a slight, not upon the king's grace only, but on all men, high and low, in his dominions. All our women-folk will hear what she has done, and all will set their husbands at defiance, reminding them how king Assuerus sent for queen Vasthi, and she would not come. Not a wife in Persia or Media but will disobey her husband more lightly for this example; the king has good reason to be angry. So please thee, let an edict go out in thy name, by the laws of Persia and Media irrevocable, forbidding Vasthi ever to come into the royal presence again. Let the crown pass to some head worthier than hers. In all the broad lands under thy domain let this decree be published; so to all husbands, high and low, their wives shall pay due honour henceforward.

King and nobles liked the plan well, and the king did as Mamuchan had advised, sent a letter to each nation in the tongue it spoke, the characters it used, decreeing that a man should be lord and master in his own house, and the whole world must take note of it.²

¹ Assuerus is the name given on inscriptions to that king Xerxes who was defeated by the Greeks at Salamis in 480 B.C.

² Instead of this last phrase, the Hebrew text has 'and should speak the tongue of his own people,' an expression difficult to account for.

2 With time, the rage of Assuerus cooled down, but he had not forgotten Vasthi's offence, or her dismissal.

2 And now his courtiers and attendants offered him their counsel, It is time we made search for beauty and maidenhood,

3 to console the king's grace. It would be well if commissioners were sent into all the provinces, to look out fair damsels that are maidens still, and bring them here to Susan. There let them be handed over to the chamberlain Egeus, that has charge of the women's quarters in the palace, and an allowance be made them for adding art to their beauty, and for all else they need.

4 And she, who most of all wins the royal favour, shall be queen instead of Vasthi. The king liked this counsel well, and gave orders that it should be put into effect.

5 There was a Jew called Mardocheaus living at Susan, descended through Jair and Semei from Cis the Benjamite,¹ who was carried off from Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nabuchodonosor at the same time as king Jechonias of Juda. A ward this man had, a niece of his called Edissa, or Esther, that had lost both her parents. Beauty was hers of form and face, and when her parents died, Mardocheaus adopted her as his own daughter. In accordance with the king's bidding, Esther was carried off among many other fair maidens to Susan, and there handed over to the chamberlain Egeus, to be kept in

9 waiting with the rest. Her charms won his favour, and he bade her attendant set about the anointing of her without more ado; choice foods should be allotted to her, and seven maids, the fairest in all the palace, to wait on her, adorning with all

10 his art her person and theirs. Of her race and country she had told him nothing; concerning that, Mardocheaus had enjoined silence on her; and he himself walked to and fro, every day, before the lodging of those fair pensioners, so great

was his care for Esther and of what would befall her.

It was a full twelvemonth before a maiden's turn came, to be the king's bride; first she must add art to her beauty, anointing herself for six months with oil, and for six with paints and powders. Ever the bride was given what adornment she would, and so, in finery of her own choosing, passed out from the maidens' lodging to the royal bed-chamber. Each morning, the bride of yesternight was escorted to a new home, where the chamberlain Susagazi, master of the royal coucbines, had charge of her, nor might she ever find her way back to the king, save at his will and on his express summons.

So the day came when it was the turn of Esther, Abihail's child, daughter now to his brother Mardocheaus, to be a king's bride. For her adorning, she had no request to make; let the chamberlain Egeus, since the maidens were under his charge, deck her as he would. But oh, she was fair; she had beauty past all belief, to win men's favour and their love. It was in Tebeth, the tenth month, in the seventh year of Assuerus' reign, that she was escorted to the royal bed-chamber.² More than all those others she won the king's heart, more than all she enjoyed his loving favour; on her head he set the royal crown, and made her his queen in place of Vasthi. And he had a great feast prepared for all his lords and vassals, Esther's bridal feast. To all his dominions he granted a public holiday, and made them gifts, with princely liberality, besides.

And now, the brides summoned and housed anew,³ Mardocheaus took up his post at the gates of the palace itself. Still faithful to his bidding, Esther had said no word about her race or her country; still, as in her nursery days, she remembered and did all he told her. And it was while Mardocheaus haunted the palace gates

¹ If Assuerus is identified with Xerxes, the words 'who was carried off' should perhaps be applied to Cis, not to Mardocheaus; otherwise Mardocheaus must have been more than a hundred years old. But see note 2 on page 448. According to the Hebrew text and the Septuagint Greek, Esther was cousin-not niece, to Mardocheaus. So in 2. 15 below 'his brother' should, according to the Hebrew, be 'his nephew'.

² The slow progress of events may be partly explained, if Assuerus is Xerxes, by his absence during the time of his campaign against Greece. ³ Literally, in the Hebrew text, 'when the maidens were collected a second time', in the Latin, 'when the maidens were sought out and collected a second time'. Commentators are much exercised to know how a repetition of the procedure mentioned in verse 3 should have been either likely in itself, or relevant to the present context. The rendering given above is based on what seems the most probable interpretation; the brides had now passed out of Egeus' care into the seraglio proper (verse 14); Mardocheaus, therefore, deserted his post at the entrance of Egeus' establishment (verse 11), and mingled with the hangers-on at the gates of the palace itself.

that two of the royal chamberlains, Bagathan and Thares, door-keepers both at the palace entry, grew disaffected, and would have made a murderous attack on the king's person. Mardocheaus came to hear of it, and told queen Esther; she, naming him as her informant, told her husband. The charge was investigated, and found true; the two conspirators were hanged, and the circumstance was put on record, being entered in the king's own archives.

3 It was after this that king Assuerus bestowed high rank upon an Agagite, Aman the son of Amadathi, bidding him take precedence of all his other nobles. And all the royal attendants at the palace gates must bow the knee and do Aman reverence, such were their orders. But Mardocheaus went his own way, and would neither bow nor bend. Often the king's men asked him at the palace doors why he thus defied the royal bidding, but still he gave them no heed, till at last they told Aman of it. Would he still be so stiff in his opinions? They had learned from him by now that he was a Jew. Aman, when he heard their story, and proved the truth of it for himself, that Mardocheaus would neither bow nor bend, fell into a great passion of rage; and, hearing that he was a Jew, he would not be content with laying hands on Mardocheaus only; the whole race, throughout all Assuerus' dominions, should be brought to ruin for it. It was in the twelfth year of the reign, in Nisan, the first month of it, that the lot (which the Hebrews call Pur) was cast into the urn in Aman's presence, to determine the day and month when he would make an end of the Jews; and the month chosen was the twelfth month, Adar.

So now Aman said to king Assuerus, There is a race spread here and there throughout thy domains that follows strange law and custom, in defiance of the royal decrees; judge whether it consorts with thy royal dignity that licence should embolden them. Be it thy pleasure to decree their destruction, and I promise thee

an increase of ten thousand talents to thy revenue. There and then Assuerus took off the ring he wore on his hand, and gave it to the Agagite Aman, son of Amadathi, the Jews' enemy; Keep it for thy own use, said he, the money thou offerest, and as for the people, do what thou wilt with them. So, on the thirteenth day of that month, Nisan, the royal secretaries were summoned, and a decree was made in Aman's sense. Governor and chieftain must receive a letter, each in the language and the characters of his own province or tribe, sent in the name of king Assuerus and sealed with his royal seal. All through his dominions the couriers went out on their errand, bearing death and ruin to all the Jews, to young and old, to women and little children with the rest. The day fixed for their massacre and the seizing of their goods was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, Adar. The tenour of the letter, sent out to warn all the provinces and have them in readiness for the stated day, was this...¹ No time the couriers lost in following out the royal command; at Susa, the decree was posted up forthwith, and before the king and Aman had finished their wine, all the Jewish citizens were in tears.

4 When the news reached Mardocheaus, he tore his garments about him; put on sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes on his head; and as he went through the open square in the heart of the city, loud lament betrayed the bitterness of his grief. Lamenting he made his way to the outer gates of the palace; further than that he might not go, into the royal court, with sackcloth for his wear. So it was everywhere; never a province, town or district the cruel edict reached but there was mourning and fasting, wailing and weeping among the Jewish folk, and of sackcloth and ashes many among them made their beds.

Esther heard, from her maidservants and from the chamberlains, what Mardocheaus did; she was bewildered at the news, and sent out clothes for him to wear instead of his sackcloth, but he would have none of it. Then she sent for Athach, the

¹ This verse is probably the rubric introducing the copy of a decree, perhaps in the Chaldaean language. See 13. 1. In the Hebrew text there is no trace of any omission. At the end of verse 15, instead of 'all the Jewish citizens were in tears' this text reads 'the city of Susa was perplexed'.

chamberlain whom the king had deputed for her needs, bidding him go and ask Mardocheaus what his doings meant.

- 6 There in the public square, before the gate that led to the palace, Athach found him, and heard from him all the news; of the money Aman had promised to the royal treasury in return for the Jews' destruction. Mardocheaus gave him a copy, too, of the edict which had been posted in Susan, bidding him shew it to the queen; go she must into the king's presence, and plead there the cause of her people.¹ So Athach went back with his message. But she sent this answer: No subject of the king's grace, no province in his domains, but knows the inner court of the palace to be sacred. Man or woman entering it unbidden dies there and then; unless indeed the king should grant them life, by holding out his gold sceptre in token of pardon. These thirty days past I have not been summoned to the king's presence; how can I venture in?

- 12 Upon receiving this message, Mardocheaus answered, Do not flatter thyself that a royal court will shelter thee in the general massacre of thy countrymen. Keep silence, and the Jews will find some other means of deliverance; on thee and thine destruction shall fall. Who knows, but thou hast reached the throne only to be ready for such an opportunity as this? Then Esther sent word, Go and muster all the Jews thou canst find in Susan, and pray for me. Spend three days and nights without food or drink, while I and my maidens fast too. Then I will break the law by appearing in the king's presence unsummoned, though I must die for it. And Mardocheaus went away, to do as Esther had bidden him.

- 5 The third day came, and Esther put on her royal robes; and, so clad, made her appearance before the king's palace, within the royal (that is, the inner) court. There sat the king on his throne, in the palace council chamber, facing the main door; he saw Esther, his queen, standing there without, and the sight of her won his heart. Out went the golden sceptre he bore, and as she drew near to kiss the tip of it, Why, Esther, said he, what is thy

errand? Ask me for half my kingdom, and it is thine. My lord king, she answered, do me the honour of dining with me to-day; I have a feast prepared; and bring Aman with thee. The king, without more ado, had Aman summoned to wait, there and then, on Esther's pleasure; and both of them went to the feast she had prepared. Deep drank the king that day, and said to Esther, What wouldst thou? Tell me what thy desire is? Be it half my kingdom, it shall not be denied thee. What would I have? said she. I ask no more than thy; since the king's grace is ready to humour my whim, to grant me what I ask, do me the favour to dine with me to-morrow, and Aman with thee; then I will make known to the royal ear what my request is.

A proud man was Aman that day, and he went home treading on air. But Mardocheaus still sat at the palace door; rise up he would not, nor stir from his post. And Aman, seeing it, fell into a rage. He gave no mark of it then, but when he reached home he called all his friends about him, and his wife Zares among them, and opened his mind. He recounted to them how great his wealth was, how many children were his, what honour the king had done him by promoting him to be the chief of all his nobles and courtiers. More, he said; it was but this day queen Esther gave the king a banquet, and would have me and none other for his fellow-guest; to-morrow I must dine with her again, with the king present. All this is mine, he said, and all this is nothing to me, while I yet see Mardocheaus sitting there at the palace gate.

But they had a remedy for this, his wife Zares and those friends of his. Have a gallows made, fifty cubits high, so that to-morrow thou canst bid the king have Mardocheaus hanged on it. Then thou mayst go light-hearted enough, to feast with the king. This counsel Aman liked well, and he gave his men orders to have a high gallows in readiness.

6 All that night the king could not sleep; so he would have the annals of his reign brought to him, the record of times past, and they began to read these

¹ An amplification of this verse is to be found in 15. 1-3, where see notes.

2 out in his presence. In the reading of them, they came upon the story of the plot made by two chamberlains, Bagathan and Thares, to murder the king, and how Mardocheus gave information of it. And for this loyalty, the king asked, what honours or rewards were given to Mardocheus? But page and courtier were agreed, Mardocheus was never the better for it. Who is out there in the court? the king asked. It was Aman, come into the inner court to find audience with the king, and have Mardocheus hanged on his gallows; so when they told him it was Aman, Let him come in, the king said.

6 Aman, said Assuerus, when he came in, what should a king do, if his heart is set on raising one of his subjects to great honour? And Aman, casting about in his mind, could think of no other man that would be so marked out for the royal favour, but himself. Why, said he, if such a man is to be honoured indeed, he should be dressed in royal robes, mounted on the king's own horse, and crowned with the royal crown; and let him ride through the city streets, with the noblest of all the king's vassals crying out at his bridle-rein, So he rides, whom most the king would honour. Lose no time, then, the king answered; bring robe and horse, and do as much thyself for the Jew Mardocheus, that sits there at the palace gates. And have a care that none of the ceremonies thou speakest of goes unobserved.

1 So Aman must bring robe and horse, must dress Mardocheus and mount him, and then go through the city streets at his bridle-rein, crying out, So he rides, whom most the king would honour. That done, Mardocheus went back to his post at the palace gates, while Aman made the best of his way home, weeping loud and hiding away his head. To his wife Zares and to all his friends he told the story of what befell; but from wife and counsellors he could get no comfort. If he is of the Jewish race,¹ they said, this Mardocheus who has begun to outmatch thee, thou wilt never get the better of him; yield to him thou must. And even as they spoke, in came

the royal chamberlains, and hurried him off to the feast the queen had prepared for him.

7 So met they once again, the king and Aman, over the queen's wine. And once again, his heart warmed by drinking, Assuerus would know what Esther's mind might be; what was it she would have? Half of his kingdom should be hers for the asking. My lord king, she said, if this is indeed thy gracious pleasure, one gift I would ask, my life; one boon, the preservation of my people. Must we be crushed to nothing, I and my people; must we perish by massacre? To that we are doomed. If we were only marked down for slaves and bondwomen, our lot should be bravely borne; I would have nursed my grief in silence. But here is an enemy whose cruel designs concern the king's grace. Who is this man? Assuerus asked. Where is the insolence to be found that would make such an attempt as this? One enemy we have, said Esther, one schemer's malice we fear, and he is here in thy presence; Aman.

Upon hearing this, Aman was struck dumb, and could look neither king nor queen in the eyes. The king rose angrily from his place, left the banqueting-room, and went out to walk in the garden, among his trees. With that, Aman rose too, intent on winning his pardon from queen Esther; doubt he might not that the king was bent on his undoing. Thus minded, he fell sprawling across the couch on which Esther lay; and so the king found him, when he returned from garden to banqueting-room. What, cried he, will he ravish the queen before my eyes, and in my own house? And before the words were out of his mouth Aman was gagged and blindfold.

And now Harbona, one of the chamberlains in attendance on the king's person, came forward; What of the gallows, said he, fifty cubits high, that stands there by Aman's house, ready for Mardocheus, that saved the king's life?² Let Aman himself hang on it, said the king. So Aman

¹ This is generally interpreted as an allusion to the divine protection enjoyed by the Jewish people. But we should have expected to find such an argument supported by reference to the events of Jewish history (cf. Judith 5. 6-25); and it is perhaps only a hostile reference to the Jews, implying that if once they rise to power they are careful not to lose it.

² Literally, 'spoke good for the king', that is, gave useful information.

was hanged on the gallows he had raised for Mardocheaus; and with that, the king's angry mood was appeased.

8 That same day, Assuerus made a present to Esther of Aman's house, that was the Jews' enemy, and gave audience to Mardocheaus; for now Esther had told him that this was her uncle. He took back, too, the ring he had bade Aman wear, and gave it to Mardocheaus instead; and Mardocheaus was given charge of Esther's house. Nor would Esther be content, till she had fallen weeping at the king's feet and prayed him to prevent the mischief Aman had thought to do by his false plotting against the Jews. The golden sceptre was held out, in sign of the royal favour, and she rose to her feet and stood fronting him. Please it the king's grace, she said, to look favourably on my suit, and find nothing in it to his disadvantage. I would have new dispatches sent out, to revoke the order made by Aman, our crafty enemy, for the slaying of the Jews in all thy domains. How can I bear to see my own people exterminated by massacre? Nay, said the king to Esther and Mardocheaus; Aman's house I have granted to Esther, and Aman himself I have sent to the gallows, for daring to lift his hand against the Jews. But letters sent in the king's name and signed with his ring, by the custom of the realm, none must ever revoke.¹ Write rather in my name, under the royal seal, orders for the Jewish people to obey, in whatever sense likes you best.

9 So, on the twenty-third day of the third month, Siban, they summoned notary and scribe of the royal household, and at Mardocheaus' bidding they issued orders to the Jewish people. Letters were sent to all the chieftains, governors and judges who ruled the hundred and twenty-seven provinces between India and Ethiopia, written to each province or tribe in the characters it

used and in the language it spoke; to the Jews, in their own characters and their own language. And these letters, written under the royal seal in the king's name, were sent out by post-boys, that must carry them from province to province before the earlier decree could be executed. City by city the Jews must be brought together, so that they could muster their whole number and fight for their lives. They might slay their enemies till they made an end of them, with their wives and children and all their households, and divide their goods as plunder. The day fixed everywhere for this act of retribution was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, Adar. . . . A copy of the letter warning the Jews everywhere in Assuerus' empire, to be prepared for vengeance. . . .² Swiftly the post-boys went about their errand, and in Susan the royal edict was hung up for all to see.

When Mardocheaus came out from his audience with the king, resplendent in royal robes of violet and white, a gold crown on his head, his cloak of purple and lawn, the whole city welcomed him with rejoicing and applause; for the Jews, it was a dawn of new hope, a day of gladness and triumphant glory.

As each tribe, city and province received the royal letter, there was feasting and carousal and holiday; and many there were, of alien race and alien creed, that submitted themselves to Jewish rite and observance; such terror the name of Jewry struck into their hearts.

9 So Adar came, the last month of the year, and the thirteenth day of Adar. All preparations had been made, by blood-thirsty enemies, for a massacre of the Jews on that day, but instead, the Jews had the better of them, and could set about avenging themselves. City by city, town by town, region by region they banded themselves together, ready to strike the

¹ The Greek and Latin versions have 'withstand' instead of 'revoke' (the same Hebrew word is used here as in verse 5). This obscures what seems to be the point of the whole passage. Although Aman is dead, the royal edict sent out by him cannot, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, be revoked (1. 19 above). Assuerus is in the same difficulty as Darius in Daniel 6. 15. He therefore tells Mardocheaus and Esther, not to rescind the existing decree, but to frame another, addressed to the Jews, which will have the effect of thwarting it. Their letter calls on the Jews to arm against the Gentiles, as Aman's decree had, in effect, called on the Gentiles to arm against the Jews (3. 13). While, therefore, the action of the Jews on the thirteenth of Adar can be represented as an act of vengeance (verses 12 and 13), it also was an act of self-defence (verse 11); if they had not armed, their enemies would have instituted a successful pogrom under the (still unrepealed) edict of Aman. ² See note on 3. 14, and also that on 16. 1.

first blow against the men that hated and persecuted them. None dared withstand them, so wide-spread the fear their rise to power had engendered; judge and governor and chieftain, ruler and administrator everywhere had no praise too high for the Jewish people, for dread of Mardocheus; did he not hold the first place at court, high in the royal favour? Every day his fame grew, and he was in all men's mouths.

Great havoc the Jews wrought among their enemies that day, slaying the very men who had marked them down for slaughter; in Susan alone they put five hundred men to death, not counting the ten sons of Aman the Agagite. Ten sons he had, Pharsandatha, Delphon, Esphatha, Phoratha, Adalia, Aridatha, Phermestha, Arisai, Adirai and Jezatha; all these they slew, and would take nothing of theirs for plunder. And now, learning the number of those who had been killed at Susan, the king said to the queen, In Susan alone the Jews have slain five hundred men, and Aman's ten sons besides; here is massacre indeed, if in all my dominions they have done the like. Tell me, what more wouldst thou have me do for thee? Please it the king's grace, she answered, let the Jews be free to continue this day's work tomorrow; and let the bodies of Aman's sons be hanged on gibbets. So the king gave orders as she asked. No sooner was the decree posted up, than gallows were made for the bodies of Aman's sons; and on the fourteenth day of Adar the Jews mustered afresh, killing three hundred citizens of Susan, but taking nothing of theirs for plunder.

All over the king's dominions, the Jews fought for their lives, and put to death the enemies that persecuted them, till seventy-five thousand of them lay slain, and no plunder taken. Everywhere it was on the thirteenth of Adar they began laying about them, and next day they slew no more; so it was this day, the fourteenth, they made into a holiday, to be observed thenceforward with feast, and rejoicing, and carousal. In the city of Susan itself, the killing went on for two days; it was the fifteenth day, when their work was over,

that they set apart for feasting and merry-making; but in the unwall'd towns and villages round about, carouse and rejoicing and the sharing out of dainties began on the fourteenth. So Mardocheus wrote to all the king's Jewish subjects, near and far, setting all this out and bidding them observe both the fourteenth and the fifteenth, year by year, as the days of Jewry's vengeance, when weeping and lament gave place to mirth and gladness. There was to be feasting on both days, and on both days rejoicing; dainties should be exchanged, and gifts made to the poor.

So the will they then had and the orders Mardocheus sent became a yearly rite; to recall how Amadathi's son, Aman the Agagite, thought to vent his enmity against the Jews by murderously destroying them, and how he consulted Pur, the lot; how Esther sought audience with the king, praying for a royal decree that should thwart his design, and make his malice fall on his own head; and how Aman and his sons went to the gallows. This feast has ever been known as the feast of Purim, because of Aman's lot-taking. Here in this letter, nay, this book you have been reading, the whole story has been set out, deeds done, griefs borne, and strange vicissitudes. And the Jews pledged themselves and their children, with all who in after times should seek admission to their way of worship, to observe two days in each year, at the fixed time by this record determined.¹ Never must the observance die out with the passing of years, where there are Jews living in any part of the world; in every city the feast of Lots must be kept by the Jews, and by all those on whom their ancestral customs are binding.

There was a second letter written by queen Esther, Abihail's daughter, and the Jew Mardocheus, confirming this ordinance for ever; it went out to all the Jews in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of Assuerus' realm, wishing their health and assuring them that they had her warrant for keeping Purim feast with yearly rejoicing. And they, at the bidding of Mardocheus and Esther, bound themselves and their children to keep it in mind;

¹ Verses 20-27, the interpretation of which is in several places uncertain, are taken by some as implying that Mardocheus' letter set out at length the story of what had been happening at Susan, and that the Book of Esther itself is either a copy of, or an abridgement made from, this document.

the fasting, and the cries for aid, the casting
 32 of the lots, and all else that is recorded in
 this book, the book of Esther.

10 This Assuerus received tribute
 1 from the islands out at sea; how great his
 reign was, you may learn from the Annals
 of the Medes and Persians. There, too, you
 will read of the high honours to which he
 3 raised Mardocheus; how Mardocheus,
 a Jew, became next in rank to the king
 himself, a great name among Jewish
 names, a man well loved by his fellows,
 that sought his people's good and brought
 blessings on their race.

(So runs the Book of Esther in the Hebrew text, omitting certain passages which appear in the Septuagint Greek. In our Latin version, these additional passages have been collected at the end of the book, as in the translation given below. The remaining verses of this chapter, with verse 1 of chapter 11, occur at the end of the Septuagint Greek; they may, however, have been displaced, being an extract from some fuller narrative. The dream referred to is described in chapter 11.)

4 . . . All this has been God's doing, Mar-
 5 docheus said. I have not forgotten the
 dream I had, and all this was foretold in
 6 it; not a word but has come true. I dreamt
 of a little spring that grew into a river,
 spreading out into sun and sunlight, and
 so went rolling on in full tide. This was
 Esther, the king's bride that became his
 7 queen. I dreamt of two dragons; of these,
 8 I was one, and Aman the other. I dreamt
 of nations mustering for battle; these were
 the men that would have blotted out the
 9 Jewish name. And the single nation in my
 dream was Israel; did not Israel cry out to
 the Lord, and win his protection, win deli-
 verance from its wrongs? Wondrous
 proof he gave of his power, for all the world
 10 to see. Two dooms he ordained, one for
 11 God's people and one for the Gentiles, and
 either should take effect, all the world
 over, after an interval of time divinely

decreed; then it was the Lord shewed he
 remembered his own people still, pitied
 his own servants still. With eager and glad
 hearts all must come together and observe
 that time, the fourteenth and fifteenth days
 of Adar, as long as Israel's race shall last.

11 This document about the feast of
 Purim, said to have been trans-
 lated by Lysimachus son of Ptolemy, a
 native of Jerusalem, was first made public in
 the fourth year of king Ptolemy and queen
 Cleopatra, by Dositheus, who claimed
 to be a priest of true Levite descent, and
 his son, who was also called Ptolemy.¹

(The remaining twelve verses of this chapter, and the whole of chapter 12, appear in the Septuagint Greek as the introduction to the whole book. In part, they are a duplicate of 2. 5, 6, 21-23 above.)

On the first day of the month Nisan, in
 the second year of the great Artaxerxes, a
 vision came in a dream to Mardocheus the
 Benjamite, who was descended from Cis
 through Jairi and Semei. Although a Jew,
 he dwelt at Susan, and was a man of con-
 sequence in the royal court; he belonged
 to that band of exiles who were carried off
 from Jerusalem by Nabuchodonosor, king
 of Babylon, together with the king of Juda,
 Jechonias. His dream was this: Mutter-
 ings and uproar at first, thunder and earth-
 quake, and commotion all over the world,
 and from these two dragons disengaged
 themselves, ready to join battle. Roused
 by their clamour, the whole world rose to
 levy war against one innocent nation; it
 was a time of darkness and of peril, of
 affliction and sore need, and great fear
 brooded over all the earth. Then this inno-
 cent nation, terrified by the misfortunes
 which threatened it, already marked down
 to die, cried out to the Lord. And at their
 cry, a great river grew out of a little spring,
 and rolled on in full flood; the sun re-
 turned, and the sunlight, the weak
 triumphed now, and tyranny fell a prey to
 their onslaught. All this Mardocheus

¹ The dating here is obscure. Taken in conjunction with 12. 1, this verse seems to imply that the vision was seen after the incidents described in chapter 1 and in chapter 2. 1-20. But those incidents began with the third year of the reign, and it is difficult to see how we are still in the second. But probably chapter 12 is a separate fragment of the story, not closely connected with chapter 11 in date. 'Artaxerxes' is the Greek translator's rendering of 'Assuerus' throughout this book; the Latin has hitherto given him his Hebrew name Assuerus. ² See note on 2. 5 above. Here the reference is clearly to Mardocheus himself; probably he only 'belonged' to the band of exiles carried off in 588 B.C. in the sense of being descended from them.

saw, and rose from his bed still wondering what the divine purpose was; still the vision haunted his mind, and he longed to know what was the meaning of it.

12 ...At this time his days were passed at the king's palace, and two of the royal chamberlains, Bagatha and Thara, were much in his company. When he came to know their minds better, and read the secret of their ambitions, he became aware that they were plotting against the king's life, and warned the king of his danger. Both, upon examination, confessed their guilt, and were sent to execution; and the king had the story recorded in his archives; Mardocheus himself has also left an account of it. The royal orders were, that he should be rewarded for the information given, and lodged at the palace; but already he had an enemy, Aman son of Amadathi, the Bugaeon. This Aman was in high favour with the king, and owed both Mardocheus and his nation a grudge for bringing the two chamberlains to their death.

(The following seven verses are found in the Septuagint Greek after 3. 13 above, with the rubric, Here is a copy of the letter.)

13 The great king Artaxerxes, to the governors of the hundred and twenty-seven provinces between India and Ethiopia, and to all his vassal chiefs, sends greeting. Wide as I rule, the world's conqueror, I would not abuse this great power of mine; mild and indulgent my sway should be, and my subjects live in undisturbed tranquillity; peace is man's greatest boon. So I asked my counsellors how this end might best be achieved; and among them Aman, who ranks next to my person; no counsellor so wise or so trusty as he. He it was told me of a race scattered about the world that lives by strange laws, and usages unknown to the rest of mankind; thinks lightly of the royal decrees, and by dissenting from them mars the concord of nations. Strange news, that one people should revolt against the whole of mankind; should follow misguided customs, slight our edicts, and disturb the peaceful

order of our empire! This Aman, next to the king in dignity, is one we reverence like a father; in all our provinces, he is supreme. He will name the malefactors, who must be put to death with their wives and children, and no mercy shewn, on the fourteenth of Adar in this present year. In one day let them all be hurried to the grave, so that our realm may recover the peace they have denied it.

(The rest of this chapter, the whole of chapter 14 and chapter 15 verses 4-19 follow, in the Septuagint Greek, at the end of chapter 4 above.)

So Mardocheus bethought him of all the Lord's great deeds in time past, and thus he prayed: O Lord, thou art the sovereign Lord and King of all things; nothing but is subject to thy power; who then can withstand thy will, if thou art minded to deliver Israel? Heaven and earth and all that heaven's vault contains is thy creation; thy dominion is universal, thy royalty unchallengeable. Thou knowest, who knowest all things, that if I refused proud Aman yonder my greeting, it was no pride of mine, no scorn, no ambition of mine that moved me. For Israel's sake, willingly enough would I kiss the dust his feet have trodden, did not fear withhold me from giving man that reverence which is God's due, from worshipping aught else than thee, my God. God of Abraham, our Lord and King, now as ever have mercy on thy people, now when our enemies threaten to destroy us, and put an end to thy ancient right. Wilt thou make so little of the possession thou didst win for thyself in Egypt? Nay, listen to my prayer, have mercy on the people thou claimest for thy own; turn our sadness, Lord, into rejoicing, and let us live to bless thy name; do not silence the lips that sing thy praise. Such was the mind, such was the prayer of all Israel, as they cried out to the Lord that day, with doom hanging over their heads.

14 And what of queen Esther? She too had recourse to the Lord, in her fear of the danger that threatened. Laid aside were those royal robes of hers, her

¹ This appears to conflict with 6. 3 above. We are perhaps meant to understand that the royal orders were never carried out, because Aman interfered with the execution of them. The word Bugaeon in verse 6 is of doubtful significance; some think it was a title accorded to certain royal chamberlains.

array must tell only of grief and lament; dust and dung should be all her anointing now. Her body she tamed with fasting; only her torn locks hung where once she had loved to adorn her beauty. In such guise she made her plea to the Lord, the God of Israel; Lord, our King, thou reignest alone; befriend a lonely heart that can find help nowhere but in thee. The peril I must take upon me is plain to view. Lord, my childhood's lessons are still un-forgotten; I know that Israel, for all time, is the people of thy choice, chosen stock of a chosen race; I know that thy warnings have come true, and if thou hast given our enemies the mastery, it is because we sinned against thee, by worshipping the gods they worshipped; in all this, Lord, thou art nothing to blame. But now they are not content with holding us down under a cruel yoke; strong in the fancied protection of these false gods, they would fain set all thy promises aside, leave thee no possession on earth at all. They would silence the voices that praise thee, dim the glories of thy temple and thy altar; nothing must be heard but the chant of the Gentiles boasting of their false gods, offering their endless praises to a mortal king.

Lord, wilt thou yield thy sceptre to gods that are no gods? Must the heathen laugh over our downfall? Let their own scheming recoil on them; bring him to a swift end, the man who has loosed his fury on us!

Lord, bethink thee of our need, give proof of thy power; Lord, that hast no rival in heaven or earth, grant me confidence.

Frame my utterance, as I speak with this fierce lord of mine, and embitter him against our enemy, bringing ruin on Aman and all that take Aman's part. So let thy power deliver us; grant help where help save thine is none. Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest how I hate the splendours of a godless court, how unwillingly I mate with an alien lord, a lord uncircumcised. The sport of ill-chance, how little I love the proud emblem of royalty I must wear before the world! Loathsome to me as the rags we women cast aside, how

gladly I tear it from my brow, in this cool hour! At Aman's board I would never sit; even the king's banquets have no taste for me, nor would I drink the wine from which he pours libation. Ever since they brought me here, comfort thy handmaid had none, Lord God of Abraham, save in thee! Lord, that hast power over all men, listen to this cry of despair; save us all from the clutches of our enemies, and rid me of these fears that daunt me!

(The three verses which follow represent a section found by St Jerome as a detached fragment in the Latin version current before his time. But they correspond to the Septuagint Greek text of 4. 8, where the Hebrew and Vulgate texts stop short after the words 'Go she must into the king's presence, and plead there the cause of her people'. This phrase, however, is verbally different in the Vulgate of 4. 8 and 15. 1. In our present context St Jerome has added the note, The speaker is evidently Mardocheus.)

15 . . . So he bade her claim audience with the king, and intercede for her people and for her country. Remember, said he, the days of thy humbler fortunes, and how it was my care nurtured thee. Now thou art matched against Aman, that is next to the king's person; he pleads for our overthrow, and it is thine to plead for our preservation. Ask aid of the Lord, and seek the king's audience. . . .

(The remaining verses of this chapter represent an alternative version, in the Septuagint Greek, of the opening of chapter 5, and resume the narrative from 14. 19 above, which is the end of chapter 4 in the Greek. The main phrases of 5. 1-2 can be distinguished here in 15. 4, 9, 15.)

When the third day came, she laid aside the garb of prayer,² and put on all her fine array, queenly robes that dazzled the eye. One prayer she offered to the God who alone rules, alone can save; then bade two of her waiting-maids bear her company. On one she leant, as though her dainty form must needs be supported; the other followed her mistress as train-bearer. Al-

¹ This verse gives a hint that Aman had special designs against the restored Jewish exiles at Jerusalem, whose existence is nowhere else alluded to in the Book of Esther. ² This is perhaps the sense of the Greek; the Latin, probably through a confusion between *oration* and *ornation*, has 'the garb of her adornment', which gives no good sense.

luring beauty of flushed cheek and shining eye hid a heart grief-stricken, a heart chilled with an overwhelming fear. Door after door she passed, till she reached the king's presence, where he sat on his royal throne, royally clad, amid a glitter of gold and jewels; terrible of mien. No sooner had he looked up, his fiery glance betraying his angry humour, than the queen swooned away; white went her cheeks, as she leaned her head, fainting, on the maid that stood by.

And now God changed the king's mood all at once to mildness; he started from his throne in trembling haste, and was fain to hold her in his arms till she came to herself; and still with soothing words he reassured her: Esther, what is amiss with thee? Were I thy own brother, thou hadst not less cause to fear. Thy life is safe; to others the law forbids entry, never to thee; thou hast but to come near, and touch my sceptre. And with that, for she was voiceless still, he raised his golden sceptre and touched her neck with it; then kissed her, and asked, What, hast thou no word for me? My lord, she said, the sight of thee overawed me, as if I had seen one of God's angels; such reverence does thy majesty inspire. For indeed, my lord, there is nothing about thee but must be admired, nothing in thy looks but is gracious. Even as she spoke, once again her strength failed her; and she was near to fainting; the king was all anxiety, and his courtiers must needs come about him, seeking to allay her fears.

(This chapter appears in the Septuagint Greek after 8. 12. The letter here given is addressed throughout to the king's Gentile subjects; which suggests that two separate missives are referred to in 8. 9.)

16 The great king Artaxerxes, to the governors of the hundred and twenty-seven provinces between India and Ethiopia, and to all his vassal chiefs, sends greeting. The favour of princes has often bred insolence in those whom they advanced to high rank; they oppress their fellow-subjects, and are even prompted by

their good fortune to plot against the authors of it; deaf to the claims of gratitude and of humanity, they think to escape the all-seeing scrutiny of God. A madness comes over them, and they assail with false charges the very men who win the praise of all by faithfulness to their duties; what easier, than to abuse with calumny the confidence of an unsuspecting ruler, who fancies all men to be as honest as himself? That men will so practise on the credulity of princes is evident both from history and from daily experience; no little foresight is needed, if the welfare of a great empire is to be preserved. The orders given yesterday must be reversed to-day; not from any caprice of ours, but because we have to consider the changing needs of the moment, in the best interests of the commonwealth.

But to our matter. We took under our protection, some time since, one Aman, son of Amadathi, a stranger; a Macedonian by race, with no share of our Persian blood, a Macedonian in his nature, whose cruel temper sorts ill with our Persian kindness.¹ He received from us nothing but friendly usage; we would have him called our father, we would have reverence paid to him as one that stood next to the king's person. And he? So was his heart swelled with pride, that he went about to deprive us of our royalty, and of life itself. First, with daring unheard-of, he would compass the death of two persons, through the general massacre of their race; Mardocheaus, to whose loyalty we owe life itself, and Esther, the queen-consort of our realm. Then, when their deaths had left us unbefriended, he would plot against our own empire and transfer it to the Macedonians.² Meanwhile, the race this inhuman wretch had marked down for slaughter, the Jewish race, proves to have deserved no blame whatever. The laws they follow are just; they are the children of that most high, most powerful and ever-living God by whose favour my fathers won this realm, and I maintain it.

Take note, then, that the directions

¹ Aman has been described elsewhere as an Agagite or a Bugaeon, neither of which terms can be explained with certainty. Macedonia would be regarded as a natural enemy of Persia at any time from 480 B.C. onwards. ² This verse, like the notice in 12. 6 which connects Aman with the disloyal chamberlains, suggests the existence of a fuller version of the story, from which our narrative was abridged.

18 which were sent out by Aman under our
 name are to be left unheeded.¹ He, the
 author of this plot, hangs now on a gibbet,
 here at the gates of Susan, with all his
 kindred; to God, not to us, thanks are due
 19 that he has received his deserts. The de-
 cree we are now sending you, giving the
 Jews liberty to follow their own laws, is to
 20 be posted up in every city of the realm; and
 you must furnish them with the means to
 make an end of all those who would have
 compassed their murder, on the thirteenth
 day of Adar, the last month of the year.
 21 Here is a day marked down for mourning

and lament, turned by God Almighty into
 a day of triumph for them; you too must
 22 keep it as one of the year's holidays, and
 observe it with due rejoicing; so making it
 known to posterity that Persia's loyal sub-
 23 jects are well rewarded for their loyalty,
 and that all who plot against her sove-
 reignty atone for their crime with death.
 Be there province or city that will not take
 24 its part in this observance, let it be laid
 waste with fire and sword; man nor beast
 shall tread its ways hereafter; to warn men
 what doom they suffer, that set edict of
 ours at defiance.

¹ Literally, 'are cancelled', but this seems to have been technically impossible; cf. note on 8. 8. 'Left unheeded' is the sense of the Septuagint Greek.

THE BOOK OF JOB

THERE was a man dwelling in the land of Hus once, Job was the name of him, that was true and honest; ever he feared God, and

kept far from wrong-doing. Seven sons he had, and three daughters; and for wealth, he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-asses, and servants a many; in all the East none was Job's rival.

And this custom his sons had in feasting, each invited the rest in turn; at such times they would send for their three sisters to eat and drink beside them. And ever when their week of feasting was over, Job would send for them,¹ and have them rid of all defilement; next morning, it was his first care to offer burnt-sacrifice for each of them. Who knows, thought he, but they may have committed some fault, these children of mine? Who knows but they may have slighted God in their secret thoughts? Never would he let the day pass without burnt-sacrifice.

One day, when the heavenly powers stood waiting upon the Lord's presence, and among them, man's Enemy, the Lord asked him, where he had been? Roaming about the earth, said he, to and fro about the earth. Why then, the Lord said, thou hast seen a servant of mine called Job. Here is a true man, an honest man, none like him on earth; ever he fears his God, and keeps far from wrong-doing. Job fears his God, the Enemy answered, and loses nothing by it. Sheltered his life by thy protection, sheltered his home, his property; thy blessing on all he undertakes; worldly goods that still go on increasing; he loses nothing. One little touch of thy hand, assailing all that wealth of his! Then see how he will turn and blaspheme thee. Be it so, the Lord answered; with all his possessions do what

thou wilt, so thou leave himself unharmed. And with that, the Enemy left the Lord's presence, and withdrew.

And now it was the turn of Job's children to sit over their feasting and their wine at the house of the eldest brother. That day, a messenger brought Job news of his oxen and asses. The oxen were a-ploughing, said he, and the asses grazing near them, when on a sudden a band of Sabæans swept down on them, and carried all away. As for thy men, the Sabæans put them to the sword, and none lives to tell the tale but I. Even as he spoke, another messenger came in with news of the sheep, how God's lightning had fallen, devouring sheep and shepherd, so that none was left to tell the tale but he. And upon the heels of that, in came a third to say that robbers from Chaldæa, in three several bands, had closed in upon the camels and driven them away, killing the men who tended them, so that none was left to tell the tale but he. And before this one had finished his story, a fourth messenger came in. I come, said he, from thy eldest son's house, where but now thy sons and daughters sat at their feasting and their wine. All on a sudden, came a tempestuous wind from across the desert, and beat so on every corner of the house that it fell in, crushing thy children to death amid the ruins of it; none lives to tell the tale but I.

Then rose up Job, and rent his garments about him; and he shaved his head bare, and fell down to earth to do reverence. Naked I came, said he, when I left my mother's womb, and whence I came, naked I must go. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; nothing is here befallen but what was the Lord's will; blessed be the name of the Lord.² In all this, Job guarded his lips well, nor challenged with human folly God's wisdom.³

¹ Or possibly, 'Job would send them a message'.
what was the Lord's will' are found in the Septuagint Greek and in the Latin, but not in the Hebrew text.

² The words 'Nothing is here befallen but what was the Lord's will; blessed be the name of the Lord.' In all this, Job guarded his lips well, nor challenged with human folly God's wisdom.
³ Literally, in the Latin, 'nor said anything foolish against God'. The sense of the Hebrew text seems to be, 'nor charged God with senseless procedure'.

2 Once again the heavenly powers came to wait upon the Lord's presence; and there, waiting with the rest of them, was the Enemy of man. And of his travels he still said the same; he had been roaming about the earth, to and fro about the earth.

3 Why then, the Lord said, thou hast seen for thyself that this servant of mine, Job, has not his like on earth; a man so true and honest, ever fearing his God, and keeping far from wrong-doing. And still he maintains his innocence.¹ Shame it is that thou hast set me on to do him a mischief, and all to no purpose. Nay, answered the Enemy, skin must suffer before skin grieves.² Nothing a man owns, but he will part with it to keep his skin whole. That hand of thine, let it fall on bone of his, flesh of his; see if he does not turn and blaspheme thee. And thereupon said the Lord to man's Enemy, Have what power over him thou wilt, so his life be kept safe in him. And with that, the Enemy left the Lord's presence, and withdrew.

And cruelly he smote Job; smote him with the foul scab from head to foot, so that he was fain to sit him down on the dung-hill, and scratch himself with a shard where he itched. Little comfort his own wife gave him; What, she said, still maintaining thy innocence? Better thou shouldst renounce God, and have done with living. Spoken like a foolish wife, Job answered. What, should we accept the good fortune God sends us, and not the ill? So well, even now, did Job guard his lips.

11 News of the calamity that had befallen him reached three of his friends, Eliphaz the Themanite, Baldad the Suhite, and Sophar the Naamathite. From their far homes all, by agreement made, came to visit him, and give him comfort. Scarcely upon a distant view, could they recognize him; loud they cried out, and sore they wept, tore their garments about them and threw the dust over their heads heaven-high. And for seven days and seven nights they sat there on the ground beside him, and no word spoken; here, they saw plainly, was overmastering grief.

3 At last, Job himself broke into utterance, and fell to cursing the day on which he was born. And this was his plaint: Blotted out for ever be the day of my birth; that night, too, which gave word that a human life had been conceived in the womb! Plunged be that day in darkness; may God on high forget it, and grant it never shine of sun; shades, like the shades of death, claim it for their own; deep gloom lie heavy on it, and wrap it all in desolation. Shrouded be that night in a black storm, let it not be reckoned among the days of the year, nor marked in the moon's calendar; a night doomed to exile, a night that never wakes the sound of praise. Wizards that can overcast the sun, and rouse old Chaos from his lair, on that night lay your ban; blacken its starlight, let it wait for the morning light, and see it never, nor break of rising dawn; the night that should have closed the doors of the womb against me, shut these eyes forever to sights of woe!

Had but the womb been the tomb of me, had I died at birth, had no lap ever cherished me, no breast suckled me, all would be rest now, all would be silence. Deeply I would take my repose, with the old kings and senators, that once restored cities for their whim,³ the chieftains that had such wealth of gold, houses full of silver; with babe still-born and babe unborn, hidden away in the sunless grave. There the unquietness of the wicked is stilled, and the weary are at rest; untroubled the thrall sleeps, his tyrant's bidding cannot reach him now; master and slave are there, and the slave masterless.

Why should they see the light, that groan to see it; why should they live, that must live in bitterness of soul? Why should they be like treasure-seekers, longing for the death that still cheats them, a grave the prize they covet? Such men as I, that must tread blindfold in a maze of God's making! Ever as I sit down to meat the sighs come, grief floods over me unrestrained. Must I have nothing left to daunt me? Must each calamity be felt as

¹ This may mean that he continued to shew correct behaviour (cf. 1. 22), but more probably that he would not admit he had done anything to deserve his sufferings (cf. 27. 6, where the same words are used, and the argument of the book generally).

² Literally, 'Skin on behalf of skin'. The rendering given assumes that a proverb, couched in elliptical language, is best interpreted by reference to the context.

³ 'Restored cities' is literally 'built up waste places', a phrase occurring in Is. 58. 12 and 61. 4, where the meaning is clear enough.

26 soon as feared? And still I kept my own counsel, still patient and silent I, till my angry mood overcame me at last.¹

4 Thereupon Eliphaz the Themanite made answer: Speak we, it may be thou wilt take our words amiss, yet speech will out. Well thou knewest how to teach others, strengthen the drooping hands, give courage to the waverer, support to flagging knees, by counsel of thine. Now the blow has fallen on thyself, and thy strength is gone; the nearer neighbourhood of misfortune unmans thee. No more we hear now of that fear of God, that life perfectly lived, which once gave thee confidence, gave thee strength to endure! And, sure enough, ruin never fell yet on the innocent; never yet was an upright soul lost to memory.² The men that traffic in wrong-doing, that sow a crop of mischief they themselves must reap at last, these I have seen undone; one breath, one blast of the divine anger withers them quite, and they are gone.

10 Roar lion and growl lioness, the fangs of the lion-cubs will yet be shattered. For lack of prey, the tiger goes his way at last, the young lions wander wide.³

12 Listen; here is a secret that was made known to me; it was but the breath of a whisper overheard. It was the hour when night visions breed disquiet, as men lie chained by sleep; fear took hold of me, a fit of trembling that thrilled my whole frame, and made every hair bristle. All at once a spirit came beside me and stopped; there it stood, no face I knew, yet I could see the form of it, and catch its voice, light as a rustling breeze. Can man have right on his side, the voice asked, when he is matched with God? Can a mortal creature shew blameless in its Creator's presence? Nay, in his own retinue God finds loyalty

wanting; angels may err. What, then, of Man, earth-bound in his house of clay, eaten away by the moth of time? What of Man, cut down between morn and eve, doomed to perish unregarded, even the straggler marching on at last?⁴ Will he not die before he learns wisdom?

5 Who will listen to thy plaint against God? Wilt thou turn to one of his angels for redress? Impatience is a great murderer of fools; in their simpleness of heart, they repine at the injury, to their ruin. Never yet did I see a fool secure in his possessions but I prophesied disaster, there and then, for his fair prospects. And still would I see his children bereft of hope, ground down by false judgement, and none to bring redress; his harvest a prey for hungry neighbours, himself for the armed robber, his wealth drunk up by thirsty mouths.⁵

Never was ill without a cause; never did mischief spring up self-sown. Man's bet is for mischief, as sure as birds will fly.⁶

Wiser counsels for me; to the Lord himself my plaint shall be made, of God himself I will seek audience. His magnificent counsels none may fathom, none reckon up his marvellous deeds. His to grant the parched earth rain, watering the countryside; his to exalt men of low esteem, to comfort the mourner with new hope. Through him the crafty schemer balked of his aims; cunning overreaches itself, and knavish plots are scattered to the winds; wise fools, that blink in daylight, and grope their way blindly at full noon!

So, from their slander and their violence, he rescues the poor and the unbefriended; now, misery, take heart, let malice stand dumb with confusion!

Happy the man, whom God chastens for his faults! The correction he sends thee

¹ The Hebrew text is ordinarily understood as meaning, 'I have no ease, no quiet, no rest; nothing but turmoil is my lot'.

² The argument here may be understood in either of two ways; it may be, 'You, Job, are innocent, therefore you cannot be wholly condemned to misfortune', or it may be, 'You, Job, are condemned to misfortune, therefore you cannot be wholly innocent'. Perhaps both lines of thought were in the speaker's mind.

³ These two sentences are evidently proverbs, and it is difficult to determine their relevance here with certainty. 'Lioness' and 'tiger' in the Latin version should be 'lion' according to the Hebrew text; five different words are here used to describe the same animal.

⁴ Even the straggler marching on at last'. Some think we should read, by a very slight alteration in the text, 'when their tent-pegs is taken out', a metaphorical description of Man's impermanency.

⁵ The text and interpretation of this verse are uncertain in the Hebrew. ⁶ 'Mischief'; literally, in the Latin version, 'trouble', but the context seems to shew that the other meaning of the Hebrew noun is to be preferred. The troubles man undergoes do not spring up haphazard; they are the fruit of his proneness to sin. 'As sure as birds will fly'; the Hebrew text probably means 'as sure as sparks will fly upwards'.

18 never, on thy life, refuse. Wounds he, it is
 but to heal; the same hand, which smote,
 19 shall medicine thee. So in six perils thou
 shalt go unharmed, and find yet one deli-
 20 verance more; hunger shall not starve
 thee, sword wound thee, slander find thee
 22 out, havoc reach thee; rapine and dearth
 thou shalt defy. And besides all this,
 ravening beasts shall not daunt thee;
 23 friendly soil for thee are the desert rocks,
 and the wild things are in league with thee;
 24 secure thou shalt keep thy tent, or visit thy
 25 fair lands, and nought shall go amiss. Be
 sure that thy posterity will increase; like
 26 the green grass thy race shall flourish; and
 when go to the grave thou must, it shall be
 with strength undiminished, like ripe corn
 27 at harvest-home. Here are thoughts tested
 and found true; well for thee if thou wilt
 heed them, and ponder them in thy heart.

2 **6** But Job answered: Oh that I had such
 a pair of scales as might weigh pro-
 vocation of mine against the ills I suffer!¹
 3 The sand on the shore of ocean could not
 match the burden of them, and do you
 wonder that my utterance is all reproach?
 4 Deep the Lord's arrows rankle in me,
 draining my life; all his terrors are arrayed
 5 against me. Brays the wild ass, be sure he
 lacks pasture; lows the ox, he stands before
 6 an empty crib. Would you have me relish
 food unseasoned, lick my lips over the
 7 taste that brings death? The food I had
 no stomach for, in my hard straits eat I
 must.²

8 Might it be granted, this is the boon I
 long for, this the request I would make of
 9 God, that he would finish what he has
 begun, crush me altogether, strike a full
 10 blow and make an end of me! Consolation
 enough, if he will but torment me to my
 death; no repining, then, against his will!
 11 In what strength should I hold out? In
 12 what hope repose? Have I the endurance
 13 of flint? Is my flesh brass? Help in myself
 is none; human aid keeps its distance from
 14 me now. Nay, who defies the Lord's ven-
 geance more surely than friend who re-
 fuses compassion to a friend? See how the

men that are my brothers have failed me,
 fickle as the mountain brooks that run
 headlong down their ravines; first shri-
 1 velled with frost, then piled high with
 snow, then, when the snows melt, gone,
 2 vanished away at the first touch of the
 heat! This way and that their winding
 3 channels turn, but all to no purpose, all are
 lost to view.³ They must take heed, now,
 4 that would pass by Thema, and travel into
 Saba; they must wait awhile on their
 journey. Some hope I had in my friends,
 5 but all is disappointment; with eyes that
 will not meet mine, they come to visit me.⁴

Ay, you have come, but finding me so
 6 sorely smitten you dread my company. I
 7 was little enough I asked; I never bade you
 diminish your own wealth by bringing
 8 gifts to me, never begged your aid to rid
 9 me of some enemy that was too strong for
 me. Come, be my instructors; I will hear
 10 you out in silence; tell me what is the fault
 I have committed, all unknowing? Ill fare
 11 the claims of truth with such as you; not
 12 one of you can shew me in the wrong, yet
 for very love of reproof you must be re-
 proving still, all your words wasted on the
 13 air. Is it well done, to make a prey of the
 defenceless, to conspire against the good
 14 name of your friend? Browbeat me, then,
 15 at your pleasure; try if close scrutiny can
 prove me false; only let there be no con-
 tentiousness in your pleadings; in all
 honesty bring your complaint. You will
 not fasten guilt on any word of mine;
 reckless utterance never these lips shall
 frame.

7 What is man's life on earth but a
 campaigning? Like a hired drudge,
 he passes his time away; nor ever was slave
 so weary, longing for the shade, or drudge
 so weary, waiting to earn his hire, as I have
 been, counting these months of emptiness,
 these nights that never brought rest. Lie
 I down to sleep, I weary to be up with the
 day; comes the day, I weary for the even-
 ing, comfortless until dark. Overgrown
 my flesh with worms, matted with dust;
 my skin dried up and shrivelled. Frail as

¹ 'Provocation of mine'; it is not certain whether this means 'wrong-doing by which I have provoked God to punish me', or 'the sense of provocation which I feel'. The Vulgate gives the latter sense.

² In verses 6 and 7, the sense of the original is very doubtful. ³ The Latin version of verses 16-18, taken by itself, yields no tolerable sense. The rendering given above interprets it in the light of the Hebrew text, which differs considerably. ⁴ The sense of the Hebrew text is that the travellers (not the friends) come hopefully looking for the streams, and are disappointed.

the weaver's thread my years vanish away, spent without hope.

7 Bethink thee, Lord, it is but a breath, this life of mine, and I shall look on this fair world but once; when that is done, men will see me no more, and thou as nothing. Like a cloud disligned in passing, man goes to his grave never to return; never again the home-coming, never shall tidings of him reach the haunts he knew. 11 And should I utter no word? Nay, the crushed spirit will find a voice, the embittered heart will not keep its own counsel. 12 Am I a raging sea, a ravening monster, that thou guardest me so close? When I would find rest on my pillow, take refuge in night thoughts, what dreams thou sendest to daunt me, what sights of terror to unman me!

15 The rope for me! Death only will content this frame. To despair I yield myself, I will live on no more; loose thy hold of me; this life of mine is but the shadow of a life. Why is it that thou wilt make so noble a thing of man, wilt pay so much heed to him? Never a day dawns but thou wilt surprise him at his post; never a moment when thou art not making proof of him. Nay, gaze on me no more; leave me, though it were but for a breathing-space, to myself! If sinned I have, does human act of mine claim thy watchful regard? Must my path always cross thine, my life always be a burden to me? ¹ Would it cost thee much to forgive sin of mine, pass over fault of mine, when I, so soon, shall be lying in the dust, missing at my post, as thou makest thy rounds at dawn?

8 Then answered Baldad the Suhite: 2 What, still at thy old complaining; blustering still, like a high wind, on and on? Can sentence undeserved come from God, unjust award from the Almighty? 4 What if these children of thine committed some fault, and he allowed justice to take its course? For thyself, thou hast but to keep early tryst with God, make thy plea to his omnipotence. Then, if thou comest before him innocent and upright, he will give thee audience betimes; he will establish thee in thy possessions again, as one that enjoys his favour. A poor thing thy

old prosperity will seem, matched with the abundance he gives thee now.

Ask counsel of the ages that are long past; let the experience of former men overrule thee. How blind are we, creatures of a day, whose time on earth passes like a shadow! Those fathers of ours will be thy best teachers, and this is the advice their wisdom offers thee: Never yet grew bulrush without moisture, nor reed-bed that lacked water; fade it must, no leaf so soon, in its first flower, before men have time to gather it. So frail their happiness, who leave God unremembered; so fade the hopes of false hearts. Little shall their recklessness avail them; in threads of gossamer they put their trust. Vain his reliance on the house he has built, vainly he seeks to underpin it. Here is a plant that seems well-watered enough, spreads abroad its early shoots, but only till the sun rises; wrapped about stones are the roots of it, and stones all its dwelling-place; yonder sun must needs drain its life, and the garden will keep no memory of its passage. So brief its pride; they are waiting even now underground, the shoots that will fill its place.

Trust me, God will not cast off the innocent, will not lend his aid to the malice of their enemies. Ere long, he will teach those lips to smile, that mouth to sing praise; brief shall be the triumph of thy foes, brief the security of the wrong-doer.

9 But Job answered: No need to teach me that; how should a man win his suit, matched against God? Who would go to law, where one plea on this side is arrayed against a thousand on that? His all-knowing mind, his all-conquering arms, what man ever throve yet that defied them? God, the unseen power that can thrust mountains this way and that, uproot them in his anger, can move earth from its place, and set all its pillars quaking, can prevent, with a word, the sun's rising, or imprison, under his royal seal, the very stars? He it was, and no other, that spread out heaven to be his covering, made ocean a floor under his feet; that created Arc-turus, and Orion, and the Hyades, and the

¹ The Hebrew tradition is that the text originally ran, 'Must I always be a burden to thee?' but was altered by the copyists as a disrespectful phrase.

10 nooks of the south;¹ great wonders he
 does, beyond all our understanding and all
 11 our reckoning. Hidden from my sight,
 hidden from my thought, he comes and
 12 goes; comes suddenly, and how should I
 defend my doings? goes suddenly, and
 13 how should I question his? There is no
 braving the anger of such a God, when
 14 even the Titanic powers obey him;² and
 what am I that I should use phrases of
 studied eloquence for my pleading?

15 Nay, though I had right on my side,
 I would not plead against him as an ad-
 versary, I would sue to him for mercy as
 16 a judge. What though I should cry upon
 him, and he should answer my summons?
 Well I know he would listen to no plead-
 17 ings of mine; his storms would overwhelm
 me, faster than ever the unmerited blows
 18 would fall; never a breathing-space, never
 19 a draught but of gall! Nought avails
 might, when a giant threatens me; nought
 avails right, when none dares to support
 20 my quarrel. Would I plead in defence, he
 turns my own words against me; be I never
 so upright, he will prove me hypocrite.
 21 And innocent I am, but of that I take
 regard no longer; I am aware of life
 itself.

22 Still unchanged is the burden of my
 complaint; innocent and guilty, he sweeps
 23 all away.³ If his scourge must fall, should
 not a single blow suffice? Why does he
 look on and laugh, when the unoffending,
 24 too, must suffer? So the whole world is
 given up into the power of wrong-doers;
 he blinds the eyes of justice. He is an-
 swerable for it; who else?

25 Swift as a royal courier my days pass,
 26 and joyless each one, like a pinnace gliding
 down stream,⁴ or an eagle swooping on its
 27 prey. Ere now, I have been minded to put
 away such talk as this, wear a sad face and
 28 live on the rack no more; still would I have
 pains to daunt me; still thou wouldst hold
 29 me guilty, wouldst not spare. Blamed I
 must be, in spite of all; vain was my
 30 striving, vainly I washed me in water pure
 31 as snow, kept my hands shining clean; thy

condemnation must roll me in the mire
 again, till the very clothes I wear shun the
 touch of me! I cannot meet him in judg- 3:1
 ment as man to man, claim an impartial
 hearing for my plea; there can be no 3:2
 arbiter between us, to claim jurisdiction
 over both. Let him lay by his rod, let his 3:3
 terrors cease to daunt me; then I will speak
 out bravely to his face; it is fear that holds
 me dumb.

10 Oh, I am weary of life; I will speak
 out, come what may; my soul is too
 embittered for silence. I will protest against
 God's sentence, demand to know why his
 judgement is so cruel. Is it well done in
 thee to play the tyrant, to spurn me, the
 creature of thy own hands, to smile on the
 ill designs of the godless? Are those eyes
 of thine human after all; is thy sight, too,
 blinded, like the sight of men? Hast thou
 a mortal's span of life, a destiny brief as
 ours, that thou must search for faults in
 me, labour to convict me of wrong done,
 when thou knowest full well that I am
 innocent, knowest that I am in thy power
 beyond hope of rescue?

It was thy hand that made me, no part
 of me but is thy fashioning; and wilt thou
 cast me aside all in a moment? Thou the
 craftsman, though of clay thy handiwork,
 and must all be ground to dust again?
 Milk of thy milking, cheese of thy pressing,
 were flesh and skin that clothed me, bone
 and sinew that built up my frame; the life
 given by thee, by thee was spared; thy vi-
 gilance was all my safety. Only in thy
 heart the memory of this is stored, but I
 know thou hast not forgotten. And was it
 thy purpose to spare me for a little, if I
 sinned, but absolve me never? Woe to me,
 if I rebelled against thee! And if I re-
 mained innocent, what then? Why, I
 would be drowned in misery and despair
 till I could lift up my head no more! Or if
 I did, that were pride in me, to be hunted
 down as a lioness is hunted; thou wouldst
 devise fresh miracles of torment; wouldst
 bring fresh virtues against me, redouble

¹ 'The nooks of the south'; this is presumably some astronomical allusion to which we have lost the key.

² 'The Titanic powers'; literally, in the Latin version 'those who hold up the earth'. The Hebrew text is generally understood as referring to the powers of Chaos over which, by an allegory, Almighty God is pictured as triumphing at the Creation.

³ The Hebrew text of this verse opens with the words, 'It is one thing', a phrase which is generally interpreted, 'It is all one' (whether I live or die; or perhaps, whether a man is guilty or innocent). But there is no evidence that this English idiom was familiar to the Hebrew mind.

⁴ Literally, in the Latin version, 'ships carrying fruit'; the phrase in the Hebrew text is usually rendered, 'skiffs made of papyrus'.

thy avenging strokes, array against me a new host of punishments.

18 Why didst thou ever take me from the womb; why could I not perish there, never
19 to meet men's eyes; a being without being,
20 carried from womb to tomb? Brief, brief is my span of days; for a little leave me to myself, to find some comfort in my misery.
21 Soon I must go to a land whence there is no returning, a land of darkness, death's
22 shadow over it; a land of gloomy night, where death's shadow lies over all, and no peace haunts it, only everlasting dread.

11 Then answered Sopbar the Naamathite: Ready to speak should be ready to listen; glibness will not make an innocent man of thee. Must all keep silence till thou hast done; shall none make answer to thy raillery? Still thou wilt have it that all thy dealings¹ are upright, that thy heart, as God sees it, is pure. Would he but speak one word in thy ear, make thee his confidant! Would he but reveal to thee the secrets of his wisdom, in its ordered variety! Then wouldst thou learn that the penalty he is exacting of thee is less, far less, than thy sins deserve. What, wouldst thou search out the ways of God, have knowledge unconfined of his omnipotence? High as heaven is that wisdom, and thy reach so small; deep as hell itself, and thy thought so shallow! Far as earth it stretches, wide as ocean; will he sweep them all away, or confine them all in a little space, there is no gainsaying him. He knows the false hearts of men, sees wickedness there, and wouldst thou have him overlook it? Poor fools, that will have a mind of their own, and think they were born free as the wild ass!

13 But see, thy heart once guided aright, thy hands outspread to him in prayer, thou hast but to cleanse thy hands of their wrong-doing, rid thy dwelling-place of the guilt that defies it. Then thou mayst lift up

thy head again, free from reproach, waver no more, tremble no more. These miseries of thine shall be forgotten, or remembered gratefully, like floods that are overpast. Radiance of noon shall dispel twilight, dawn shall rise where darkness seemed to envelop thee; fresh confidence shall be thine, fresh hope; hidden away in safety² thou shalt sleep secure; and that rest of thine, none shall disturb, suitors a many shall come to court thy favour.

The godless another doom awaits; their eyes shall grow faint with watching, and no rescue shall ever reach them; no other prospect they have but despair.

12 But Job answered: Strange, that you alone should have the gift of reason; that when you die, wisdom must die too! Well, I too have my thoughts; I am yet a match for you; this knowledge you bring me is knowledge common to all. For all his friends' raillery, a man such as I will still cry upon God, and have him answer the summons;³ the simplicity of the upright was ever a laughing-stock, and indeed, it is but a rushlight, despised by shrewd and prosperous folk, but it waits its turn.⁴ Meanwhile, see how well the robbers store their houses, braving God's anger, and yet in all things he lets them have their way! Dost thou doubt it? The very beasts will tell thee, the birds in air will be thy counsellors; the secret is known in every cranny of the earth, the fish in the sea will make it known to thee; none doubts, I tell thee, that all this is the Lord's doing; all living things that breathe, all the spirits of all mankind, lie in the hollow of his hand. As surely as the ear judges words, and the mouth relishes the taste of food, so surely is there truth in ancient sayings; it is time brings experience.

All God's doing; his are the wisdom and the power; to him belong prudence in act and discernment. The ruins he makes, 14

¹ 'Thy dealings': the Hebrew text gives 'thy doctrine', but this is not in point. Job has claimed to be innocent, not to be infallible. It seems possible that there is some corruption in the text; meanwhile, the Latin word used occasionally has the sense of 'dealings' in general; cf. 'he had dealings with Joab, son of Sarvia' in III Kg. 1. 7, 'the God we have to deal with' in Heb. 4. 13. So also, 'what she has done' in Esther 1. 17.

² 'Hidden away in safety'; literally, 'dug in'. It can hardly be supposed that the Latin version intends an allusion to burial.

³ The translation given here, as in 5. 1, 9. 16 and 13. 22, assumes that a judicial process is meant; Job will (as it were) call God to account at law for his injustice. Commentators ordinarily understand 'cry upon' and 'answer' in the sense of granting relief.

⁴ Two words in the Hebrew text here are susceptible of other interpretations than those given by the Latin version; and its sense is probably better rendered 'The shrewd and prosperous make light of a man's ruin when his feet are just ready to stumble'.

none can rebuild, his imprisonment none
 15 can escape; withholds he the rain, all is
 16 dried up; sends he rain, it floods all the
 17 ground. Yes, he is strong, he is wise; reads
 18 the knave's heart as easily as the fool's. He
 19 can thwart the counsellor, bemuse the
 20 judge, exchange the king's baldrick for the
 21 rope of a prisoner, lead the priest away
 22 ungowned, dispossess the noble, bewitch
 23 the lips that never erred, rob the elder of
 24 his prudence, bring princes into contempt,
 25 unman the strong.¹ Things deep hidden
 in darkness he reveals, kindles the light
 where death's shadow lay, brings growth
 or ruin to a people, and what he has ruined
 restores. The hearts of chieftains he be-
 wilders, leading them by false paths to vain
 ends, till all light fails, and they grope
 about in darkness, wander aimless like a
 drunkard after his wine.

13 Eyes nor ears nor wits are wanting
 to me, and I know all this as well
 2 as you, but I am still a match for you. Or
 3 rather, it is to God, the omnipotent, I will
 4 speak; with him I remonstrate; but first I
 5 would prove you what you are, unskilful
 6 plasterers all of you, that follow false rules
 7 of your craft. Would you but hold your
 8 tongues once for all! It were your best
 9 wisdom. Listen while I refute you; mark
 10 well what are my pleadings. Do you think
 11 God stands in need of your shifts, your
 12 lying advocacy? Are you God's hired par-
 13 tisans, resolved to acquit him? Why then,
 14 beware of his own infallible scrutiny; think
 you he will be blinded, as men are blinded,
 15 by your sophistries? Nay, he himself will
 be the first to blame you for wrongful at-
 16 tachment to his cause; your turn, then, to
 17 fear every movement of his, to cower
 18 before his terrors! Your wise memories
 will vanish into dust, your pride will prove
 to be a thing of clay.

13 Nay, hold your tongues for a little, while
 14 I say out my mind. Do not ask why I set
 my teeth so firmly;² take my life in my

hand; let him slay me if he will! I await
 his decree;³ needs must that I should make
 my defence before him, and spare me he
 will; let the guilty shun his presence, not I.
 Nay, hear me out; let me open my mind
 in full; should I stand my trial, I know that
 I must be found innocent! Only let me
 meet my accuser! Why must I die un-
 heard?⁴

But two rights I claim, if I am to face
 thee openly; withdraw thy chastising
 hand, and daunt me with thy terrors no
 longer. Then, if thou wilt call me in ques-
 tion, I will make reply; or let me speak,
 and be thou ready with thy answer. Tell
 me, what are all these transgressions, these
 faults thou findest in me? What crime,
 what wrong-doing is mine? Why is it that
 thou turnest thy back on me, and wilt treat
 me as an enemy? As well wrestle with a
 flying leaf, chase a wisp of straw, as keep
 this jealous record against me, tax me with
 the offences of my youth! To hold me so
 close a prisoner, watch me wherever I go,
 track my foot-prints, when I am no better
 than rotting carrion, than a garment fretted
 away by the moth!

14 So frail man's life, woman-born, so
 full of trouble, brief as a flower that
 blooms and withers, fugitive as a shadow,
 changing all the while; and is he worth that
 watchfulness of thine, must thou needs
 call him to account? (Who can cleanse
 what is born of tainted stock, save thou
 alone, who alone hast being?⁵) Brief, brief
 are man's days; thou keepest count of the
 months left to him, thou dost appoint for
 him the bound he may not pass. And wilt
 thou not leave him undisturbed for a little,
 till the welcome day comes when drudgery
 is at an end?

Were he but as the trees are! A tree has
 hope to live by: pollarded, it still grows
 green, and fresh branches spring from it.
 Root and stock old and withered, down in
 the dusty earth, but at the breath of water

¹ The Latin version has 'relieve the oppressed', which is quite out of keeping with the context.

² Literally, 'tear (in the Hebrew text, carry) my flesh in my teeth'; evidently this was a proverbial way of expressing rashness, like that in the second half of the verse.

³ Literally, 'even if he slays me, I will hope in him'. But the true sense of the verse is hard to determine; there are two traditions of the Hebrew text, one reading 'I will wait for him' and the other 'I will not wait'.

⁴ It is possible to interpret the Hebrew text as meaning, 'Who is there that will accuse me? If anybody can, then I will remain silent and go to my death'; but this fits the context less naturally.

⁵ In the Hebrew text, this verse reads simply, 'Who can bring the clean from the unclean?' 'Not one'; there is no agreement either as to the meaning of the phrase or as to its relevance in the discussion, and some think it has been accidentally misplaced.

it revives, and the leaves come, as they
 10 came when it first was planted. For us
 mortal men, death; a stripping, and a
 breathing out of the soul, and all is over.

11 Where is the sea, when its waters dry up,
 12 the river when its bed is empty? So man
 falls asleep, never to rise again while hea-
 ven endures; from that sleep there is no
 13 waking, there is no rousing him. Ah, if the
 grave were only a place of shelter, where
 thou wouldst hide me away until thy anger
 was spent, with a time appointed when
 thou wouldst bethink thyself of me again!¹

14 Ah, if the dead might live again! Then I
 could wait willingly enough, all the time
 of my campaigning, till I were relieved at
 15 my post; thou wouldst summon me at last,
 and I would answer thy summons, thy
 creature, safe in thy loving hand!²

16 So jealous a record thou keepest of every
 step I take, and hast thou never a blind eye
 17 for my faults? Instead, must thou seal up
 every wrong-doing of mine, as in a casket;
 embalm the memory of my transgressions?³

18 Nay there is no help for it; mountain-
 side or cliff that begins to crumble scales
 19 away and vanishes at last, water hollows
 into the hard rock, and floods wear away
 the firm ground at last, and thou hast made
 20 no less inevitable man's doom. His brief
 mastery thou takest away for ever; the
 21 lively hue changes, and he is gone. His
 children rise to honour, sink to shame, and
 he none the wiser; nothing man feels save
 22 the pains that rack him in life, the griefs
 that fret his soul.⁴

15 Then answered Eliphaz the The-
 2 manite: This is not a wise man's
 way, to answer with windy sophistries, as
 3 if thou hadst the sirocco in thy blood, ill
 matched for the contest, prating to thy
 4 hurt. Worse, if thou hadst thy way, all
 reverence should be abolished, all devotion

at an end. Thy tongue takes its instructions
 5 from a sinful heart; this is rebel speech. No
 need for me to prove thee a guilty man, thy
 6 words prove it; thy own lips arraign thee.

Tell me, was thine some primeval birth;
 7 wast thou made before the hills? Hast
 8 thou overheard the secrets of God's
 council-chamber, that thou thinkest him
 no match for thee in wisdom? What know-
 9 ledge hast thou but we share it, what dis-
 cernment greater than ours? We too have
 10 ancients among us, grey-headed men that
 have seen more days than any father of
 thine. It should be no great matter for
 11 God to comfort thee, if thy untimely
 speech did not forbid it; what mean
 12 these transports, why does that eye roll so
 wildly? What pride is this that would cross
 13 God himself, moving thee to rash utter-
 ance? It is not in man to live a life all
 14 blameless; never son of woman yet found
 acquittal. Fickle natures God finds among
 15 his very angels; the purity of heaven itself
 does not suffice him; what of man, the
 16 abominable, the defiled, athirst ever for
 wrong-doing?

Listen, while I tell thee my mind; thou
 17 shalt hear what my own eyes have wit-
 nessed; thou shalt hear what wise men
 have said, making known the tradition of
 their fathers, that dwelt ever in their own
 18 land, and held no commerce with strangers.

Proudly though he carry himself all his
 20 days, the godless man is on the rack; how
 long will his tyrannous reign last? All the
 21 while, terror whispers in his ear; danger
 there is none, but he sees plots everywhere.
 Treads he by dark ways, he never hopes to
 22 see light again, swords here, swords there
 to threaten him; ventures he out in search
 23 of food,⁶ he doubts not his last hour is at
 hand; dangers threaten him, difficulties
 24 hedge him round, as though he were a king
 making ready for battle. And all because
 25

¹ Cf. Gen. 8. 1.

² The unfulfilled condition here expressed is represented in the Latin version as if it were something which is actually to happen, but such a rendering is plainly out of harmony with the context.

³ There has been much discussion over the meaning of these two verses, and over the position which they occupy in the argument. Some think they are part of the unfulfilled condition which goes before, and that the hiding away of man's sin is represented as something desirable; others, that they express the actual condition of things, and that man's sins are represented as treasured up against him, i.e., remaining unforgiven. Once again the suspicion arises that they really belong to a different context.

⁴ The words 'in life' do not occur in the Hebrew text, and some think that the verse refers to the (entirely self-regarding) unhappiness of the soul after death.

⁵ The Hebrew text here is usually understood as meaning, 'Art thou not content with God's consolations, his word spoken gently to thee?'

⁶ The Hebrew text here may be corrupt, and has to be rendered with considerable interpolations: 'He (imagines himself at some future time) wandering (to look) for food, (and saying to himself) Where (is any to be found)?' In any case, it is probable that Eliphaz is still describing the tortures of a bad conscience, not some actual punishment of the wicked.

he chose God for his enemy, matched himself against omnipotence; head high in air he made the onslaught, proud of his strong sinews, like a bull with hanging dewlap and well-covered flanks.¹

Now he is like some plant that grows amid deserted streets, upon houses uninhabited that lie in ruins; no root shall he strike into the earth, of true wealth or abiding prosperity; never leave the shadows, but he is withered up by the heat or carried away by the blast. Let no fond hope delude him that he can buy off his doom; fall he must before his time; withered every branch, despoiled the vine with clusters yet unripe, shed the olive's flower. Barren, barren the schemer's plot; the house of the bribe-taker shall burn about his ears. Vainly engendered, borne in the womb, brought forth, their load of misery and infamy and shame.

16 But Job answered: Old tales and cold comfort; you are all alike. Words are but wind; there is no end to them, and they cost thee nothing. Believe me, I could do as well, were you in my case, talk the language of consolation, and mock you all the while, speak of encouragement; my lips should tremble with a show of pity.² But here is grief words cannot assuage, nor silence banish; grief that bows me down till my whole frame is lifeless; these furrowed cheeks are the witness of it. And now a false accuser dares me to my face and baits me!³ One that vents all his spite against me, gnashes his teeth malignantly, watches me with fierce eyes like an enemy. Mouths that deride me, hands

that smite me on the cheek in reproof, hearts that delight in my anguish, to what ill neighbourhood God has condemned me, what tyrants hold me in their grip!

So free from care my life was, and now, suddenly as though a wild beast had fastened on me, dashed me to the ground, he has broken that life to pieces. I am a mark for his archery, his arrows are all about me; still they pierce me to the marrow, drain my life,⁴ wound upon wound; giant hands assail me. No wonder if I go clad in sackcloth, disfigured with ashes, if my face is swollen with weeping, and on my eyelids the darkness falls.

Such is the reward of a guiltless life, of prayer offered without stain. I charge thee, earth, to leave my blood unburied, never to muffle the echoes of my protest; there is one in high heaven that knows the truth and must bear witness. Friends, prate on; these tears of mine issue their challenge to a God! Ah, could but a mortal bring God to justice, as man impleads man! Mortal am I; swiftly my years pass, and by the road I tread there is no returning.

17 Broken my will to live, shortened my days, the grave my only prospect; my eye lingers on sights of bitterness, never through my fault!⁵ Lord, wouldst thou but vindicate me, and set me right with thee! I care not who else is for or against me.⁶ For these, at least, I care not; thou hast robbed their hearts of all discernment, and they shall have no cause for boasting. Small thanks a man has for counting out the spoils, while his children go hungry!⁷

Broken my will to live, shortened my days, the grave my only prospect; my eye lingers on sights of bitterness, never through my fault!⁵ Lord, wouldst thou but vindicate me, and set me right with thee! I care not who else is for or against me.⁶ For these, at least, I care not; thou hast robbed their hearts of all discernment, and they shall have no cause for boasting. Small thanks a man has for counting out the spoils, while his children go hungry!⁷

¹ The words 'like a bull' are not in the original; but the Hebrew notion of fat as a symbol of arrogance cannot well be reproduced in English without the use of simile.

² In the original, simply 'he dwells'. Some have imagined that the wicked man lives among the ruins of his victims' estates; others, that he is represented as daring God's vengeance by rebuilding accursed cities (cf. Jos. 6. 26). But in view of the plant-metaphors which follow, it seems more probable that Eliphaz is comparing the wicked to an ill-rooted plant, like Baldad in 8. 11-19.

³ Both in the Hebrew text and in the Latin version, the exact train of thought may be variously interpreted. Verses 8 and 9 are also of doubtful sense in the Hebrew.

⁴ 'And now a false accuser dares me to my face and baits me'; according to some the meaning is, 'My leanness gives open proof of it', which corresponds well with the former half of the verse. For those who adopt this rendering, it is possible to understand the verbs in verse 10 as referring to God himself. The 'false accuser' can hardly refer to God; and only by a strong rhetorical exaggeration could it refer to Eliphaz. It seems more likely that in this section Job is thinking of his spiritual enemies, perhaps as he has seen them in night visions (7. 14).

⁵ 'Still they pierce me to the marrow, drain my life'; literally, 'without respite he wounds my loins (in the Hebrew, kidneys), and pours out my bowels (in the Hebrew, gall) upon the ground'.

⁶ The Hebrew text here is generally understood as meaning, 'There are mockers at my side, and my eye dwells on their provocations'.

⁷ Literally, in the Latin version, 'Deliver me, Lord, and set me close to thee, and let who will fight against me'; in the Hebrew text, 'Go bail for me, Lord; who (else) will be my security?'. Literally, 'He promises spoils to his companions, and the eyes of his children will languish'. The Hebrew text is very obscure, and is thought by many to be corrupt; the copyist may have been baffled by the unexpected appearance of a proverb, perhaps on the subject of boasting.

6 A public by-word God has made me, a
7 warning in all men's sight, my eyes grown
dim, my whole frame wasted away, in my
8 resentment. Here is sore bewilderment for
honest hearts; angrily do innocent men
9 complain, to see knaves prosper, will the
just be true to their resolve any longer?
Will they be encouraged to keep their
10 hands clean?¹ Nay, sirs, return to the
charge as often as you will; I do not look
to find a wise man among you.
11 Swift pass my days, my mind distracted
12 with whirling thoughts, that make night
into day for me, as through the hours of
13 darkness I await the dawn. Waiting for
what? The grave is my destined home;
among the shadows I must make my bed
14 at last; only from corruption I claim a
father's welcome, mother's and sister's
15 greeting the worms shall offer me; what
16 hope is this? Wait I patiently or impa-
tiently, who cares? Into the deep pit I
must go down, all of me; even there, in the
dust, shall I find rest?²

2 **18** Then answered Baldad the Suhite:
Ah, you word-mongers, you have
never had enough! First grasp our mean-
ing, and we might argue to some purpose;
3 but no, to men like thee we are worthless
4 as dumb beasts.¹ See with what fury he
rends his own bosom! Must earth be dis-
peopled, must the rocks be torn from their
place, to gratify one man's despairing
mood?

5 Nay, the hopes of the wicked man are a
light that shall be put out; a very will of
6 the wisp; darkness shall fall over his
dwelling-place, and the lamp that shone
7 there will shine no more. The boldness of
his own stride takes him prisoner; his own
8 devices recoil against him; into the trap he
walks, struggles vainly with its meshes;

now he is laid by the heels! Mounts ever
9 higher his burning thirst.⁴ The ground
10 sown with snares, pit-falls about his path,
fears attend him everywhere, catch every-
11 where at his feet.

His strength brought low by famine,
12 hunger gnawing at his sides and wasting
all his beauty, death in its primal guise
13 shall devour those limbs.⁵ Gone the se-
14 curity of his home, now its master lies
under the heels of tyrant death; in his
15 house strangers⁶ shall dwell, on his lands
brimstone be scattered, root never grow
16 beneath nor harvest rise from it.⁷ Gone
17 the fame of him, gone the name of him,
from street and country-side,⁸ eclipsed in
18 utter darkness, lost to the world. Root nor
19 branch of his posterity shall remain among
his folk, vanished every trace of him from
the lands he knew. That doom with terror
20 and amazement high and low shall wit-
21 ness.⁹ Here (they will say) was a home of
wrong-doing; he who lived here, lived a
stranger to God.

2 **19** But Job answered: What, will you
torment me still? Every word of
3 yours a fresh weight to crush me? How
many times is this you have fallen on me,
4 trampled me down without ruth? If, un-
aware, I have committed some fault, it
5 concerns none but myself; not for you to
claim authority over me, bring home to me
my disgrace!

How to make you understand that God
6 has misjudged me, caught me in his toils!
If I cry out upon my wrongs, there is
7 none to hear me, none to take cognisance
of my plea; my path hedged in, so that
8 there is no escape, my direction lost, and
I benighted. By him discredited, dis-
9 crowned, by him left defenceless on every
10 side, I go my ways; a tree torn up by the

¹ This verse fits best into the context if it is understood as a question; those who take it as a statement regard it as an allusion to Job himself. ² The Hebrew text here is largely different and wholly obscure.

³ Job is here addressed in the plural. Some picture the scene of the whole book as a kind of public debate (cf. 32, 2) and suppose that the audience was divided in its sympathies. But it seems more likely that 'you' means 'thou and people like thee', 'you critics of Providence'. ⁴ The word rendered 'thirst' in the Latin is of uncertain meaning. ⁵ Literally, 'first-born death', in the Hebrew text, 'the first-born of death'. This is usually interpreted of fever or some other kind of disease, but without evidence. The context here would suggest rather starvation. ⁶ Literally, in the Latin version, 'the dead man's fellows'. The phrase in the Hebrew text is of doubtful meaning; some think that weeds are referred to. 'On his lands'; the Latin version repeats 'in his house', but two different words are used in the Hebrew text, and the latter is a more general word for the place where a man lives.

⁷ Or possibly 'from him', cf. verse 19. ⁸ *vv.* 12-17. The verbs of this passage are represented by the Latin, unsuitably, as expressing a wish. ⁹ 'High and low'; literally, 'the last and the first', which may also be explained as meaning 'later generations and earlier generations'. Some interpret the Hebrew text as meaning 'men of the west and men of the east'.

11 roots has more to hope for than I. Against
 12 me all his anger is aroused; I am that
 13 enemy against whom he musters all his
 14 forces, to ride over me, to beleaguer my
 15 dwelling place. Sundered am I from my
 16 brethren, a stranger to all that knew me,
 17 forsaken by my kindred, by my friends
 18 forgotten. Guests that dwell in my house,
 19 ay, and the very serving-women, stare at
 20 me, the alien, the unknown; my servants
 21 do not come at my call, I must speak them
 22 fair; my wife shuns the breath of me, to
 23 my own flesh and blood¹ I am a suppliant.
 24 The very innocents² despise me, jeer at
 25 me when my back is turned; no counsellor
 26 so trusted but he is weary of me, no friend
 27 so loved but he abandons me now. And I
 28 so wasted! Skin clinging to bone, save
 29 where the lips cover my teeth, is all that is
 left of me.³

21 Friends, friends, do you at least have
 pity, now when God's hand has fallen on
 me! Would you take part in God's hue and
 cry against me, slander me to your hearts'
 content?⁴ Could but these words of mine
 be written down in a book, graven with a
 pen of iron upon tablets of lead, chiselled
 on hard flint!⁵

25 This at least I know, that one lives on
 who will vindicate me, rising up from
 the dust when the last day comes.⁶ Once
 more my skin shall clothe me, and in
 my flesh I shall have sight of God.⁷ I
 myself, with my own eyes; it will not
 be something other than myself that sees
 him. Deep in my heart is this hope re-
 posed.⁸

28 You that would raise the hue and cry,
 finding matter of complaint against me,
 29 should rather take flight yourselves, the
 sword at your heels; the sword that
 avenges wrong, proof to you that justice
 shall be done.

20 Then answered Sophar the Naamathite: Strange hesitation thy words breed in me; my thoughts veer to and fro. Not deaf am I to thy pleadings, but there is a voice in my heart gives me pause. Certain it is that never since man found a place on earth did the wrong-doer win lasting triumph; only for a brief moment does knavery bring him content.

Let his pride overtop heaven itself, his head be lifted high as the clouds, he is for the dung-hill at last; none knows what has become of him. Vanished and gone like a dream, the phantom of yesternight, unmarked by human eyes, lost to the scenes he knew! Crushing poverty shall be his children's lot; his acts shall yield their own harvest of shame, all the lusty vigour of his frame doomed, like himself, to silence and the dust. Sweet in the mouth is the taste of evil-doing; how the tongue cherishes it! How he treasures it, loth to lose the secret pleasure of his palate! But once let that food reach his belly, not the gall of adders is so venomous. The wealth he loved to swallow, disgorge he must; God will make his belly return it; poisonous as the asp's head or the viper's tongue were those juices he sucked, when he thought to enjoy streams of plenty; honey and cream should have been his in rich abundance.

Endlessly he shall pay for the wrong he did, plagued in the measure of his own false dealings. He who oppressed and robbed the poor shall never prosper with his ill-gotten fortunes; he, the insatiable, will not keep what he so coveted; he, that never had a crust to spare, will be stripped now of all his goods. Once so full fed, now he goes in need; stands in doubt, with distress crowding in on every side; ah for a meal to fill his belly with! But no, God's angry vengeance is let loose on him, raining

¹ Literally, 'the sons of my womb'. This may be taken as meaning 'sons of my body' (Job's description of his loneliness being only rhetorical; cp. 1. 19), or as meaning 'sons of the same mother as myself'.

² In the Latin version, 'fools', in the Hebrew text, 'little children'. ³ The Hebrew text appears to run: 'To my skin, to my flesh, my bones cling; I have escaped by the skin of my teeth'. It is difficult to see how the English phrase (derived from this passage) fits in here. ⁴ 'Slander me'; literally, 'eat my flesh', an idiom well known in Aramaic, found also in Hebrew here and in Ps. 26. 2.

⁵ The word *celte*, said to mean 'a chisel', does not occur anywhere else in Latin literature, and is thought by some to be a copyist's error in our Bibles for *certes*; 'Upon tablets of lead, or perhaps upon flint'. In the Hebrew text, there is possibly an allusion to the filling in of sculptured letters with lead. ⁶ In the Hebrew text, it is the Vindicator himself, not Job, who will 'stand up over the dust hereafter'.

⁷ The first part of this verse is unintelligible in the Hebrew text; it appears to mean 'And after (or, afterwards) they will strip my skin, this'. Probably the reading is corrupt, but the other versions do not bear out the sense given by the Latin. 'In my flesh'; literally, 'from my flesh', which some would interpret as meaning, 'deprived of my flesh'. ⁸ v. 27. 'Something other than myself'; literally, 'a stranger'. The end of the verse, in the Hebrew text, reads 'My inmost thoughts die away in my bosom'.

24 down all its weapons; shuns he the steel,
25 to the bow of bronze he falls a prey. Bright
and bitter the drawn sword threatens;
about him, dread warriors come and go.¹
26 He hides away, where thick darkness
broods over him;² straightway a fire no
human hand has kindled threatens to de-
vour him; woe betide any that would take
27 refuge in that dwelling! Heaven will reveal
the story of his crimes, earth itself rise in
revolt against him; all the promise of his
28 race will be laid bare and torn away, in that
hour of the Lord's vengeance.³

29 Such is the lot God sends to the wicked,
such their divinely appointed doom.

2 **21** But Job answered: Listen, do but
listen to me, and then, if you will,
3 repent of your charity; let me have my say,
4 and then mock on. It is not as if I bore a
grudge against man; I have better reason
5 than that to be indignant. Mark my com-
plaint well, and you shall be astonished,
6 hold your breath⁴ in amazement, as I too
tremble with dismay at the thought of it.

7 How is it that godless men live on, meet
with advancement, enjoy their riches un-
disturbed? Long they live, to see their
8 posterity thrive about them, kinsmen and
9 grandsons thronging all around. Safe and
sound their dwelling-place; God's scourge
10 passes them by; never bull of theirs failed
11 to gender, cow to calve; blithe as lambs the
12 little children go out to play; everywhere
is tambour and harp-playing, everywhere
13 the pipe's merry note. So, full of ease,
their life passes, and they go down at last
without a struggle to the grave.

14 And these are the men who bade God
keep his distance from them, refused to
15 learn his will;⁵ what right had he, the
Omnipotent, to their obedience, what ad-
vantage would they gain by offering prayer
16 to him? These are the godless folk whose
counsel I must shun because they cannot

command their own good fortune! Tell 17
me, how often in very deed are the hopes
of the wicked extinguished, engulfed by
the flood? Does God's vengeance often
deal out misfortune to them, sweeping 18
them away like chaff before the wind, ashes
beneath the storm?

But perhaps God is reserving for the 19
children punishment of their father's sins?
Nay, let the sinner himself feel the retribu-
tion when it comes; his own eyes must see 20
the blow fall, his own lips drink in the
divine vengeance! Little he cares what be- 21
falls his posterity after he is gone, though
halved be the time of its continuance.

The God that passes judgement on his 22
angels needs none to instruct him!⁶ Here 23
is one man goes to his death sound and
strong, rich and happy, well covered with 24
flesh, his bones full of marrow; another, 25
all misery and poverty, and he, no less than 26
the other, has dust for bed, worms for
coverlet.

Spare me those thoughts I know already, 27
those reasons that would crush me! What 28
becomes of the tyrant's palace, of the evil-
doer's home, at last? Ask any wayfarer 29
(you say) that knows them, and you shall
hear the same account of the matter: 30
The rogue's villainy is being reserved for future
punishment, he is being slowly drawn on
to his doom. Fools, how can anyone bring 31
home his guilt to him now, punish the
wrong he did? He is being slowly drawn 32
on to his tomb, where he shall wait on in
the ranks of the dead; made welcome in the 33
dark valley,⁷ whither all men shall follow,
as numberless that went before him.

Vain is all your consolation, while the 34
answer you give me matches so ill with
truth.

22 Then answered Eliphaz the The- 2
manite: A man cannot hope to
implead God, even a man of perfect wis-

¹ This sentence has, in the original, no subject. The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as referring to the act of drawing the arrow out of a wound. ² Literally, 'all darkness is concealed in his hidden things'. ³ 'The promise of his race'; literally, 'the bud of his house', a phrase not elsewhere paralleled. ⁴ 'Be laid bare'; in the Hebrew text, 'go into exile'. ⁵ Literally, 'put your hands on your mouths'. ⁶ *vs.* 14-33. The interpretation here given to this passage is designed to make Job's remarks consistent with each other and with his general line of argument. Several of them would appear at first sight (especially as read in the Latin version) to favour the notion that God inflicts signal punishment on evil-doers. But it seems clear that these do not reflect Job's own sentiments; they are an ironical presentation of his opponents' point of view, e.g., verse 16 and the first half of verse 19. ⁷ It is hard to see how this verse fits into the context, and some think it has been misplaced. The idea seems to be that Job's comforters are offering an apology for the Providential order such as God himself would not approve of. ⁸ The Latin here gives the strange rendering, 'the gravel of Cocytus'. In pagan mythology, Cocytus was a river flowing through the underworld.

3 dom. Just though thou be, how is God the
 4 better for knowing thou art just? Can
 5 stainless life of thine advantage him? Or
 6 dost thou think that fear of thee will per-
 7 suade him to appear in court, and prove
 8 thee in the wrong?¹ Must he browbeat
 9 thee over a long record of guilt,² over many
 10 heinous deeds done; remind thee of the
 11 usurer's pledge needlessly taken, of thy
 12 brother left to go naked while thou hadst
 13 his garment by thee, of water grudged to
 14 thirsty men, bread refused to the hungry?
 15 Must he tell the story of a rich tyrant that
 16 had lands and held to them; of widows sent
 17 away without redress, orphans left without
 18 support, through thy means? Must he say,
 19 that is why thou art caught in the snare,
 20 dismayed by sudden peril, left benighted
 when thou thoughtest to see day, over-
 whelmed by the unexpected flood?
 21 Bethink thee, God is high as heaven
 22 itself, reaches beyond the uttermost star.
 23 Wouldst thou tell us that he has no know-
 24 ledge of what passes, that he issues his de-
 25 crees blindly, gives no heed to our mortal
 26 doings, there where he walks above hea-
 27 ven's vault, all wrapped in cloud? That
 28 were to follow old paths of error, trodden
 29 long ago by impious feet. Snatched away
 30 before their time were the men that rea-
 soned so; a flood engulfed the solid ground
 beneath them. These, beyond doubt, were
 men who bade God keep his distance from
 them, thought the Omnipotent could give
 them no aid, when he had filled their abode
 with blessings! Not for nothing do I shun
 their counsels! Here was a sight to make
 the just triumphant, make innocent folk
 laugh aloud in scorn, to see how their

proud hopes vanished, and all that was left
 of them perished in the flames.³

Fall in with the Lord's ways, and be his
 friend; thou shalt be well rewarded. Let
 his lips be thy oracle, his words written on
 thy heart. Turn back to the Almighty for
 thy healing, and rid thy dwelling-place of
 guilt. Firm rock thou shalt have for shift-
 ing dust, and for firm rock streams of gold;
 the Almighty himself will be thy shield,
 and silver thou shalt never lack.⁴ In those
 omnipotent arms thou shalt rest content,
 thy face upturned towards God himself,
 thy prayer heard as soon as offered, thy
 vows paid as soon as due; all thy desire
 thou shalt have, and all thy paths will be
 sunshine. He that was once brought low
 shall be high in renown; the downcast eye
 shall win deliverance.

But the innocent shall be kept safe; in
 a pair of clean hands there was safety ever.

23 But Job answered: And still I
 repine bitterly as ever, no groaning
 too heavy for the wounds I bear. Ah, if I
 could but find my way to God, reach his
 very throne, in reproachful accents plead
 my suit before him, and learn what he
 would say in his defence, grasp the mean-
 ing of it! Will he match his strength with
 mine, use all his majestic power to crush
 me? The justice of my cause once made
 known to him, I should triumph at last.

But no; travel I east or west, I find no
 trace of him, turn I north or south, I have
 no skill to catch sight of him. And he, all
 the while, keeps watch over my doings,
 tests me like gold the fire assays; he knows
 how close I have kept to the path he traced

¹ *vv.* 2-4. The Hebrew text is ordinarily understood as meaning: 'Can a man render useful service (by living an innocent life) to God? Is a wise man of service to him (or perhaps, to himself)? Can the Almighty take any pleasure in the fact that thou art upright, is it any gain to him if thou followest honest paths? Is it because of thy fear of him that he finds fault with thee, comes to court as thy adversary?' But, although this apparently gives a satisfactory account of the various sentences, it leaves an unbridgeable gulf in logic between verse 3 and verse 4. The Latin version yields a greatly preferable sense: God cannot be expected to answer Job's summons to trial, since he has no motive, whether of interest or of fear, for doing so.

² The Latin version begins the sentence with the words 'Is it not rather because of . . . But this seems due to an erroneous apprehension of the Hebrew original. The Hebrew text reads simply, 'Are not thy wickednesses many and thy faults endless?' This is generally understood as a charge brought by Eliphaz against Job; but such a sudden attack on Job's character would be out of keeping with the rest of the chapter, and indeed of the book. Verses 5-11 fall better into place if they are understood as an imaginary address by Almighty God to an imaginary sinner (*cf.* Ps. 49. 16-21).

³ *vv.* 15-20. Some definite historical situation seems to be envisaged, but it cannot be identified with certainty. The Deluge has been suggested in view of verse 16, the destruction of Sodom in view of verse 20; the death of Core and his companions (*Num.* 16) is also a possible solution.
⁴ *vv.* 24, 25. The Hebrew text here is usually interpreted, 'Put (thy) gold-ore upon the dust, and thy (gold of) Ophir upon the rocks of the valleys; then the Almighty will be thy gold-ore . . .', &c. The Latin version has probably failed to recognize the word for gold-ore, rendering it in one verse 'flint-stone' and in the other 'against thy enemy'. But it is doubtful whether our present Hebrew text is genuine; it is not easy to see why Eliphaz should encourage a man who has just lost all his possessions to throw away his gold.
⁵ *vv.* 29, 30. The sense of the Hebrew text here is doubtful.

12 for me, swerving never aside, true to every
 command of his, every utterance of his
 13 cherished in my heart. But what of that?
 He reigns without a rival, none can cross
 his purposes; he does what likes him best.
 14 His will once fully accomplished in me, he
 has many another like purpose to fulfil.
 15 What wonder if I am all adread in his pre-
 sence, if the thought of him racks me with
 16 terror? It is God that melts my heart with
 17 fear, his omnipotence that daunts me; that
 thought unmans me, not the surrounding
 darkness, not the mists which hide my
 view.¹

24 Since he, who is omnipotent, de-
 termines every event, how is it that
 those who know him wait in vain for his
 doom to fall?²

2 Here are men that alter their neigh-
 bour's landmark, drive stolen cattle to
 3 pasture, rob the orphan of his ass, take the
 4 widow's ox in pawn, shoulder the poor
 aside, conspire to oppress the friendless;
 5 leave others to make their living as best
 they may, like the wild ass in the desert,
 waking betimes to scrape food for hungry
 6 mouths at home. Reap they the field that
 is none of theirs, strip they the vineyard
 7 wrongfully seized from its owner; let men
 go bare, their garments snatched away, de-
 fenceless against cold and rain on the
 8 mountain-side, so that they are fain to hug
 9 the rocks for lack of shelter. Their violence
 robs the helpless children, despoils the
 10 poor and simple; back and side must go
 bare, and never a stalk left for hungry men
 11 to glean; nor any vintager of theirs lies
 down between the rows at noon, but goes
 12 thirsty!³ A cry goes up from the city
 streets, where wounded men lie groaning;
 tell me, does not God allow it to pass
 unheeded?⁴

13 How they shun the light, these rebels
 who ignore God's precepts, leave his paths
 14 untrodden! The murderer must be stir-

ring before daybreak, to catch his helpless
 prey, or prowl, as the thieves prowl, at
 night. For darkness, too, the adulterer
 15 waits, no eye must scan his muffled fea-
 tures; under cover of darkness he will
 16 break into the house, to keep the tryst made
 yesterday; no daylight for him. To him,
 17 the first flush of dawn is death's shadow;
 deep gloom is the sunshine he walks by.

Light as foam on the waters, nor light
 the doom, surely, that awaits him on earth;
 not for him the vineyard's sunny slope!
 Swift as snow melts under the noon-day
 19 heat, let his guilty soul pass to the grave,
 unpitied, with worms for its boon-com-
 20 panions, forgotten, overthrown like an un-
 fruitful tree! The childless woman was his
 21 prey;⁵ in vain the widow looked to him for
 mercy; now, surely, God has pulled the
 22 tyrant down; firm he has stood, but now
 he despairs of life itself! Time for re-
 23 pentance God gave him, by his pride
 misused, but ever on his doings kept a
 watchful eye; now, their brief renown
 24 over, such men must pass, as all things
 pass, into the dust, be carried off, swept
 away like ears of corn!⁶

But no, never the day comes! Who
 25 dares give me the lie, challenge me in
 God's sight?⁷

25 Then answered Baldad the Suhite:
 Ay, but what power, ay, but what
 2 terrors he wields, who reigns peacefully,
 there in high heaven! He, the lord of
 3 countless armies, he, whose light dazzles
 every eye! And shall man, born of woman,
 4 win his suit, prove his innocence, when he
 is matched with God? Dim shews the
 5 moon, tarnished the stars, under his eye;
 and what is man but waste and worm in his
 6 presence?

26 But Job answered: Bravely spoken,
 2 for a cause that so much needed it!
 That arm of thine ever upheld the weak.

¹ v. 17. The Hebrew text is here obscure, and perhaps corrupt. ² Literally, 'Times are not hidden from the omnipotent, but those who know him are ignorant of his days'.

³ v. 2-11. The Latin version is here in disagreement, occasionally, with the Hebrew text, which is itself very difficult. It is not always easy to see whether the subject of a particular sentence is the wicked, or their victims.

⁴ It seems necessary to understand the end of this verse as a question; otherwise the Latin flatly contradicts the meaning, both of the Hebrew text and of the Septuagint Greek, nor can we easily suppose it to have been Job's opinion.

⁵ 'Was his prey'; the Latin word used can mean either 'fed' or 'fed upon'.

⁶ v. 18-24. These verses, with their threat of calamity to the wicked, should perhaps be understood as an ideal consummation which, as verse 25 points out, does not seem to be verified in fact.

⁷ The meaning of the Hebrew text is probably, 'reduce my words to nothingness'.

3 Brave advice offered in that great discernment of thine, to one who so lacks wisdom!
4 A fine lesson thou hast read him, the God who gave thee breath!

5 Sure enough, there is none but trembles
6 before him; even the old heroes, and those who share their dwelling-place under the lower depths; bare to his eyes is the place
7 of shadows, oblivion lies revealed. He it was spread out the northern skies over
8 emptiness, poised earth on nothing; cloud-bound he holds the rain, that else would
9 spill on earth all at once, veiled and shut in
10 with cloud his unseen throne. While day and night last, the waters keep the bounds
11 he has decreed for them; the very pillars of heaven tremble awe-struck at his will.
12 His the power, his the wisdom, that drew the seas together all in a moment, and the
13 rebellious dragon struck down; his the spirit that clothed the heavens, his the hand that drew yonder writhing serpent
14 from the womb.¹ Here is but a small part of his doings, here is but the whisper of his voice; who dares to contemplate the thunder of his full magnificence?

27 And thus Job continued to lay bare his thought: As sure as he is a living God, he, the omnipotent, who so refuses me justice, who makes my lot in life so bitter; while life is in me, while he still grants me breath, never shall these lips justify the wrong, never this tongue utter the lie! Gain your point with me you shall not; I will die sooner than abandon my plea of innocence. That claim, once made, I will not forgo; not one act in all my life bids conscience

reproach me. Count him a knave that is my enemy, every detractor of mine a friend of wrong!²

(What is the sinner's hope worth after all his greedy getting, when God takes the life away from him?)³ In that hour of need, his cry for reprieve will go unheard; he cannot go on for ever basking in the Almighty's favour, calling God to his aid. Now be God's hand laid bare, now let me acknowledge openly the counsels of omnipotence! Not one of you but knows the truth of it already; yet one and all you must be urging a false plea, without the need for it!

What spoil, after all, does God grant to the wicked? From his almighty hand, what abiding possession does the man of violence receive? Sons beget he never so many, what avails it, when the sword overtakes them, and their children in turn must go wanting bread, when the plague gives all the rest of his line their burial, and never a widow to bemoan them? What avails it, to heap up silver like the sand, buy fine clothes, too, and think such treasures cheap as dirt, if more upright men than he more innocent than he, must have the wearing of those clothes, share out that silver at last? Light as the moth he builds, not so frail a shelter the vineyard-watcher weaves about him. Rich he is laid to rest, but nothing takes with him; rich he shall wake no more.⁴ Helpless in the flood, driven in darkness by the storm, carried off, as if sirocco or whirlwind had swept him away, he is routed before the pitiless onslaught, hands clapped in triumph, tongues hissing in derision as he goes.)

¹ 'Draw... from the womb'; in the present Hebrew text, 'pierced through'; see Is. 51. 9, where the same verb is used. Here, as in that passage, the power of the sea is allegorically described as a proud monster, the darkness of night (perhaps) as a writhing serpent.

² This verse may be taken, instead, with what follows, and interpreted as meaning, 'May the sinner, the wrong-doer, fare as I would have my own enemies and detractors fare'.

³ *cf.* 8-23. These verses, or most of them, are thought by some scholars to have been accidentally misplaced, belonging properly to Baldad's speech in ch. 25, or to some other utterance by Job's interlocutors. It is undeniable that upon first reading they seem to tell against, not for, the point of view Job has hitherto supported; and it is curious that Job should be the speaker all through chapters 26-31 inclusive. If our present text is accurate, the following observations may be made on it. Verses 8-24 are probably concerned only with what happens after the sinner's death; Job's complaint has been that the sinner is not punished during life. Possibly, then, Job's speculations here take on a new turn. Still maintaining that virtue is not rewarded or vice punished in this life (and therefore that his own sufferings do not prove him guilty) he asks what is the value of the brief prosperity which ends with the sinner's lifetime (*cf.* Lk. 12. 16-21). The secret of life must, after all, be something other than the acquisition of worldly advantage. What that secret is, he proceeds to examine in the next chapter.

⁴ Literally, in the Latin version, 'The rich man when he goes to sleep will take nothing with him; he will open his eyes and find nothing'. The Hebrew text seems to mean, 'Rich he shall lie down, and it shall not continue (or, he shall never lie down again); he will open his eyes, and—nothing'. Conceivably this refers to a situation in which ruin comes upon the sinner in a single night. But more probably it refers to his death, and the words 'he will open his eyes' are only figurative.

28 Where, then, does wisdom lie?¹

Easy to trace where the veins of
 2 silver run, where gold-ore is refined, where
 3 iron is dug from the depths of earth, and
 4 rocks must be melted to yield copper. See
 how man has done away with the darkness,
 has pierced into the very heart of things,
 into caves under ground, black as death's
 5 shadow! Where yonder ravine cuts them
 off from the shepherd-folk, the miners toil,
 forgotten; lost to all track, far from the
 6 haunts of men.² That earth, from whose
 surface our bread comes to us, must be
 7 probed by fire beneath, till the rocks yield
 sapphires, and the clods gold. Here are
 8 passages no bird discovers in its flight, no
 vulture's eye has seen; that never gave
 roving merchant³ shelter, or the lioness a
 9 lair. Boldly man matches himself against
 the flint, uproots the mountain, cuts chan-
 10 nels through the rock, where things of
 price have dazzled his eye; narrowly he
 scans the river's depths, and brings to
 11 light all they hide. But wisdom, tell me
 where to search for wisdom; tell me in
 what cache discernment lies?

How should man set a price on it? This
 12 earth our pleasant home, yields no return
 of it; Not here, cries the abyss beneath us,
 13 and the sea echoes, Not here. Not for
 pure gold is it bartered, or weighed against
 14 silver in the balance; not the bright wares
 of the Indies, nor jewel of sardonyx, nor
 15 sapphire can vie with it; it is not to be
 matched with treasures of glass or gold,
 rivalled by all the goldsmith's workman-
 16 ship. Do not talk of coral or of crystal;⁴
 for wisdom you must make deeper search
 17 still; with wisdom the topaz from Ethiopia
 and the finest gold-leaf cannot compare.

Whence, then, does wisdom come to us;
 18 where is discernment to be found? That
 is the secret kept hidden from beast on
 19 earth and bird in heaven; the shadow-
 world of death claims no more than to have
 20 heard the rumour of it. Only God knows

the way to it, only God can tell where it
 lies, he whose view reaches to the world's
 21 end, sees all that passes under the wide
 heavens. He, when first he took scale and
 22 measuring-line to set wind and water their
 task, when he appointed a time for the
 rain's abating, and a track for the whistling
 storm, descried wisdom already; traced
 23 his plan, and set all in order, and mastered
 it.

To man, he has told this much, that
 24 wisdom is fearing the Lord; there lies dis-
 cernment, in refusing the evil path.

29 And thus Job continued to lay
 bare his thought: Alas for the
 2 changes the months have brought with
 them! Alas for the old days, when God
 was my protector, when his light shone
 3 above me, its rays guiding me through the
 darkness! Days of ripe manhood, when
 4 God was my home's familiar guest, he, the
 Almighty, at my side! I had my children
 still about me; the milk frothed in pools at
 5 my feet, no rock so hard but my olives
 bathed it in oil. Went I to the city gate,
 6 there was my seat ready for me in the open
 square; rose the young men to make place
 7 for me, rose the aged to do me honour;
 nobles fell silent, and waited, finger on lip,
 8 words failed the chieftains, and counsel
 9 they gave no more.

None heard the same of me then, but
 10 called me a happy man; none watched my
 doings then, but spoke in my praise. Poor
 11 man nor helpless orphan cried to me in
 vain; how they blessed me, souls reprieved
 12 from instant peril; with what comfort the
 widow's heart rejoiced! Dutiful obser-
 13 vance was still the vesture I wore, my robe
 and crown integrity; in me, the blind
 14 found sight, the lame strength, the poor a
 father. None so ready to give the stranger's
 15 cause a hearing, break open the fangs of the
 wrong-doer and snatch the prey from his
 16 teeth.

¹ These five words do not occur in the original; they are supplied here so as to explain the course of the argument; cf. verse 12.

² In the Hebrew text, this verse runs 'The ravine divides (or, he divides the ravine) from the company of a foreign resident the forgotten ones from the foot they have languished from mankind they have wandered (or, tottered)'. The Latin version gives, 'The torrent divides from the exiled people those whom the foot of the poor man has forgotten, those who are far from the beaten track'. The guess of modern scholars which would identify the ravine as a pit-shaft, and sees a reference to miners swinging to and fro in hanging cages, does justice neither to the usage of words nor to the requirements of the context. The text is probably corrupt, but we may presume that it refers to the remoteness and hiddenness of mining operations, not to contemporary conditions of labour.

³ 'Roving merchant'; the word is of doubtful meaning in the original, and perhaps refers to wild beasts.

⁴ Literally, in the Latin version, 'things high and things jutting out'. In the Hebrew text, the second half of the verse refers to a third kind of jewel, perhaps pearls.

18 Here, thought I, I have built myself a nest to die in; here, like some palm-tree,
 19 I shall defy the years, palm-tree that spreads out its roots to the river-bank, on whose leaves lodges the dew; my fame never diminishing, never worn out the bow
 21 I bear. How eagerly men hung upon my words, intent to learn what counsel I would
 22 give, nor ventured to speak when I had done! A gracious influence my words fell,
 23 like autumn rain or the spring showers on lips athirst. Were they faint-hearted, they found me smiling still, and the encouragement of my glance never failed them.
 25 Deigned I to be their leader, the first place was mine; yet ever when I sat like a king with his retinue about him, I would comfort the mourner's tears.

30 And now? Now I am a laughing-stock, even to younger men; a flock of such base breed as theirs sheep-dog of mine never tended! So profitless their puny strength, I would have let them die before ever they came to maturity.¹ Starveling creatures, they should browse in the waste, unkempt, haggard and woe-begone, cropping mallow and tree-bark and juniper-root for their diet, and making great hue and cry after such dainties, as they
 6 pluck them from the hill-slopes! Barren ravine and cave and rock their dwelling-
 7 place, they were glad of so much shelter; a bramble thicket should be their welcome
 8 refuge. A senseless and a nameless breed, earth is well rid of them. O that I should be a song and a by-word on such lips as
 10 these! That they loathe and shun me, and make bold to spit in my face, being what they are! Now God has made me a mark for his archery, now he has put a bit in my mouth; when my fair spring was overcast by calamity,² every passer-by might throw me down; like a flood they swept over
 13 me, trampled down my path, took me un-
 14 aware and overcame me, when there was none to bring rescue. One breach made, one gate forced, they might fall upon me all at once, and add their weight to my misery.

All that I was, is gone, the ambition, the happiness that was mine swept away like clouds before the storm; my heart is dead within me, a prey to long despairs. By night, anguish racks my frame; sleepless the cares that consume me, their poison seems to eat away the very garments I wear, clings fast about me like the collar of my coat. No better I than mud in the streets, little thought of as dust or ashes; unheard I cry to thee, unregarded I stand in thy presence; so hardened is thy heart; so pitilessly thy blows fall upon me. Didst thou exalt me, lift me so high in air, only to hurl me down in ruin? I know well enough that thou wilt bring me to the grave at last; it is the home thou hast appointed for all living men; but surely thou dost not exert thy power only to destroy, surely thou hast mercy on the fallen? I myself know what it is to pity the afflicted, to shed tears over human need! But no, hope I for better things, I hope in vain; ever deeper the darkness shews to eyes straining for the light. Still my heart is in turmoil, greeted still by fresh despairs; I go mourning, my face blacker than ever the sun's heat made it, rise up in public, and claim audience for my wrongs; crying so dismally as if I had jackals⁴ for my brothers, ostriches for my company. And all the while, fever to discolour this flesh, to shrivel this frame! What wonder if all, with me, is mourning and lament, if the music of harp and flute is heard no more?

31 And this was a man that had bound his eyes over by covenant; never should even his fancy dwell upon the thought of a maid! Well I knew that God Almighty in high heaven would have neither part nor lot with me else; ruin for the sinner his doom is, disinheritance for the wrong-doer. Tell me, does not this God watch over every path I take, trace my footsteps one by one? Walk I by crooked ways, run I eagerly after false dealing, he can weigh my offence with true scales; let God himself bear witness to my innocence! Have I strayed from my

¹ Literally, 'they were thought unworthy of life itself'. Throughout this chapter, and notably in verses 5, 7, 11-13, 20, 24, the Vulgate differs considerably from the Hebrew, which is often difficult and perhaps corrupt.

² Literally, 'calamities arose at the right hand of me sprouting'. The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning, 'the rabble rose up to attack me on my right hand'.
³ Literally, 'their multitude'; the sense of the Hebrew text is quite uncertain here.
⁴ 'Jackals'; in the Latin text literally 'dragons'.

course; has my heart followed the lure of
 my eyes; are my hands stained with
 8 wrong? Then let another man enjoy the
 harvest I have sowed, then let my race
 9 be doomed to extinction! Have wiles of
 woman entangled my heart; did I lie in
 10 wait under my neighbour's window? Then
 be my own wife another's whore, strangers
 11 be her bedfellows! That were sin in me,
 12 and foul wrong done; that fire, once
 lighted, will rage till all is consumed, never
 a crop shall escape it.

13 Did I refuse justice to man-servant of
 mine or woman-servant, when they had
 14 complaint to bring? Then it shall go hard
 with me when it is God's turn to pro-
 nounce judgement; how shall I meet his
 15 scrutiny, who fashioned in the womb this
 one and that, man and master alike? Did
 16 I deny some poor man the alms he craved,
 keep the widow waiting for her pittance,
 17 sit over my meal alone, and never an
 orphan boy to share it? That were an ill
 18 return for the loving care that has borne
 me company as I grew up from childhood,
 19 ever since I left my mother's womb.¹ Did
 I spurn the naked that were ready to perish
 20 of cold, too poor to find clothing; did I
 never earn thanks, from the back that went
 21 bare till fleece of my flock warmed it? Did
 I threaten the friendless, whenever I could
 secure judgement against them in the
 22 market-place? Then let shoulder of mine
 hang from shoulder-blade, every bone in
 23 my arm broken! Nay, but God's terrors
 overwhelmed, his majesty overbore me.

24 In wealth did I put my trust, hail the
 25 bright gold as my life's protector; doted I
 upon my great riches, upon all my toil had
 26 earned? When I gazed on the sun in its
 splendour, on the moon in her royal pro-
 27 gress, did these things steal my heart away,
 so that mouth kissed hand in adoration?
 28 That were great wrong done, to deny the
 29 God who is higher than all. Did I triumph
 30 over a fallen foe, rejoice at his ruin; lend
 my lips to ill uses, cursing my enemy's life
 31 away? Rather, it was of myself men were
 fain to speak evil, men of my own house-

hold, and to their hearts' content.² Never
 32 had the stranger to lodge in the open, my
 doors were open to every wayfarer that
 passed.

Men are frail; does sin lie on my con-
 science undisclosed, does the memory of
 33 guilt rankle in my bosom? Was I daunted
 34 by fear of the throng, of my neighbours'
 contemptuous looks? Did I hold my
 tongue,³ and keep within doors? O that
 35 my cause might be tried; that he, the Al-
 mighty, would grant my request, that he,
 my judge, would write my record down;
 how proudly I would bear it with me,
 36 shoulder-high, wear it as a crown! I would
 37 proclaim it wherever I went, fit for a king's
 eyes to read. Can these lands of mine bear
 38 testimony against me, can their furrows
 tell a sad tale of harvests enjoyed, and no
 39 price paid for them, of labourers cruelly
 treated? Then thistles for wheat, thorns
 40 for barley may it yield me.

Ended herewith are the sayings of Job.

32 So they answered Job no more,
 those others, a man persuaded of
 his own innocence. But there was one who
 2 stood by in anger and thought scorn of
 them, Eliu the Buzite, son of Barachel,
 of Ram's kindred. Angry he was with Job,
 for claiming that God did him an injury,
 and thought scorn of those friends of his,
 3 that could find no reasonable answer, but
 were content to find Job a guilty man. Eliu,
 4 then, waited till Job had finished speaking;
 was he not younger than the rest? But
 5 when he found that the other three had no
 answer to give, he could contain himself
 no longer.

Thus, then, spoke Eliu the Buzite, son
 6 of Barachel: Late in time was I born, and
 you are older men than I; with bowed head
 I kept my own counsel, ready to listen,
 7 while old age spoke, and learn from you the
 garnered wisdom of years. But I see now
 8 that man speaks by inspiration; only the
 breath of the most High can grant discern-
 9 ment; long life does not make men wise,
 it is not always the aged that give true

¹ Literally, 'For mercy grew up with me from my childhood, and came out of my mother's womb with me'; the sense may be that Job himself was always a merciful man, but the parenthesis is awkward. There is no mention of mercy in the Hebrew text.

² Literally, 'If the folk of my tabernacle did not say, Who will give us of his flesh, that we may be glutted?' This is usually interpreted, in various ways, as if 'his flesh' could mean 'the dishes of meat which he provides', but this is very improbable. For 'eating a man's flesh' in the sense of trampling him, see 19. 22 above.

³ Literally, according to the Latin version, 'And did I not rather hold my tongue', but this obscures the sense of the passage.

10 award. So it is that I would fain have you
listen while I make known my thought to
11 you. I have waited long on your words,
heard you out, while you searched about
12 for reasons, attentive enough, while I still
hoped to hear the truth from you; but no,
not one of you has convinced Job, or an-
13 swered his riddle. Do not flatter yourselves
that you have tracked down the truth; God
14 must put him down, not man.¹ Not against
me has he drawn up these pleadings of his;
not with your shiftless answers will I meet
him.

15 What, all abashed, these wise men, no
answer ready, the words driven from their
16 lips? I have had enough of waiting for
them to speak, and seeing them stand
17 dumb; I will take my turn at pleading, tell
18 out my thoughts. I am full of matter, in
19 labour with ripe utterance; fresh wine that
has no vent will burst even a new wine-
20 skin. Speak I must, if I would get relief,
21 unburden my lips of their answer. Human
respect shall not daunt me; how should I
22 match man with God?² Uncertain my
span of days; what if he should call me
suddenly to account, he, my Creator?

2 **33** Listen, then, Job, to my remon-
strances, and hear me out; flows
my speech free, tongue and throat are
3 loosed; here be plain words, uttered in all
4 honesty. A creature I; God's spirit made
me, the breath of omnipotence woke me to
5 life; if answer thou hast, thou canst meet
me fearlessly, since God made us both, and
6 we were fashioned of one clay; here are no
terrors to daunt thee, no threats to over-
bear thee.

8 Openly thou hast said, with my own ears
9 to witness it, Innocent though I be of all
10 wrong, free from the stain of guilt, God
has picked a quarrel with me; that is the
reason, and no other, why he treats me as
11 an enemy, holds me so close a prisoner, and
12 watches me wherever I go. But there is no

substance in thy plea; I tell thee, man can-
not be matched with God. What, wouldst
thou complain that he does not meet these
charges of thine? Know, then, that God
warns us once, but does not repeat his
warning.³ Sometimes in visions of the
night, when deep sleep falls upon men as
they lie abed, he speaks words of revela-
tion, to teach them the lesson they need.
This is one means by which he will turn a
man away from his designs, purge him of
his pride; and so the grave is disappointed,
the sword misses its prey. Or else he will
use the pains of the sick-bed for a man's
correction, and leave his whole frame
wasted with disease.

Evil days, when he sickens at the
thought of food, of all the dainties he once
loved so well; when the flesh pines and
the bones have nought to cover them,
when death encroaches on life, and the
powers of darkness daunt his spirits! Then
it is an angel's⁴ task, as many angels there
be, to interpret his need, and shew him
where man's good lies; and the word of
mercy will be spoken, Let be, the grave is
not for him; I have found the secret of his
ransoming;⁵ enough, now, torment has
racked him, let him return to the vigour of
his youth! So, God's pardon wooed and
won, the sick man stands in his presence
once more, all thankfulness, restored to
favour. He turns to the bystanders and
makes acknowledgement, A sinner I, no
doubt but I have greatly offended, my
punishment was less than I deserved! Now
God has reprieved me from death's exile,
I am to live still, and see the light.

Such mercy, not once or twice, God
shews to man, rescuing him from the
grave, rekindling the lamp of life for him.
Listen to me, then, Job, and hear me out;
make answer to me, if answer thou canst,
for I would fain see thee acquitted. If an-
swer thou hast none, listen to me in silence
while I unfold the truth.⁶

¹ Literally, 'Lest perhaps you should say, We have found wisdom; God not man, has cast him away'. It is not clear whether the wisdom is that of Job or his friends, nor whether the second half of the verse is part of their supposed utterance.

² According to the Hebrew text, 'I cannot give flattering titles to men', a phrase which is repeated in the next verse, where the Latin has 'I do not know how long I shall last'.

³ The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning, 'God warns us once and a second time (or, warns us in one of two ways) without our perceiving it'.

⁴ The word used in the Hebrew text may also be rendered, 'a messenger's'.

⁵ It is not certain here whether it is the angel that speaks, or God himself. In the Hebrew text, the first half of verse 25 reads 'Tender let his flesh be as the flesh of a child'.

⁶ *vv.* 27-33. Eliu does not, like the three friends, suspect Job of some special fault which has called down God's punishment upon him. He explains human suffering as sent by God not for vengeance but for correction. Only, since we are all sinners, we have to confess that our suffering; was (incidentally) deserved.

2 **34** And Eliu spoke on: A word for the
 3 wise; listen, you that are the
 4 world's sages; for food, the discerning
 5 palate, for wisdom, the discerning ear.
 6 Award we must give, this way or that; of
 7 two ways we must choose the better. Here
 8 is Job telling us that he is innocent, that
 9 God denies him his rights, judges him
 10 falsely, and plies him with punishment un-
 11 deserved. Are there many such, many that
 12 thirst so greedily for the opportunity to
 13 cavil? What is this but to take part with
 14 wrong-doers, range himself among the im-
 15 pious, when he complains that there is no
 16 pleasing God, however ready a man is to
 17 do his will?

18 Listen to me, then, discerning hearts!
 19 From God, the Almighty, far removed is
 20 all wickedness, is every thought of wrong;
 21 he treats men only as they deserve, giving
 22 due reward to each. What, should Al-
 23 mighty God pervert justice by condemn-
 24 ing the innocent? Is the care of the wide
 25 earth entrusted to some other; is not the
 26 maker of the world himself the world's
 27 judge? He has but to turn his thought
 28 towards men, reclaiming the spirit he once
 29 breathed into them, and all life would fail
 30 everywhere; mankind would return to its
 31 dust.

32 Is Job wise? Then let him listen to these
 33 words of mine, heed well my warning. Can
 34 there be healing,¹ where there is no love of
 35 right? Wouldst thou find fault with him
 36 whose justice runs so deep? He it is that
 37 says Traitor to a crowned king, and finds
 38 princes themselves guilty of rebellion. No-
 39 thing cares he for royal dignity, nor takes
 40 the oppressor's part against the friendless;
 41 are not all alike his creatures? Suddenly
 42 death falls; there is a stir among the people
 43 at midnight, and they pass by to see the
 44 tyrant carried out, and yet no hand laid on
 45 him!² Still God's eye watches over men,
 46 whatever they do, wherever they take their
 47 path; darkness is none, though it were the

shadow of death itself, that can hide the
 wrong-doer; not at a time of his own
 choosing man meets God in judgement.
 A whole world of men he will destroy, and
 put others in their place; weary of their ill
 deeds, he bids darkness fall, and there is
 an end of them. In some place where
 many triumph at the sight, he beats down
 the rebels³ that hitherto of set purpose
 defied him, recked nothing of his com-
 mandments, till at last the despairing cry
 of poor folk unbefriended reached his ears.
 So long as he grants prosperity, redress
 there is none; it is when he frowns upon
 man or nation that no eye can meet him.
 Yet for a people's sins, he will appoint a
 false-hearted king to rule them.

Such is the testimony I give to God;
 now let us hear thine; shew me my error,
 and if thou canst prove that I have spoken
 amiss, I will speak no more. Perhaps thou
 thinkest it part of the punishment God
 asks of thee, hearing what it pains thee to
 hear? But it was thou, not I, wert the first
 to speak. If thou hast better advice to
 offer, say on.⁴

O for wise tongues to speak, for dis-
 cerning ears to listen to me! This Job has
 spoken as fools do; no word of his that
 echoes true doctrine! Father,⁵ let Job be
 tried still, tried to the uttermost; have no
 patience with a man so perverse, that sets
 a crown on his sins by blasphemy! For a
 while, let us see all ease denied him; and
 let him cite God to judgement if he will!

2 **35** And Eliu spoke on: What sub-
 3 stance is there in this contention
 4 of thine, when thou claimest to have right
 5 on thy side against God? He cares nothing
 6 (so runs thy complaint) for man's good
 7 deeds; they are of no advantage to him,
 8 that he should care for sin of mine!⁶ Here
 9 is my answer, to thee, Job, and to thy
 10 friends alike. Look heavenward, mark how
 11 the skies tower above thee, and read thy

¹ Rather, according to the Hebrew text, 'governance'; Eliu's argument seems to be that right itself can have no other source than him who is the world's supreme Ruler.

² Literally, 'In a moment they shall die, and at midnight the people shall be stirred up, and they shall carry away the violent man without a hand'.

³ Literally, 'He smites them as if they were wicked in the dwelling-place of those who see'; it is probable that the text here is corrupt.

⁴ *tu.* 31-33. It is not easy to be certain what is the sense of the Latin version here. The Hebrew text differs from it considerably; but the interpretations given of this are so forced and so various as to make it doubtful whether the true reading has been preserved.

⁵ 'Father'; the Hebrew word so rendered in the Latin can also be interpreted, 'I would that...'

⁶ Literally, 'For thou hast said, Thou (God) takest no pleasure in the right, or what advantage will it be to thee if I sin?'—it seems necessary to suppose that there is an ellipsis in the thought of the sentence here. The sense of the Hebrew text is doubtful.

6 lesson there. Multiply thy wrong-doing as
 7 thou wilt, no sin of thine can harm or touch
 8 him; be honest as the day, no gift thou
 9 makest him, he is none the richer for thy
 10 pains. Only to thy fellow man thy malice
 11 does a hurt; only Adam's children profit
 12 by thy uprightness.

13 . . . Cries and groans there are in plenty
 14 when oppression abounds, when tyranny
 15 holds unchecked sway;¹ Where is God?
 16 men ask; yet never did they seek to find
 17 him when he brought triumph in the hour
 18 of distress, the God who teaches them such
 19 lessons as he never gave to beast or bird.
 20 Only then, only when the wicked lord it
 21 over them, men cry out, but their cry goes
 22 unheard; should God concern himself
 23 with these random complaints, he, the
 24 Almighty, examine their pleadings one by
 25 one? Nay, when he seems to take no heed,
 26 submit thyself to his judgement and await
 27 his hour; thy present sufferings do not be-
 28 token his anger, he is not taking vengeance
 29 to the full.

30 See, then, how all Job's utterance misses
 31 the mark; glib words with no tincture of
 32 knowledge!

33 **36** And still Eliu would have his say:
 34 Bear with me a little while I de-
 35 clare my thought to thee; I have more to
 36 say yet on God's behalf. From a deep
 37 source I will draw my reasons, proving
 38 him, my Maker, to be just; here is no de-
 39 lusive eloquence, the full truth shall be
 40 made known to thee. He, the all-powerful,
 41 does not grudge men power; it is only to
 42 the wicked he denies his aid; the friendless
 43 shall have redress. Never from the just is
 44 his favour withdrawn; a royal throne is
 45 theirs for ever, so high he exalts them. If
 46 he should leave them in chains, caught in
 47 the toils of sore need, it is but to apprise
 48 them of their own ill deeds, their own
 49 tyrannous deeds; he will speak home to
 50 them for their correction, warn them to
 51 turn back from their guilty ways. Hear
 52 they and heed, they shall live long in ease
 53 and renown; if hear they will not, it is the
 54 sword's point for them, to their last gasp

fools still. It is the cunning, the false-
 55 hearted, that are God's sworn enemies;
 56 from them no cry comes when the chains
 57 close about them; the storm sweeps them
 58 away, forgotten in death as the temple
 59 minions are forgotten;² it is the friendless
 60 he rescues in their need, speaks home to
 61 them through the afflictions they endure.
 62 From the pit's mouth, where the ground
 63 seems lost under thy feet, he will bring thee
 64 out into full freedom; thou shalt take thy
 65 ease at a table loaded with dainties.

66 Is sentence passed on thee such as
 67 rebels undergo? Thou shalt have justice
 68 yet, and a true award. Never let the
 69 thought that God is angry lure thee into
 70 tyranny and corruption; lay aside thy
 71 greatness, forbear to oppress, away with
 72 the body-guard which attends thee; put
 73 an end to the dark time when nations must
 74 march under their orders. Do not yield to
 75 the rebellious mood thou hast cherished
 76 since affliction came upon thee.³

77 God, that is so great and powerful,
 78 man's sovereign teacher, how should any-
 79 one fathom his designs, or charge him with
 80 injustice? Bethink thee, how high beyond
 81 thy thought are those creatures of his which
 82 men praise; how mortals see, but see, like
 83 mortals, from afar. Truly there is no mea-
 84 suring God's greatness, no reckoning his
 85 length of days. He hoards up the rain-
 86 drops, or showers them down in full flood
 87 from the cloud-fountains that curtain us
 88 overhead. With those clouds, when it is his
 89 pleasure, he spreads his pavilion, flashes
 90 his lightning on high, brings darkness on
 91 the depths of the sea. Has he not a whole
 92 world to rule, a whole race of mortals to
 93 supply with food? Now he hides the light
 94 away with the shadow of his hand, now
 95 he bids it shine out again, as if to shew a
 96 friend at his side that he is the owner of
 97 it, that he can reach its high fastness when
 98 he will.

99 **37** What wonder if my heart trembles
 100 and fails me at the thought?
 101 Listen to the bruit of it, the voice that
 102 speaks amid such terrors, the dread accents

¹ At verse 9, there is such a sudden break in the argument of the chapter that it is difficult to believe the text has come down to us without omission. In the following verse, "brought triumph in the hour of darkness" is literally "gave songs in the night".

² It is doubtful whether the second half of this verse has been correctly transmitted to us. If it has, the enemies of God are perhaps compared to the temple-prostitutes of heathen worship as persons unlikely to beget any posterity. ³ *cf.* 16-21. Throughout this passage, both the Hebrew text and the Latin version are hopelessly obscure.

3 of that utterance! Under what part of
 heaven, into what corner of earth does he
 4 not look, do not his lightnings flash? Then
 what a crash resounds, the magnificent
 peal of his thunder; a voice heard, and
 5 none can tell whence it comes! God's
 voice in the thunder, a marvel worthy of
 him, whose deeds are so great and so un-
 searchable.

6 He it is that bids the snows fall over
 earth, and winter shower, and his fierce
 7 storms of rain. No hand of man but is shut
 up close now under his seal, that owns him
 8 Master-workman of all; cowers the beast
 9 in its lair, or lurks in its cave; from his
 treasure-house in the north, tempest comes
 10 and cold. At God's breath the frost binds
 fast, till he bids the waters flow again in
 plenty. And now the crops must have rain;
 11 far and wide the clouds scatter their rays
 12 of hope;¹ this way and that they turn at the
 guidance of his will, to do their appointed
 13 task on earth, among distant tribes, or here
 in his own land, let his mercy bid them
 appear where it may.

14 Matter enough, Job, for thy heeding!
 Halt where thou standest, and consider the
 15 marvellous acts of God. Canst thou tell us
 when it was God bade the rain bring hope
 16 to us from those clouds of his, tell us the
 course of their journeyings? Is thy know-
 17 ledge so perfect? See if thy garments do
 not cling warm about thee when the south
 18 wind cheers the earth! And was it with
 help of thine God fashioned the heavens,
 19 firm as cast bronze? Tell us, what words
 we shall use to him, we, shut up in our
 20 darkness? What messenger shall deliver
 my complaint to him, a human messenger
 that will bring on himself only ruin?

21 Light fails men's eyes; all of a sudden,
 the air is thick with clouds; then a breath
 22 of passing wind has driven them away! As
 well search for the treasures of the north,
 as for the majestic praise which is God's
 23 due; find speech worthy of it we cannot,
 so great he is in strength, so prudent in
 counsel, so faithful in right dealing, past
 24 all that tongue can tell. Well may men fear
 him; none that think themselves wise but
 will tremble to meet his look.

38 Then, from the midst of a whirl-
 wind, the Lord gave Job his answer: Here is one that must ever be
 2 clouding the truth of things with words ill
 considered! Strip, then, and enter the
 3 lists; it is my turn to ask questions now,
 thine to answer them. From what vantage-
 4 point wast thou watching, when I laid the
 foundations of the earth? Tell me, whence
 comes this sure knowledge of thine? Tell
 5 me, since thou art so wise, was it thou or
 I designed earth's plan, measuring it out
 with the line? How came its base to stand
 6 so firm; who laid its corner-stone? To me,
 7 that day, all the morning stars sang to-
 gether, all the powers of heaven uttered
 8 their joyful praise. Was it thou or I shut in
 the sea behind bars? No sooner had it
 9 broken forth from the womb than I dressed
 it in swaddling-clothes of dark mist, set it
 10 within bounds of my own choosing, made
 fast with bolt and bar; Thus far thou shalt
 11 come, said I, and no further; here let thy
 swelling waves spend their force.

Dost thou, a mortal, take command of
 12 the day's breaking, and shew the dawn its
 appointed post, twitching away earth's
 13 coverlet, scaring away the ill-doers? The
 14 dawn, that stamps its image on the clay of
 earth; stands there, flung over it like a gar-
 15 ment,² taking away from the ill-doers the
 darkness that is their light, so that all their
 16 power goes for nothing. Didst thou ever
 make thy way into the sea's depths, walk
 at thy ease through its hidden caverns?
 17 When did the gates of death open to thee,
 and give thee sight of its gloomy threshold?
 18 Nay, hast thou viewed the whole surface
 of earth itself? Tell me, if such knowledge
 19 is thine, all its secrets; where the light
 dwells, where darkness finds its home;
 20 hast thou followed either of these to the
 end of its journey, tracked it to its lair?
 21 Didst thou foresee the time of thy own
 birth, couldst thou foretell the years of life
 that lay before thee?

Hast thou found thy way in to see the
 22 chambers where snow and hail lie stored,
 my armoury against the times of stress,
 23 when there are wars to be fought, battles
 to be won? Tell me by what means the 24

¹ According to the Hebrew text, this verse should begin, 'He loads the clouds with moisture'. 'Their rays of hope'; literally, 'their brightness', which is usually interpreted of the lightning, but the allusion seems out of place here, and also in verse 15 below. Throughout this passage, verses 3-12, the Hebrew text is difficult of interpretation. ² The grammar of the Hebrew text is obscure; it runs, literally, 'It turns about as clay (of?) the signet-ring; they stand like a garment'.

light is scattered over earth, the heat dif-
 25 fused; tell me what power carved out a
 26 channel for the tempestuous rain, a vent
 for the echoing thunderstorm, that they
 should fall on some lonely desert where
 27 foot of man never trod, water those track-
 less wastes, and make the green grass
 28 spring? What sire gendered the rain, or
 the drops of dew; what mother's womb
 29 bore the ice, the frost that comes from
 heaven to make water hard as stone, im-
 prison the depths beneath its surface?

31 Is it at thy command the glittering
 bright Pleiads cluster so close, and Orion's
 32 circlet spreads so wide? Dost thou tell the
 day star when to shine out, the evening
 star when to rise over the sons of earth?¹
 33 Is it thine to understand the motions of the
 heavens, and rule earth by their influence?
 34 Can thy voice reach the clouds, and bid
 35 their showers fall on thee; canst thou send
 out lightnings that will do thy errand, and
 36 come back to await thy pleasure? What
 power gives either man's heart its pre-
 science, or the cock its sure instinct,²
 37 knows all the motions of heaven, and lulls
 38 the music of the spheres?³ When was it
 that earth's dust was piled, and the solid
 ground was built up?

39 Is it thou or I that finds the lioness her
 prey, to satisfy those hungry whelps of
 40 hers, where they lie in rocky caves, their
 41 lurking-places? Which of us feeds the
 ravens? Is it not to God their nestlings cry
 so shrilly, homeless for want of food?

39 Not thine to know when the wild
 goats give birth on their high
 crags, to watch the hinds in their throes;
 2 count the months while they carry their
 young, and know the time of their delivery.
 3 Without thy aid they travail; born of those
 4 pangs, the calves are soon weaned, and
 make for the pastures, go out to return no
 5 more. Who gives the wild ass untram-
 melled liberty to roam the wilderness, and
 7 make the salt plains his dwelling-place; to
 spurn the din of cities, no driver crying
 8 after him, and look about him at the slopes

where he feeds, all that green world his
 5 pasturage? Canst thou tame the wild ox⁴
 to thy service, feed him at thy stall, bind
 10 him to the plough with thongs and lead
 him out to break clods in the valley?
 Wouldst thou trust that great strength of
 11 his to do thy work for thee, bring in thy
 12 harvest and fill thy threshing-floor?

Here is the ostrich, of one feather with
 13 heron and hawk, yet she will leave her eggs
 14 on the bare earth; and canst thou give
 warmth to the dust to hatch them?⁵ Heed-
 15 less, though foot of man should trample or
 wild beast devour them, she steels herself
 16 to pity as if the brood was none of hers;
 throws away all her hopes in causeless
 alarm. God's will it was to deny her sense;
 17 wisdom she might have none, though she
 were swift, at need, to hoist her wings
 aloft, mocking the pains of horse and
 rider.

Ay, and what of the horse? Is it of thy
 18 gift his great strength comes, was it thou
 didst caparison with him terrors?⁶ Thou
 20 wilt not scare him away like a locust;
 fiercely he breathes, deeply he paws the
 21 ground, bravely he prances, as he goes out
 to meet the shock of battle. Fear cannot
 22 daunt him, nor the sword drive him back;
 clang quiver, let shield and spear dazzle as
 23 they may, he swallows up the intervening
 distance, all heat and rage. Little reck he
 of the trumpet's blast; echoes exultantly
 24 the bugle's note, while he scents from afar
 the combat, hears the shouting of captains,
 and the din of armies.

Is it of thy devising the hawk grows full-
 25 fledged, in time to spread her wings for the
 southward journey? Is it at thy bidding
 27 the eagle soars, to make her eyrie in the
 heights, cave and crag and inaccessible rock
 28 her familiar home, whence her far-seeing
 eyes look round, searching for prey?
 Blood-thirsty her brood, and where the
 29 carcass waits, waits she.

All this the Lord said to Job, and added
 30 besides, What is this? One that would
 31 match himself with God, so easily put
 down! Nay, God thou didst challenge.

¹ The constellations mentioned cannot be identified with certainty.

² The two words represented here by 'heart' and 'the cock' are variously interpreted by Hebrew scholars.

³ In the Hebrew text, 'Who is wise enough to count the stars, or can lay down the water-skins (or perhaps, the lutes) of heaven?'

⁴ Literally, in the Latin version, 'rhinoceros' here, and elsewhere 'unicorn'. The word occurs frequently in Scripture, but the exact meaning of it remains in dispute.

⁵ *ez.* 13, 14. The Latin here does not tally with the Hebrew text, the sense of which is by no means certain.

⁶ Literally, 'clothe his neck with neighings (or perhaps, with thunders)'.

33 God thou must refute. And thus Job made
 34 the Lord answer: So vain a pleader, I have
 no suit to make; finger on lip I will listen.
 35 Once and again I have spoken the word I
 would fain unsay; more I dare not.¹

40 And once more, from the midst of
 a whirlwind, the Lord gave Job his
 2 answer: Strip, then, and enter the lists; it
 is my turn to ask questions, thine to impart
 3 knowledge. My awards thou wouldst fain
 reverse; wouldst prove me unjust, to prove
 4 thyself innocent; why then, let us see thee
 shew strength like the strength of God, let
 us hear thee thunder as God thunders.
 5 Come, deck thyself with glory, up with
 thee to the heights; shew all thy splendours,
 robe thyself in dazzling array!
 6 Scatter the proud in that indignation of
 thine, with thy frown abase the tyrant;
 7 here is an oppressor for thee to thwart;
 here is one that defies thee, crush him!
 8 Bury them in the dust, one and all, hide
 9 them from sight, deep in the abyss; then
 I will acknowledge thee for one whose own
 strength can bring him victory.

10 Here is Behemoth,² my creature as thou
 art, fed on the same grass the oxen eat; yet
 what strength in his loins, what lustiness
 12 in the navel of his belly! Stiff as cedar-
 wood his tail, close-knit the sinews of his
 13 groin, bones like pipes of bronze, gristle
 14 like plates of steel! None of God's works
 can vie with him, the maker of such a beast
 15 has his sword ready for use; ¹ whole moun-
 tain-sides, the playground of his fellow
 16 beasts, he will lay under tribute,³ as he lies
 there under the close covert of the marsh-
 17 reeds, thick boughs for his shadow, among
 18 the willows by the stream. The flooded
 river he drinks unconcerned; Jordan itself
 19 would have no terrors for that gaping
 mouth. Like a lure it would charm his eye,

though it should pierce his nostrils with
 sharp stakes.⁵

Or Leviathan, wilt thou find a hook that
 will draw him to land, a line that will hold
 his tongue fast? Canst thou ring him, or
 pierce his jaw with a clasp? Will he importune
 thee with entreaties, or cajole thee
 with blandishments, till thou makest a
 covenant that binds him to be thy servant
 for ever? Wilt thou make a plaything of
 him, as if he were a tame bird, chain him
 up to make sport for thy maid-servants?
 Is he to be divided up among fellow fisher-
 25 men, sold piece-meal to the merchants? Is
 that skin a spoil for the net, that head for
 the fishermen's cabins? Do but try con-
 27 clusions with him, and see if the memory
 of the combat does not keep thee dumb!
 Fond hope, that must be dashed to the
 28 ground for all to see it!

41 It is in mercy that I forbear to
 make him a plague for mankind.
 But indeed, there is no resisting me, nor
 can any deserve my thanks by lending me
 the aid I lacked; nothing on earth but is at
 my disposal. I give him no quarter, for all
 his boastful, all his flattering words.⁶

Who can strip the skin of him, who can
 4 penetrate into the cavern of his mouth,
 forcing the gates that guard it, the terrors
 5 of his teeth? The body of him is like
 6 shields of cast metal, scale pressing on
 scale, so close to one another as to leave no
 7 vent between; so well joined that nothing
 8 will part them. Let him but sneeze, the
 9 fire flashes out; let him open his eyes, it is
 like the glimmer of dawn; flames come
 10 from his jaws, bright as a burning torch,
 smoke from his nostrils, thick as the fumes
 11 of a seething pot; his very breath will set
 12 coals aflame, such fire issues from that
 mouth. What strength dwells in that neck 13

¹ *vs.* 31-35. In the Hebrew text, these are marked as the first five verses of chapter 40.

² Behemoth is usually identified with the hippopotamus, sometimes with the elephant; Leviathan with the crocodile, sometimes with the whale. But both may be allegorical representations of the hostile powers overcome by the Creator.

³ Literally, 'He is the beginning of the works of God; he who made him will bring near his sword', a phrase variously interpreted by commentators.

⁴ The Latin version represents the mountains as giving Behemoth grass, but the word used in the Hebrew text means produce of any kind, and it seems possible, in view of what follows, that mountain streams are referred to.

⁵ This seems to be the best way of taking the Latin; exactly the same expression is used in Judith 10. 17, and the river forms the natural subject of the sentence. The Hebrew text runs: 'By his eyes he captures him, by snares he pierces his nostrils'; and the words are commonly taken, not without hesitation, as alluding to the difficulty, or perhaps the ease, with which the animal is caught.

⁶ *vs.* 1-3. The Latin version here differs widely from the Hebrew text, which itself gives a questionable sense. If we follow the Latin it seems impossible to suppose that any creature in the natural order, such as the crocodile, is envisaged. But indeed there are many allusions in this chapter which cannot, without considerable ingenuity, be referred to the crocodile.

- 14 of his, what terrors play about him! Firm-
set are the folds of his flesh, unyielding
though a thunder-bolt should strike them;¹
15 firm-set, too, is the heart of him, firm as
16 ever stone was, or smith's anvil. Rises he
17 up, angels themselves are afraid, and take
sanctuary in their dread.² Sword-thrust,
nor spear, nor breast-plate can hold their
18 own against him; to him, steel is but chaff,
19 bronze but touch-wood, nor fears he the
20 archer; sling-stones he counts as straw, as
straw the hammer-blow, laughs at the
21 brandished spear. Sunlight flashes be-
neath him as he goes, a path of gold through
22 the slime;³ he makes the deep sea boil like
23 a pot where ointment simmers; how it
shines in his wake, as though ocean itself
had grown hoary with age!
24 He has not his like among the strong
25 things of earth, that fearless nature, that
heaven-confronting eye. Over all the pride
of earth he reigns supreme.

- 2 **42** And thus Job answered the Lord:
I acknowledge it, thou canst do all
thou wilt, and no thought is too difficult
3 for thee. Here indeed is one that clouds
over the truth with his ignorance! I have
spoken as fools speak, of things far beyond
4 my ken. Henceforth it is my turn to speak,
thine to listen; my turn to ask questions,
5 thine to impart knowledge! I have heard
thy voice now; nay, more, I have had sight
6 of thee; now I am all remorse, I do penance
in dust and ashes.⁴
7 And now, his converse with Job finished,
the Lord said to Eliphaz the Themanite,
You have earned my displeasure, thou and

these two friends of thine, by speaking
amiss of me as my servant Job never did.
To Job you must go for your ransoming,
with seven bulls and seven rams to offer in
burnt-sacrifice; he, my servant, shall inter-
cede for you, and for his sake your folly
shall be pardoned, that spoke amiss of me
when he spoke the truth.

So away they went, Eliphaz the The-
manite, Baldad the Suhite, and Sophar the
Naamathite, and did the Lord's bidding.
For Job's sake the Lord pardoned them;
and, as he prayed for these friends of his,
the Lord relented at the sight of his peni-
tence. So he gave back to Job twice over
all that he had lost. Clansmen and clans-
women and all his old acquaintances ga-
thered about him now, and sat down as
guests in his house, and made great ado
bemoaning all the afflictions the Lord had
sent him; not one of them but gave him
presents, a sheep and a gold ear-ring
apiece. A richer man the Lord made Job
now than ever he had been in old days;
fourteen thousand sheep he had, and six
thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of
oxen, and a thousand she-asses. Seven
sons he had, and three daughters, the first
he called Fair as the Day, and the second
Sweet as Cassia, and the third Dark Eye-
lids.⁵ Nowhere might women be found
fair as Job's daughters, and each had the
same patrimony as her brothers.

Job himself lived on for a hundred and
forty years, to see sons and grandsons and
a new generation yet of his descendants;
so he died at last as old men die, that have
taken their full toll of the years.

¹ There is no reference to a thunder-bolt in the Hebrew text. In the following verse, it has 'nether mill-stone' instead of 'smith's anvil'. ² 'Take sanctuary'; literally, in the Latin version, 'purity themselves'. The Hebrew word used is commonly interpreted as meaning 'are bewildered' in this context; and the Hebrew word rendered 'angels' perhaps only means 'strong men'. ³ The Hebrew text is different here, and apparently compares the scales of Leviathan to potsherds. ⁴ The text of this passage is not above suspicion. Neither the beginning of verse 3 nor the end of verse 4 can be said to suit Job's own position; even if we regard them as quotations (the one from 38. 2 and the other from 40. 2) they have no obvious relation to the context. Nor is the sense of the contrast in verse 5 by any means clear. ⁵ 'Cassia'; an aromatic bark, perhaps cinnamon. 'Dark Eye-lids'; literally 'Pot of Antimony', which was used as a cosmetic.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

1

BLESSED is the man who does not guide his steps by ill counsel, or turn aside where sinners walk, or, where scornful souls gather, sit down to rest; the man whose heart is set on the law of the Lord, on that law, day and night, his thoughts still dwell. He stands firm as a tree planted by running water, ready to yield its fruit when the season comes, not a leaf faded; all that he does will prosper. Not such, not such the wicked; the wicked are like chaff the wind sweeps away. Not for the wicked, when judgement comes, to rise up and plead their cause; sinners will have no part in the reunion of the just. They walk, the just, under the Lord's protection; the path of the wicked, how soon is it lost to sight!

2

WHAT means this turmoil among the nations? Why do the peoples cherish vain dreams? See how the kings of the earth stand in array, how its rulers make common cause, against the Lord, and against the King he has anointed, crying, Let us break away from their bondage, rid ourselves of the toils! He who dwells in heaven is laughing at their threats, the Lord makes light of them; and at last, in his displeasure, he will speak out, his anger quelling them: Here, on mount Sion, my sanctuary, I enthrone a king of my own choice.

Mine to proclaim the Lord's edict; how he told me, Thou art my son; I have begotten thee this day. Ask thy will of me, and thou shalt have the nations for thy patrimony; the very ends of the world for thy domain. Thou shalt herd them like sheep¹ with a crook of iron, break them in

¹ 'Herd them like sheep'; or, according to another reading, 'shatter them'.

² The word given in the Hebrew text should mean either 'purity', or 'the Son'.
³ All these titles prefixed to various psalms are very obscure, and there is little agreement about their meaning except that they refer to the musical and liturgical setting.

pieces like earthenware. Princes, take warning; learn your lesson, you that rule the world. Tremble, and serve the Lord, rejoicing in his presence, but with awe in your hearts. Kiss the rod,² do not brave his anger, and go astray from the sure path. When the fire of his vengeance blazes out suddenly, happy are they who find their refuge in him.

3

(A psalm David wrote, when he fled before his son Absalom.)

SEE how they surround me, Lord, my adversaries, how many rise up in arms against me; everywhere voices taunting me, His God cannot save him now. Yet, Lord, thou art my champion, thou art the pride that keeps my head erect. I have but to cry out to the Lord, and my voice reaches his mountain sanctuary, and there finds hearing. Safe in God's hand I lay down, and slept, and have awoken; and now, though thousands of the people set upon me from every side, I will not be afraid of them. Bestir thyself, Lord; my God, save me; thine to smite my enemies on the cheek, thine to break the fangs of malice. From the Lord all deliverance comes; let thy blessing, Lord, rest upon thy people.

4

(To the choir-master. On stringed instruments. A psalm. Of David.)

WHEN I call on thy name, listen to me, O God, and grant redress; still, in time of trouble, thou hast brought me relief; have pity on me now, and hear my prayer. Great ones of the world, will your hearts always

be hardened,¹ will you never cease setting
 4 your heart on shadows, following a lie? To
 the souls he loves, be sure the Lord shews
 wondrous favour; whenever I call on his
 5 name, the Lord will hear me. Tremble,
 and sin no more; take thought, as you lie
 6 awake, in the silence of your hearts. Offer
 sacrifices with due observance, and put
 7 your trust in the Lord. There are many
 that cry out for a sight of better times; do
 thou, then, Lord, shew us the sunshine of
 8 thy favour. Never did rich harvests of
 corn and wine bring gladness like the glad-
 9 ness thou puttest into my heart. Even as
 I lie down, sleep comes, and with sleep
 tranquillity; what need, Lord, of aught
 but thyself to bring me confidence?

5

(To the choir-master. On the flute.
 A psalm. Of David.)

2 LORD, listen to my plea, let me not sigh
 in vain; pay heed to my cry of petition,
 my King, my God. To thee, Lord, my
 prayer goes up, early to win thy audience;
 4 early in the morning I lay my petition
 5 before thee and await thy pleasure. No
 evil thing claims thy divine assent; with
 6 thee baseness cannot dwell; nor rebellion
 hold its ground at thy coming. Thou hatest
 7 the wrongdoer, and wilt bring the liar to
 destruction; blood-thirsty and treacherous
 8 men the Lord holds in abhorrence. I, then,
 encompassed by thy mercy, will betake
 myself to thy house, and in reverence of
 thee bow down before thy sanctuary.
 9 Lord, do thou lead me with faithful
 care; clear show the path, while I walk
 10 beset by enemies. In their speech no truth
 can be found; their hearts are all treachery,
 their mouths gaping tombs; flattering is
 11 ever on their lips. Thy scourge, O God!
 Cheat them of their hopes, cast them out
 in all their wickedness; have they not
 12 defied thee? But for all those who trust in
 thee there is joy and everlasting triumph;
 welcome protection they have from thee,
 13 true lovers of thy name. Lord, thou givest
 thy benediction to the just; thou dost
 throw thy loving-kindness about us like a
 shield.

¹ Our Hebrew text has, 'Will my honour always
 be turned into reproach?'

6

(To the choir-master. On stringed instruments.
 Over the octave. A psalm. Of David.)

LORD, when thou dost reprove me, let it
 not be in anger; when thou dost chastise
 me, let it not be in displeasure. Lord, pity
 me; I have no strength left; Lord, heal
 me; my limbs tremble; my spirits are alto-
 gether broken; Lord, wilt thou never be
 content? Lord, turn back, and grant a
 wretched soul relief; as thou art ever mer-
 ciful, save me. When death comes, there
 is no more remembering thee; none can
 praise thee in the tomb. I am spent with
 sighing; every night I lie weeping on my
 bed, till the tears drench my pillow. Grief
 has dimmed my eyes, faded their lustre
 now, so many are the adversaries that sur-
 round me. Depart from me, all you that
 traffic in iniquity; the Lord has heard my
 cry of distress. Here was a prayer divinely
 heard, a boon divinely granted. All my
 enemies will be abashed and terrified;
 taken aback, all in a moment, and put to
 shame.

7

(A lament of David's, which he sang to the Lord
 because of Chus, the Benjamite.)

O LORD my God, my confidence is in thee;
 save me from all my pursuers, and grant
 me deliverance: else must I fall a helpless
 prey to the lion, be torn in pieces, with
 none to bring me aid. O Lord my God, if
 I too have been at fault, if these hands are
 stained with guilt; if I have been a false
 friend, and not rather spared even those
 that wronged me, then indeed let some
 enemy overtake me with his relentless pur-
 suit, trample me to earth, and level my
 pride with the dust! Lord, rise up in thy
 anger, countervail the malice of my ene-
 mies; bestir thyself, O Lord my God, in
 defence of the laws thou thyself hast given
 us. All the nations will gather about thee,
 if thou wilt come back to thy throne and
 rule them, the Lord judging the nations!
 Give me redress, Lord, in my uprightness,
 in all the innocence of my heart. Surely
 thou wilt put an end to the wrong-doing of
 the wicked, and prosper the innocent; no
 thought or desire of ours can escape the
 scrutiny of thy divine justice. From the

Lord, refuge of true hearts, my protection
 12 comes. God judges ever true; day by day
 13 his indignation mounts up; if they do not
 14 repent, his sword will flash bright; he has
 15 bent and aimed his bow; deadly are the
 16 weapons he is preparing for them; he has
 17 barbed his arrows with fire. Here was a
 18 heart pregnant with malice, that conceived
 only spite, and gave birth only to empty
 promise! Here was one who dug a pit and
 sunk it deep, and fell into a snare of his own
 setting! All his spite will recoil on himself,
 all his violence will fall on his own head.
 I will ever thank the Lord for his just
 retribution, singing praises to the name of
 the Lord, the most High.

8

(To the choir-master. To the mood of the song,
 The Wine-presses. A psalm. Of David.)

2 O LORD, our Master, how the majesty of
 thy name fills all the earth! Thy greatness
 3 is high above heaven itself. Thou hast
 made the lips of children, of infants at the
 breast,¹ vocal with praise, to confound thy
 enemies; to silence malicious and revenge-
 4 ful tongues. I look up at those heavens of
 thine, the work of thy hands, at the moon
 and the stars, which thou hast set in their
 5 places; what is man that thou shouldst re-
 member him? What is Adam's breed, that
 6 it should claim thy care? Thou hast placed
 him only a little below the angels,² crown-
 7 ing him with glory and honour, and bid-
 ding him rule over the works of thy hands.
 Thou hast put them all under his do-
 8 minion, the sheep and the cattle, and the
 9 wild beasts besides; the birds in the sky,
 and the fish in the sea, that travel by the
 10 sea's paths. O Lord, our Master, how the
 majesty of thy name fills all the earth!

9

(To the choir-master. To the mood of the song,
 Mur Labben. A psalm. Of David.)

2 LORD, I give thee all the thanks of my
 heart, recounting thy wonderful doings;

glad and triumphant in thee, I will sing
 3 psalms to thy name, O God most high. See
 4 how my enemies turn back, how they faint
 and melt away at the sight of thee! Thou
 5 hast given me redress and maintained my
 cause; thou art there on thy throne, seeing
 justice done. Thou hast checked the
 6 heathen in their course; thou hast brought
 the wicked to nothing, blotting out their
 name for all time. Spent is the enemy's
 7 power, doomed to everlasting ruin; the
 memory of them has died with the fall of
 their cities. But the Lord abides for ever
 8 on the throne of judgement he has pre-
 pared, still judging the world rightly, still
 awarding each people its due; the Lord is
 9 a stronghold to the oppressed, a stronghold
 in time of peril. Those who acknowledge
 10 thy name, Lord, can trust thee; never was
 man forsaken that had recourse to thee.

Sing, then, to the Lord, who dwells in
 12 Sion, tell the Gentiles his great deeds;
 how he, the avenger of blood, cares for the
 13 afflicted, does not forget them when they
 cry to him. Have pity on me, Lord, look
 14 upon all that I suffer at my enemies' hands;
 thou who didst ever rescue me from the gate
 15 of death, to proclaim thy praises at the gate
 of thy loved Sion, to exult in thy saving
 power. The heathen have been caught in
 16 their own deadly devices; their feet have
 been trapped in the very toils they had
 17 laid; now it will be seen how the Lord
 defends the right, how the wicked contrive
 their own undoing. To the place of death
 18 the wicked must return, heathens that have
 no thought of God. He does not forget the
 19 helpless; their time will come; the patience
 of the afflicted will not go for nothing.
 Bestir thyself, Lord, let not human
 20 strength prevail; let the heathen stand
 upon their trial before thee; let the hea-
 21 then, too, feel thy terrors, and learn they
 are but men.

(Here, in the Hebrew text,
 Psalm 10 begins.)

Lord,³ why dost thou stand far off? In
 22 days of affliction, why dost thou make no
 sign? The hearts of the oppressed burn
 23

¹ Some would interpret the Hebrew here, 'thou hast founded strength through the lips of children and infants at the breast'. ² The Hebrew can also be translated 'below God'. ³ The numbering of the Psalms here corresponds with that of the Vulgate. In the Hebrew text, which is followed by some modern versions, verses 22-39 of this Psalm are treated as a separate psalm and numbered 10; while Psalms 146 and 147 are given as one psalm. Thus the Vulgate numbers 10 to 147 correspond to 11-147 of the alternative reckoning.

within them, so triumphant is the schemer
 24 that has entrapped them; so proud of his
 25 wicked end achieved, still robbing men,
 26 blaspheming and despising the Lord. God
 there is none to punish me, the sinner
 27 thinks in his pride, and makes that thought
 his rule; still, as he goes on prospering, he
 28 banishes thy laws from his mind, and
 makes light of his enemies. Endless time,
 he thinks, cannot shake his untroubled
 29 existence. His mouth overflows with
 curses, and calumny, and deceit; his
 tongue is a storehouse of dissension and
 mischief. Ambushed he lies at the village
 gate, to kill unawares the man who never
 30 wronged him; his eyes are continually on
 his prey; like a lion in its lair, he watches
 from his hiding-place, to surprise his de-
 31 fenceless foe, safe in the net. So he catches
 him in the toils; stands there bowing and
 scraping,¹ till the prey falls by his onset.
 32 Why not? he thinks to himself, God has
 forgotten about it; God still turns his face
 away, and sees nothing.
 33 O Lord God, bestir thyself, lift up thy
 34 hand; do not forget the helpless. Why is
 the sinner allowed to defy God, to think he
 35 will never exact punishment? But in truth
 thou seest it; thou hast eyes for misery and
 distress, and wilt take them into thy keep-
 ing. The destitute are cast on no care but
 thine; to thee only the orphan looks for
 36 redress. Break down the power of the
 wicked oppressor, punish his ill-doing, and
 37 let him be seen no more. The Lord will
 reign for ever and ever, while you, the
 heathen, will vanish from the land he
 38 loves. The sighing of the defenceless has
 found audience; thou wilt heed them and
 39 bring courage to their hearts, wilt give
 redress to the fatherless and the perse-
 cuted; mortal man shall make himself
 feared no longer.

10 (11)

(To the choir-master. Of David.)

2 MY trust is in the Lord; how is it that you
 say to me, Escape, like a frightened spar-
 3 row, to the hill-side? Escape; the rebels
 have strung their bows, have arrows ready
 on the string, to shoot from their hiding-

¹ v. 31. This seems the most natural way of taking a much-disputed sentence.

places at an unoffending heart; they have
 thrown down all thou hadst built; what
 hope, now, for the just man?

Is not the Lord in his holy shrine, the
 same Lord whose throne is in heaven,
 whose eye watches, whose glance can ap-
 praise, the deeds of men? Innocent or
 sinful, he reads every heart, and the friends
 of wrong-doing are his enemies. Pitilessly
 his weapons rain down upon the offenders;
 burning coals, and brimstone, and scorch-
 ing wind; such is the draught he brews for
 them. The Lord is just, and just are the
 deeds he loves; none but upright souls
 shall enjoy his presence.

11 (12)

(To the choir-master. Over the octave.
A psalm. Of David.)

LORD, come to my rescue; piety is dead;
 in a base world, true hearts have grown
 rare. None but exchanges empty forms of
 speech with his neighbour; everywhere
 false hearts and treacherous lips. Those
 treacherous lips, that tongue with high-
 sounding phrases; Lord, rid the earth of
 them! With our tongues, they say, we can
 do great things; our lips are good friends
 to us; we own no master. Now, says the
 Lord, I will bestir myself, on behalf of the
 helpless who are so ill used, of the poor
 who cry out so bitterly; I will win them the
 redress they long for. The promises of the
 Lord are true metal, like silver that is
 tested in the crucible, the stains of earth
 gone, seven times refined. Yes, Lord, thou
 wilt watch over us, and keep us ever safe
 from these evil days.

See how the wicked come and go all
 around us, how they rise to greatness, this
 base breed of men!

12 (13)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

LORD, must I still go all unremembered,
 must thy look still be turned away from
 me? Each day brings a fresh load of care,
 fresh misery to my heart; must I be ever
 the sport of my enemies? Look upon me,

O Lord my God, and listen to me; give light to these eyes, before they close in death; do not let my enemies claim the mastery, my persecutors triumph over my fall! I cast myself on thy mercy; soon may this heart boast of redress granted, sing in praise of the Lord, my benefactor.

13 (14)

(To the choir-master. Of David.)

THERE is no God above us, is the fond thought of reckless hearts; warped natures everywhere and hateful lives! There is not an innocent man among them. The Lord looks down from heaven at the race of men, to find one soul that reflects, and makes God its aim; but no, all have missed the mark and rebelled against him; an innocent man is nowhere to be found. What, can they learn nothing, all these traffickers in iniquity, who feed themselves fat on this people of mine, as if it were bread for their eating, and never invoke the Lord's name? What wonder if fear unmans them, when the Lord takes the part of the innocent? Easily you thought to outwit the friendless; see, the Lord is his refuge! Oh, that it might dawn over Sion, Israel's deliverance! Day of gladness for Jacob, day of Israel's triumph, when the Lord restores the fortunes of his own people.¹

14 (15)

(A psalm. Of David.)

WHO is it, Lord, that will make his home in thy tabernacle, rest on the mountain where thy sanctuary is? One that guides his steps without fault, and gives to all their due; one whose heart is all honest purpose, who utters no treacherous word, never defrauds a friend, or slanders a neighbour. He scorns the reprobate, keeping his reverence for such as fear God, and is true, come what may, to his pledged word; lends without usury, and takes no bribe to condemn the innocent. He who so lives will stand firm for ever.

¹ This psalm is a curious literary problem; the whole of it can be found elsewhere in the Bible. Verses 1 and 2, with the first sentence of verse 3, and verses 4-7, reappear in Psalm 52, with some variation in verse 6. The remainder of verse 3 is found in the Greek and Latin versions, but not in the Hebrew text. It corresponds exactly with Rom. 3: 10-18, and appears to be a cento of Scriptural quotations taken from the following sources: Ps. 5: 10, 139: 4, 9: 28, Is. 59: 7, Ps. 35: 2

15 (16)

(A miktam. Of David.)

KEEP me safe, Lord; I put my trust in thee. The Lord, whom I own as my God, confess that in him is all my good! There are faithful souls in this land of his; wondrous delight he gives me in their companionship. What do they do but lay up fresh store of sorrows, that betake themselves to alien gods? Not with these will I pour out the blood of sacrifice; I will not take forbidden names on my lips. No, it is the Lord I claim for my prize, the Lord who fills my cup; thou, and no other, wilt assure my inheritance to me. Portion is none were more to my liking; welcome the lot's choice!

Blessed be the Lord, who schools me; late into the night my inmost thoughts chasten me. Always I can keep the Lord within sight; always he is at my right hand, to make me stand firm. Glad and merry am I, heart and soul of me; my body, too, shall rest in confidence that thou wilt not leave my soul in the place of death, or allow thy faithful servant to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the way of life, make me full of gladness in thy presence; at thy right hand are delights that will endure for ever.

16 (17)

(A prayer. Of David.)

LORD, to my just complaint give ear; do not spurn my cry for aid. Listen to this prayer of mine; they are no treacherous lips that make it. At thy judgement seat I claim award; unerring thy scrutiny. Wilt thou read my heart, drawing near in the darkness to test me as if by fire, thou wilt find no treachery in me. Never have these lips been led astray by man's evil example; still to thy law's pattern thy warnings kept me true; still in thy paths my steps were firmly planted, my feet did not stumble.

And now I cry to thee, the God who ever hearest me; turn thy ear towards me, and listen to my plea. Thy mercy, thy signal mercy shew; none ever sought sanctuary

8 at thy right hand in vain. Protect me as
thou wouldst the apple of thy own eye;
hide me under the shelter of thy wings,
9 safe from the evil-doers who wrong me.

See how my enemies close about me
10 mercilessly, their hearts shut to pity, a
11 boast on their lips! Even now their
stealthy tread closes in on me, as they
watch their opportunity to bring me
12 down; treacherous as a lion that is eager
for its prey, a young lion that waits hidden
in its lair.

13 Bestir thyself, Lord; forestall him and
throw him to the ground; bare thy sword,
14 and save me from the evil-doer, raise thy
hand, to rescue me from the hands of
mortal men! Mortal men indeed, that
have all their portion here on earth; whose
desires thou dost satisfy with treasures
from thy store, so that their children, too,
live in abundance, and leave riches for new
15 heirs to enjoy. As for me, I will come with
upright heart into thy presence, and when
I wake up, I shall be well content with
thy likeness.

17 (18)

(To the choir-master. Of David, the servant of the Lord. He addressed to the Lord the words of this song, on the day when God delivered him from the hand of Saul, and from the hands of all his enemies; as follows:*)

2 SHALL I not love thee, Lord, my only
3 defender? The Lord is my rock-fastness,
my stronghold, my rescuer; to God, my
hiding-place, I flee for safety; he is my
shield, my weapon of deliverance, my re-
4 fuge. Praised be the Lord! When I invoke
his name, I am secure from my enemies.
5 All about me surged the waves of death,
deep flowed the perilous tide, to daunt me;
6 the grave had caught me in its toils, deadly
7 snares had trapped my feet. One cry to the
Lord, in my affliction, one word of sum-
mons to my God, and he, from his sanc-
tuary, listened to my voice; the complaint
I made before him found a hearing.

8 Earth thereupon shivered and shook, the
very foundations of the hills quailed and
9 quaked at his anger; at the fiery smoke that
breathed from his mouth and nostrils,
10 kindling coals to flame. He bade heaven

stoop, and came down to earth, with a dark
cloud at his feet; he came, cherub-
11 mounted, borne up on the wings of the
wind, shrouded in darkness, canopied with
black rain-storm and deep mist. Then,
12 while coals were kindled at the brightness
as he came, the Lord sent his thunder from
13 heaven, the most High let his voice be
heard. How they scattered when he rained
14 down his arrows on them, how they fled in
confusion before the volleys of his light-
ning! The sea's bed came to light, the very
15 foundations of the world were laid bare,
when thou didst threaten them, Lord,
when thou didst blow upon them with the
breath of thy anger. Then he reached down
16 from heaven, caught hold of me, rescued
me from that flood, saved me from trium-
phant malice, from the enemies that held
me at their mercy. Evil days, when they
17 faced me at every turn! Yet the Lord
stood by me, and brought me out into
18 freedom again; his great love befriended
me.

So, for my faithfulness, the Lord would
19 requite me, as he sees me guiltless in act,
he would make return. Have I not kept
20 true to the Lord's paths? Have I not been
ever loyal to my God? No law of his, but
21 I have kept it before my eyes; no task he
laid upon me have I refused; ever stain-
22 less in his presence, ever watchful to keep
myself clear of guilt, ever faithful, ever
23 guiltless in act, the Lord has requited me.
Lovingly wilt thou treat those who love
24 thee, with the loyal keep troth; pure of
heart the pure of heart shall find thee, the
cunning thou wilt overreach. To humble
25 folk thou wilt bring deliverance; the
proud, with their haughty looks, thou wilt
bring down to earth. It is thou, Lord, that
26 keepest the lamp of my hopes still burning;
shinest on the darkness about me, O my
27 God. In thy strength I will engage a host
of the enemy, in my God's strength I shall
28 leap over all their defences.

Such is my God, unsullied in his deal-
29 ings; his promises are like metal tested in
the fire; he is the sure defence of all who
trust in him. Who but the Lord is God?
30 What other refuge can there be, except our
God? It is he that girds me with strength,
31 bids me go on my way untroubled. He

* The whole of this psalm has been preserved for us independently among the records of King David's reign, with slight variations (1 Kg. 22).

35 makes me sure-footed as the deer, and gives me the freedom of the hills; these hands, through him, are skilled in battle, these arms are a match for any bow of bronze. Thy saving power, Lord, is my defence, thy right hand supports me; thy tender care fosters me. Through thee, my steps are untrammelled as I go, my tread never falters; I can overtake the enemies I pursue, and never turn home till I have made an end of them; I can beat them to their knees, and hurl them down at my feet. Thou girdest me about with a warrior's strength; whatever power challenges me, thou dost subdue before me, putting my enemies to flight, and throwing all their malice into confusion. Loudly they cry out to the Lord, bereft of aid, but he makes no answer to their cries. I can crush them to pieces, like the dust which the wind blows along; I can trample them down like mire from the streets.

44 Nor was it enough, of domestic broils to rid me; a world should be my vassal; new realms should pay me homage, quick to do my bidding. See where they come, the alien born, come slinking out of their strongholds, pale of cheek, to cringe before me. Blessed be the living Lord who is my refuge, praised be the God who delivers me! It is thou, my God, that bringest me redress, that bendest peoples to my will, that savest me from the spite of my enemies: so that I am high above the reach of their assaults, proof against their violence. Then, Lord, I will give thee thanks in the hearing of all the nations, singing in praise of thy name; victory thy mercy grants to the King thou hast anointed, to David, and David's line for ever.

18

(19)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

2 SEE how the skies proclaim God's glory, how the vault of heaven betrays his craftsmanship! Each day echoes its secret to the next, each night passes on to the next its revelation of knowledge; no word, no accent of theirs that does not make itself heard, till their utterance fills every land, till their message reaches the ends of the

world. In these, he has made a pavilion for the sun, which comes out as a bridegroom comes from his bed, and exults like some great runner who sees the track before him. Here, at one end of heaven, is its starting-place, and its course reaches to the other; none can escape its burning heat.

The Lord's perfect law, how it brings the soul back to life; the Lord's unchallengeable decrees, how they make the simple learned! How plain are the duties which the Lord enjoins, the treasure of man's heart; how clear is the commandment the Lord gives, the enlightenment of man's eyes! How sacred a thing is the fear of the Lord, which is binding for ever; how unerring are the awards which the Lord makes, one and all giving proof of their justice! All these are more precious than gold, than a hoard of pure gold, sweeter than the honey, dripping from its comb. By these I, thy servant, live, observing them how jealously! And yet, who knows his own frailties? If I have sinned unwittingly, do thou absolve me. Keep me ever thy own servant, far from pride; so long as this does not lord it over me, I will yet be without fault, I will yet be innocent of the great sin. Every word on my lips, every thought in my heart, what thou wouldst have it be, O Lord, my defender, my redeemer!

19

(20)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

THE Lord listen to thee in thy time of need, the power of Jacob's God be thy protection! May he send thee aid from his holy place, watch over thee, there on mount Zion; may he remember all thy offerings, and find savour in thy burnt-sacrifice. May he grant thee what thy heart desires, crown thy hopes with fulfilment. So may we rejoice at thy deliverance, rallied in the name of the Lord our God; abundantly may he grant thy prayer. Shall I doubt that the Lord protects the king he has anointed, will listen to him from his sanctuary in heaven? Is not his right hand strong to save? Let others talk of horses and chariots; our refuge is the

¹ The meaning of the Hebrew text here is quite uncertain.

9 name of the Lord our God. Stumbled and
fallen they, while we stand firm on our
10 feet. O Lord, save the king,¹ and hear us
in the hour when we call upon thee.

20 (21)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

2 WELL may the king rejoice, Lord, in thy
protection, well may he triumph in thy
3 saving power! Never a wish in his heart
hast thou disappointed, never a prayer on
4 his lips denied. With happy auguries thou
dost meet him on his way, dost set a crown
5 of pure gold on his head. Prays he for life?
Long continuance of his reign thou dost
grant him; to last unailing till the end of
6 time. Great is the renown thy protection
has won for him; glory and high honour
7 thou hast made his. An everlasting monu-
ment of thy goodness, comforted by the
8 smile of thy favour, he stands firm, trusting
in the Lord; the favour of the most High
is with him.

9 Ay, but thy enemies—they shall feel thy
power; that right hand will not leave their
malice unpunished. At thy frown, they
will wither away like grass in the oven;
10 whirled away by the Lord's anger, burnt
up in its flames. Thou wilt rid the land of
their breed, their race will vanish from the
12 world of men. See how all their false de-
signs against thee, all their plots come to
13 nothing! Thou wilt rout them; bent is thy
bow to meet their onslaught.²

14 Stand high above us, Lord, in thy pro-
tecting strength; our song, our psalm, shall
be of thy greatness.

21 (22)

(To the choir-master. Melody, The hind at dawn.
A psalm. Of David.)

2 MY God, my God, why hast thou forsaken
me? Loudly I call, but my prayer cannot
3 reach thee. Thou dost not answer, my
God, when I cry out to thee day and night,
4 thou dost not heed.³ Thou art there none
the less, dwelling in the holy place; Israel's
5 ancient boast. It was in thee that our
fathers trusted, and thou didst reward

6 their trust by delivering them; they cried
to thee, and rescue came; no need to be
ashamed of such trust as theirs. But I, 7
poor worm, have no manhood left; I am
a by-word to all, the laughing-stock of the
rabble. All those who catch sight of me 8
fall to mocking; mouthing out insults,
while they toss their heads in scorn, He
9 committed himself to the Lord, why does
not the Lord come to his rescue, and set
his favourite free?

What hand but thine drew me out from 10
my mother's womb? Who else was my
refuge when I hung at the breast? From 11
the hour of my birth, thou art my guar-
dian; since I left my mother's womb, thou
art my God! Do not leave me now, when 12
trouble is close at hand; stand near, when
I have none to help me. My enemies ring 13
me round, packed close as a herd of oxen,
strong as bulls from Basan; so might a lion 14
threaten me with its jaws, roaring for its
prey. I am spent as spilt water, all my 15
bones out of joint, my heart turned to
molten wax within me; parched is my 16
throat, like clay in the baking, and my
tongue sticks fast in my mouth; thou hast
laid me in the dust, to die. Prowling about 17
me like a pack of dogs, their wicked con-
spiracy hedges me in; they have torn holes 18
in my hands and feet; I can count my
bones one by one; and they stand there
watching me, gazing at me in triumph.
They divide my spoils among them, cast 19
lots for my garments. Then, Lord, do not
stand at a distance; if thou wouldst aid me, 20
come speedily to my side. Only life is left
me; save that from the sword, from the 21
power of these dogs; rescue me from the
very mouth of the lion, the very horns of
the wild oxen that have brought me thus
low.

Then I will proclaim thy renown to my 22
brethren; where thy people gather, I will
join in singing thy praise, Praise the Lord, 23
all you that are his worshippers; honour
to him from the sons of Jacob, reverence to
him from Israel's race! He has not scorned 24
or slighted the appeal of the friendless, nor
turned his face away from me; my cry for
help did not go unheeded. Take what I owe 25
thee, my song of praise before a great 26

¹ Some would understand the Hebrew text as meaning, 'O Lord, our King, save us'. ² Verses 9-13 are perhaps addressed to God, more probably to the psalmist himself. ³ The Hebrew text here has the difficult phrase 'and (there is) no silence for me'.

assembly. I will pay my vows to the Lord
 27 in the sight of his worshippers; the poor
 shall eat now, and have their fill, those who
 look for the Lord will cry out in praise of
 him, Refreshed be your hearts eternally!
 28 'The furthest dwellers on earth will be-
 think themselves of the Lord, and come
 back to him; all the races of the heathen
 29 will worship before him; to the Lord
 royalty belongs, the whole world's homage
 is his due. Him shall they worship, him
 30 only, that are laid to rest in the earth, even
 from their dust they shall adore. I, too,
 shall live on in his presence,' and beget
 children to serve him; these to a later age
 31 shall speak of the Lord's name; these to a
 race that must yet be born shall tell the
 story of his faithfulness, Hear what the
 Lord did.

22

(23)

(A psalm. Of David.)

THE Lord is my shepherd; how can I lack
 2 anything? He gives me a resting-place
 where there is green pasture, leads me out
 3 to the cool water's brink, refreshed and
 content. As in honour pledged, by sure
 4 paths he leads me; dark be the valley about
 my path, hurt I fear none while he is with
 me; thy rod, thy crook are my comfort.
 5 Envious my foes watch, while thou dost
 spread a banquet for me; richly thou dost
 anoint my head with oil, well filled my
 6 cup. All my life thy loving favour pursues
 me; through the long years the Lord's
 house shall be my dwelling-place.

23

(24)

(Of David. A psalm.)

THE Lord owns earth, and all earth's
 fulness, the round world, and all its in-
 2 habitants. Who else has built it out from
 the sea, poised it on the hidden streams?
 3 Who dares climb the mountain of the
 4 Lord, and appear in his sanctuary? The
 guiltless in act, the pure in heart; one who
 never set his heart on lying tales, or swore
 5 treacherously to his neighbour. His to
 receive a blessing from the Lord, mercy

from God, his sure defender; his the true
 6 breed that still looks, still longs for the
 presence of the God of Jacob.

Swing back, doors, higher yet; reach
 7 higher, immemorial gates, to let the King
 enter in triumph! Who is this great King?
 8 Who but the Lord, mighty and strong, the
 Lord mighty in battle? Swing back, doors,
 9 higher yet; reach higher, immemorial
 gates, to let the King enter in triumph!
 Who is this great King? It is the Lord of
 10 Armies that comes here on his way trium-
 phant.

24

(25)

(Of David.)

ALL my heart goes out to thee, O Lord
 my God. Belie not the trust I have in
 2 thee, let not my enemies boast of my down-
 fall. Can any that trust in thee be dis-
 3 appointed, as they are disappointed who
 lightly break their troth? Direct my way,
 4 Lord, as thou wilt, teach me thy own paths.
 Ever let thy truth guide and teach me,
 5 O God my deliverer, my abiding hope.
 Forget not, Lord, thy pity, thy mercies of
 6 long ago. Give heed no more to the sins
 7 and frailties of my youth, but think mer-
 cifully of me, as thou, Lord, art ever
 gracious. How gracious is the Lord, how
 8 faithful, guiding our strayed feet back to
 the path! In his own laws he will train the
 9 humble, in his own paths the humble he
 will guide. Jealous be thy keeping of cov-
 10 enant and ordinance, and the Lord's deal-
 ings will be ever gracious, ever faithful
 with thee. Kindly be thy judgement of my
 11 sin, for thy own honour's sake, my
 grievous sin.

Let a man but fear the Lord, what path
 12 to choose he doubts no longer. Much joy
 13 he shall have of his lands and to his heirs
 leave them. No stranger the Lord is, no
 14 secret his covenant, to his true worship-
 pers. On the Lord I fix my eyes con-
 15 tinually, trusting him to save my feet from
 the snare. Pity me, Lord, as thou seest me
 16 friendless and forlorn. Quit my heart of
 its burden, deliver me from my distress.
 17 Restless and forlorn, I claim thy pity, to
 18 my sins be merciful. See how many are
 19 my foes, and how bitter is the grudge they

¹ 'I, too, shall live on in his presence'; according to the Hebrew text, this should be 'and their souls have no life', belonging to verse 30 as part of the description that verse gives of the unfortunate.

20 bear me. Take my soul into thy keeping;
 21 come to my rescue, do not let me be dis-
 appointed of my trust in thee. Upright-
 22 ness and purity be my shield, as I wait
 patiently, Lord, for thy help. When wilt
 thou deliver Israel, my God, from all his
 troubles?

25

(26)

(Of David.)

LORD, be thou my judge; have I not
 guided my steps clear of wrong? Have I
 trusted in the Lord, only to stumble on my
 2 path? Test me, Lord, put me to the proof;
 assay my inmost desires and thoughts.
 3 Ever I keep thy mercies in mind, ever thy
 4 faithfulness bears me company. I have not
 consorted with false men, or joined in plot-
 5 ting evil; I have shunned the company of
 the wicked, never sat at my ease with
 6 sinners. With the pure in heart I will wash
 my hands clean, and take my place among
 7 them at thy altar, there making thy praises
 known, telling the story of all thy won-
 8 derful deeds. How well, Lord, I love the
 house where thou dwellest, the shrine of
 9 thy glory! Lord, never count this soul for
 lost with the wicked, this life among the
 10 blood-thirsty; hands ever stained with
 11 guilt, palms ever itching for a bribe! Be it
 mine to guide my steps clear of wrong;
 12 deliver me in thy mercy. On sure ground
 my feet are set; where his people gather I
 will join in blessing the Lord's name.

26

(27)

(Of David.)

THE Lord is my light and my deliverance;
 whom have I to fear? The Lord watches
 over my life; whom shall I hold in dread?
 2 Vainly the malicious close about me, as if
 they would tear me in pieces, vainly my
 enemies threaten me; all at once they
 3 stumble and fall. Though a whole host
 were arrayed against me, my heart would
 be undaunted; though an armed onset
 should threaten me, still I would not lose
 4 my confidence. One request I have ever
 made of the Lord, let me claim it still, to
 dwell in the Lord's house my whole life
 long, resting content in the Lord's good-
 5 ness, gazing at his temple. In his royal

tent he hides me, in the inmost recess of
 his royal tent, safe from peril. On a rock
 fastness he lifts me high up; my head rises
 6 high above the enemies that encompass
 me. I will make an offering of triumphant
 music in this tabernacle of his, singing and
 praising the Lord.

Listen to my voice, Lord, when I cry to
 7 thee; hear and spare. True to my heart's
 8 promise, I have eyes only for thee; I long,
 Lord, for thy presence. Do not hide thy
 9 face, do not turn away from thy servant in
 anger, but give me still thy aid; do not
 forsake me, do not neglect me, O God, my
 10 defender. Father and mother may neglect
 me, but the Lord takes me into his care.
 Lord, shew me the way thou hast chosen
 11 for me, guide me along the sure path, beset
 as I am with enemies; do not give me over
 12 to the will of my oppressors, when false
 witnesses stand up to accuse me, breathe
 out threats against me. My faith is, I will
 13 yet live to see the Lord's mercies. Wait
 14 patiently for the Lord to help thee; be
 brave, and let thy heart take comfort; wait
 patiently for the Lord.

27

(28)

(Of David.)

To thee, my Lord, my refuge, I cry aloud,
 do not leave my cry unanswered; listen to
 me, or I am no better than a dead man,
 sinking to the grave. Listen Lord, to my
 2 plea as I call upon thee, as I raise my hands
 in prayer towards thy holy temple. Do not
 3 summon me, with the wicked, before thy
 judgement-seat; with men who traffic in
 iniquity, men who talk of peace to their
 neighbours, while their hearts are full of
 4 malice. For them, the reward of their own
 acts, their own evil ways; as they did, be it
 done to them, in their own coin repaid. Of
 5 the Lord's acts, the Lord's ways, they took
 no heed; ruin be theirs, ruin irreparable.

Blessed be the Lord's name, my plea is
 heard; the Lord is my strength and shield.
 7 Trusting in him, I found redress; there is
 triumph in my heart, on my lips the song
 of praise. The Lord defends his own
 8 people, protects the king he has anointed.
 Lord, save thy people, bless thy own
 9 chosen race; be their shepherd, evermore
 in thy arms upholding them.

28 (29)

(A psalm. Of David.)

SONS of God, make your offering to the Lord; an offering to the Lord of honour and glory, an offering to the Lord of the glory that befits his name; worship the Lord, in holy vesture habited. The voice of the Lord is heard over the waters, when the glorious God thunders, the Lord, thundering over swollen waters; the Lord's voice in its power, the Lord's voice in its majesty. The Lord's voice, that breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon; bids Lebanon and Saron leap high as a bullock leaps, breed of the wild ox. The Lord's voice kindles flashing fire; the Lord's voice makes the wilderness rock: the Lord, rocking the wilderness of Cadés. The Lord's voice sets the oak-trees a-swaying, strips the deep forest bare. Meanwhile, in his sanctuary, there is no sound but tells of his glory. Out of a raging flood, the Lord makes a dwelling-place; the Lord sits enthroned as a king for ever. And this Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will give his people his own blessing of peace.

29 (30)

(A psalm. A hymn for the feast of the temple's dedication. Of David.)

PRAISE to thee, Lord, thou hast taken me under thy protection, and baulked my enemies of their will; I cried out to the Lord my God, and thou didst grant me recovery. So didst thou bring me back, Lord, from the place of shadows, rescue me from the very edge of the grave. Sing praise to the Lord, then, faithful souls, invoke his name with thankfulness. For a moment lasts his anger, for a life-time his love; sorrow is but the guest of a night, and joy comes in the morning. I, too, had thought, in time of ease, Nothing can shake me now; such power and state, Lord, had thy mercy granted me. Then thou didst turn thy face away from me, and I was at peace no more. Lord, I was fain to plead with thee, cry upon God for pity: How will it profit thee to take my life? I can but go down into the

grave; and will this dust give thanks to thee, or acknowledge, there, thy faithfulness? Listen, Lord, and spare; Lord, let thy aid befriend me. With that, thou didst turn my sadness into rejoicing, thou hast undone the sackcloth I wore, and girded me about with gladness. So may this heart never tire of singing praises; O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.

30 (31)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

To thee, O Lord, I look for refuge, never let me be ashamed of my trust; in thy faithful care, deliver me. Grant me audience, and make haste to rescue me; my hill-fastness, my stronghold of defence, to save me from peril. Thou dost strengthen and defend me; thou, for thy own honour, dost guide and escort me; by thee protected, I shall escape from the snare that lies hidden in my path. Into thy hands I commend my spirit; thou, God ever faithful, wilt claim me for thyself. Let fools provoke thee by the worship of false gods; for me, no refuge but the Lord. I will triumph and exult in thy mercy; it was thou didst pity my weakness, and save me when I was hard bestead; before the enemy's toils could close around me, the open plain lay at my feet.

And now, Lord, have compassion on my distress; vexation has dimmed my eyes, frets me away, soul and body. My life is all grief, my years are but sighs; for very misery, my strength ebbs away, my frame is wasted. Openly my foes deride me; even to my neighbours I am a thing of utter scorn; my friends are adread, and the passer-by shuns my contact; I am lost to memory, like a dead man, discarded like a broken pitcher. On every side their busy whispering comes to my ears; peril all around, so powerful the conspiracy that threatens my life. And still, Lord, my trust in thee is not shaken; still I cry, Thou art my God, my fate is in thy hand; save me from the enemy's power, save me from my pursuers! Smile on thy servant once more, and deliver me in thy mercy; Lord,

¹ In the Hebrew text 'through my sin'.

do not let me plead in vain. Disappoint the wicked of their hopes, hurl them down
 19 thwarted into the abyss; let silence fall on those treacherous lips, that spoke maliciously of the innocent in the days of their pride and scorn!

20 What treasures of loving-kindness, Lord, dost thou store up for the men who fear thee, rewarding their confidence for all
 21 the world to see! Thy presence is a sanctuary, to hide them away from the world's malice; thy tabernacle a refuge from its noisy debate. Blessed be the Lord; so wondrous is his mercy, so strong the wall of his protection. I thought, bewildered, that thy watchful care had lost sight of me; but I cried out to thee, and thou thereupon
 24 didst listen to my plea. Love the Lord well, you who worship him; the Lord keeps faith with his servants, and repays the actions of the proud above measure.
 25 Take heart, keep high your courage, all you that wait patiently for the Lord.

31

(32)

(Of David. A maskil.)

BLESSED are they who have their faults forgiven, their transgressions buried deep; blessed is the man who is not guilty in the Lord's reckoning, the heart that hides no
 3 treason. While I kept my own secret, evermore I went sighing, so wasted my frame
 4 away, bowed down day and night by thy chastisement; still my strength ebbed, faint as in mid-summer heat. At last I made my transgression known to thee, and hid my sin no longer; Fault of mine, said I, I here confess to the Lord; and with that,
 6 thou didst remit the guilt of my sin. Let every devout soul, then, turn to thee in prayer when hard times befall; rise the floods never so high, they shall have no
 7 power to reach it. Thou art my hiding-place, when I am sore bestead; songs of triumph are all about me, and thou my deliverer.

8 Friend, let me counsel thee, trace for thee the path thy feet should tread; let my prudence watch over thee. Do not be like the horse and the mule, senseless creatures which will not come near thee unless their
 10 spirit is tamed by bit and bridle. Again

and again the sinner must feel the lash; he who trusts in the Lord finds nothing but mercy all around him. Just souls, be glad,
 11 and rejoice in the Lord; true hearts, make your boast in him.

32

(33)

TRIUMPH, just souls, in the Lord; true hearts, it is yours to praise him. Give thanks to the Lord with the viol's music, praise him with a harp of ten strings. For him let a new song be sung; give him of your best, sound the harp and cry out lustily. The Lord's word is true, he is faithful in all his dealings; faithfulness he loves, and the just award, the whole earth overflows with the Lord's goodness. It was the Lord's word that made the heavens, the breath of his lips that peopled them; he it is who stores up the waters of the sea as in a cistern, treasures up all its waves. Let the whole earth hold the Lord in dread, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; he spoke, and they were made, he gave his command, and their frame was fashioned. At the Lord's bidding, a nation's purposes come to nothing, a people's designs are thwarted; his own designs stand firm for ever; generation after generation, his will does not swerve.

Blessed the nation that calls the Lord its own God, the people he has chosen out to be his! Looking down from heaven, he watches all mankind, his dwelling-place has the whole world in view; he has fashioned each man's nature, and weighs the actions of each. There is no protection for kings in powerful armies, for warriors in abundant prowess; nor shall horses bring thee the mastery, brute strength that cannot save. It is the Lord, watching over those who fear him and trust in his mercy, that will protect their lives, will feed them in time of famine. Patiently we wait for the Lord's help; he is our strength and our shield; in him our hearts find contentment, in his holy name we trust. Lord, let thy mercy rest upon us, who put all our confidence in thee.

33

(34)

(Of David, when he feigned madness at the court of Abimelech, so that Abimelech sent him away, and he escaped.¹)

2 AT all times I will bless the Lord; his
3 praise shall be on my lips continually. Be
4 all my boasting in the Lord; listen to me,
5 humble souls, and rejoice. Come, sing the
6 Lord's praise with me, let us extol his
7 name together. Did I not look to the
8 Lord, and find a hearing; did he not deli-
9 ver me from all my terrors? Ever look to
10 him, and in him find happiness; here is no
11 room for downcast looks. Friendless folk
12 may still call upon the Lord and gain his ear,
13 and be rescued from all their afflictions.
14 Guardian of those who fear the Lord, his
15 angel encamps at their side, and brings
16 deliverance. How gracious the Lord is!
17 Taste and prove it; blessed is the man
18 that learns to trust in him. It is for you,
19 his chosen servants, to fear the Lord;
20 those who fear him never go wanting.
21 Justly do the proud fall into hunger and
22 want;² blessing they lack not that look to
23 him.

24 Know, then, my children, what the fear
25 of the Lord is; come and listen to my
26 teaching. Long life, and prosperous days,
27 who would have these for the asking? My
28 counsel is, keep thy tongue clear of harm,
29 and thy lips free from every treacherous
30 word. Naught of evil cherish thou, but
31 rather do good; let peace be all thy quest
32 and aim. On the upright the Lord's eye
33 ever looks favourably; his ears are open to
34 their pleading. Perilous is his frown for
35 the wrong-doers; he will soon make their
36 name vanish from the earth. Roused by
37 the cry of the innocent, the Lord sets them
38 free from all their afflictions. So near is he
39 to patient hearts, so ready to defend the
40 humbled spirit. Though a hundred trials
41 beset the innocent, the Lord will bring him
42 safely through them all. Under the Lord's
43 keeping, every bone of his is safe; not one
44 of them shall suffer harm. Villainy hastes
45 to its own undoing; the enemies of inno-
46 cence will bear their punishment.

47 The Lord will claim his servant as his
48 own; they go unproved that put their
49 trust in him.

34

(35)

(Of David.)

LORD, espouse my quarrel; disarm the
enemies who rise in arms against me; grip
target and shield, bestir thyself in my de-
fence. With poised lance, bar the way
against my pursuers; whisper in my heart,
I am here to save thee. For my mortal
enemies, shame and disappointment; for
my ill-wishers one and all, ruin and re-
morse; chaff before the wind, with the
angel of the Lord to scatter them, be-
nighted and bemired on their way, with
the angel of the Lord in pursuit! Wantonly
they have spread their nets for me, wan-
tonly they have dug the cruel snare; now
let sudden doom overtake them, their own
nets enmesh, their own snare entrap them!
Mine to triumph in the Lord, to boast of
the aid he brings me; this be the cry of my
whole being, There is none like thee,
Lord; who else rescues the afflicted from
the hand of tyranny, the poor, the desti-
tute, from his oppressors? See how per-
jured witnesses have come forward, to
browbeat me over charges of which I know
nothing; how they have repaid my kind-
ness with cruelty, and left me friendless!
Time was, when these were sick;³ what
did I then? Sackcloth was my wear;
rigorously I kept fast, prayed from my
heart's depths. I went my way sadly, as
one that mourns for brother or friend,
bowed with grief, as one that bewails a
mother's loss. And now it was my turn to
reel under fortune's blows; what did they?
Gleeful they met, and plotted to attack me
unawares; tore at me without ceasing,
baited and mocked me, gnashing their
teeth in hatred. Lord, wilt thou look on
unheeding still? Wilt thou leave my life at
the mercy of these roaring lions? Let me
live to praise and thank thee before the
multitude that throngs thy courts. No
more the leer of triumph in the eye of
yonder treacherous foe, that wantonly
assails me!

In all their whispering, never a word of
peace; they will still be plotting against the
land's repose. See how they mop and mow
at me, crying out, Joy, joy that we should
have lived to see this! Thou too, Lord,

¹ See I Kg. 21. 10 and following. ² For 'the proud', the Hebrew text has 'the young lions'.
³ 'When these were sick', as if King David were recalling his earlier kindness to these enemies of his.

hast seen it, do not pass it by in silence;
 23 Lord, do not abandon me. Bestir thyself
 and take my part, give me speedy redress,
 24 my Lord and my God. As thou art just,
 O Lord my God, give thy award for me,
 25 never let them triumph over me; never let
 them think, All goes well, and boast that
 26 they have made a prey of me. Disappoint
 them, fill them with confusion, the men
 who delight in my misfortune; cover them
 with shame and self-reproach, the enemies
 27 that triumph over me. Joy and gladness be
 theirs, who applaud my innocence; Praise
 to the Lord! be their cry, the Lord who
 28 defends his servant. And all day long, for
 thy just awarding, this tongue shall make
 known thy praise.

35 (36)

(To the choir-master. Of David, the Lord's servant.)

2 DEEP in his heart the sinner hears the
 whispering of evil, and loses sight of the
 3 fear of God; flatters himself with the
 thought that his misdoings go undis-
 4 covered, earn no reproof. No word on his
 lips but is cruel and false; never a wise
 5 thought, a kindly deed. He lies awake
 plotting mischief, and lends himself to
 every evil course, never weary of wrong-
 doing.
 6 Lord, thy mercy is high as heaven; thy
 7 faithfulness reaches to the clouds; thy
 justice stands firm as the everlasting hills,¹
 the wisdom of thy decrees is deep as the
 abyss. Lord, thou dost give protection to
 8 man and beast, so rich is thy divine mercy;
 under the shelter of those wings the frail
 9 children of earth will find confidence. With
 thy rich store thou wilt nourish them, bid
 them drink deep at thy fountain of con-
 10 tentment. In thee is the source of all life;
 thy brightness breaks on our eyes like
 11 dawn. Still let thy mercy dwell with those
 who acknowledge thee, thy favour with
 12 upright hearts; do not suffer the proud to
 trample on me, the wicked to dispossess
 13 me. See what a fall awaits the wrong-
 doers, how they are cast down to earth,
 and can keep their feet no more!

36 (37)

(Of David.)

ART thou impatient, friend, when the
 wicked thrive; dost thou envy the lot of
 evil-doers? they will soon fade like the
 2 grass, like the green leaf wither away. Be
 3 content to trust in the Lord and do good;
 live on thy land, and take thy ease, all thy
 4 longing fixed in the Lord; so he will give
 thee what thy heart desires. Commit thy
 5 life to the Lord, and trust in him; he will
 prosper thee, making thy honesty clear as
 6 the day, the justice of thy cause bright as
 the sun at noon. Dumb and patient, to the
 7 Lord's mercy look thou, never fretting
 over the man that has his own way, and
 thrives by villainy. End thy complaints,
 8 forgo displeasure, do not fret thyself into
 an evil mood; the evil-minded will be dis-
 9 possessed, and patient souls, that wait for
 the Lord, succeed them. Forbear yet a
 10 little, and the sinner will be seen no more;
 thou wilt search in vain to find him, while
 11 patient souls are the land's heirs, enjoying
 great peace.

Gnashing his teeth with envy, the
 12 wrong-doer plots against the innocent, and
 13 cannot see his own turn coming; but the
 Lord sees it, and laughs at his malice.
 How they draw the sword, how they bend
 14 the bow, these sinners, to bring ruin on
 helpless poverty, to murder the upright;
 15 swords that will pierce their own hearts,
 bows that will break in pieces! Innocence,
 16 ill endowed, has the better of the wicked
 in their abundance; soon fails the strength
 17 of their arms, and still the Lord has the just
 in his keeping. Jealously the Lord watches
 18 over the lives of the guiltless, they will hold
 their lands for ever, undismayed by ad-
 19 versity, in time of famine well content.
 Knavery will yet come to an end; like the
 20 spring's finery they will die, the Lord's
 enemies, vanish away like smoke. Let the
 21 sinner borrow, and never repay, still the
 good man will be a generous giver;² win
 22 the Lord's blessing, and the land is thine,
 his ban is death. Man's feet stand firm, if
 23 the Lord is with him to prosper his jour-
 ney; he may stumble but never fall, with
 24

¹ Literally, 'the hills of God', a Hebrew form of speech for what is magnificent in nature. ² It is difficult to see the connexion between this verse and the next, unless we suppose that it indicates a reversal of fortunes, in which the wicked will always be defaulting borrowers, and good men will be in a position to help them.

25 the Lord's hand in his. Now youth is past,
and I have grown old; yet never did I see
the good man forsaken, or his children
26 begging their bread; still he lends without
stint, and men call down blessings on his
27 posterity. Offend no more, rather do good,
28 and be at rest continually; the Lord is ever
just, and will not abandon his faithful
servants. Perish the sinner, forgotten be
29 the name of the evil-doer, but these will
hold their land, and live on it always at
rest.

30 Right reason is on the good man's lips,
31 well weighed are all his counsels; his steps
never falter, because the law of God rules
32 in his heart. Sinners lie in wait, plotting
33 against the life of the innocent; but the
Lord will never leave him in their power,
never find him guilty when he is arraigned.
34 Trust the Lord, and follow the path he has
chosen; so he will set thee up in possession
of thy land, and thou wilt live to see the
35 wicked come to ruin. Until yesterday,
I saw the evil-doer throned high as the
36 branching cedars; then, when I passed by,
he was there no longer, and I looked in
37 vain to find him. Virtuous men and inno-
cent mark thou well; he that lives peace-
38 ably will leave a race behind him, while
sinners are rooted out every one, and their
39 graceless names forgotten. When affliction
comes, the Lord is the refuge and defence
40 of the innocent; the Lord will aid and
deliver them, rescue and preserve them
from the power of wickedness, because
they put their trust in him.

37 (38)

(A psalm. Of David. For a memorial.)

2 THY reproof, Lord, not thy vengeance;
thy chastisement, not thy condemnation!
3 Thy arrows pierce me, thy hand presses
4 me hard; thy anger has driven away all
health from my body, never a bone sound
5 in it, so grievous are my sins. My own
wrong-doing towers high above me, hangs
6 on me like a heavy burden; my wounds
fester and rankle, with my own folly to
7 blame. Beaten down, bowed to the earth,
8 I go mourning all day long, my whole
9 frame afire, my whole body diseased; so
spent, so crushed, I groan aloud in the
10 weariness of my heart. Thou, Lord,

knowest all my longings, no complaint of
mine escapes thee; restless my heart, gone
11 my strength; the very light that shone in
my eyes is mine no longer.

Friends and neighbours that meet me
12 keep their distance from a doomed man;
old companions shun me. Ill-wishers that
13 grudge me life itself lay snares about me,
threaten me with ruin; relentlessly their
malice plots against me. And I, all the
14 while, am deaf to their threats, dumb be-
fore my accusers; mine the unheeding ear,
15 and the tongue that utters no defence. On
thee, Lord, my hopes are set; thou, O Lord
16 my God, wilt listen to me. Such is the
prayer I make, Do not let my enemies
17 triumph over me, boast of my downfall.
Fall full well I may; misery clouds my
18 view; I am ever ready to publish my guilt,
ever anxious over my sin. Unprovoked,
19 their malice still prevails; so many that
bear me a grudge so wantonly, rewarding
20 good with evil, and for the very rightness
of my cause assailing me. Do not fail me,
21 O Lord my God, do not forsake me; hasten
22 to my defence, O Lord, my only refuge.

38 (39)

(To the choir-master, Idithun. A psalm.
Of David.)

IT was my resolve to live watchfully, and
2 never use my tongue amiss; still, while I
was in the presence of sinners, I kept my
3 mouth gagged, dumb and patient, im-
potent for good. But indignation came
4 back, and my heart burned within me, the
fire kindled by my thoughts, so that at last
I kept silence no longer.

Lord, warn me of my end, and how few
5 my days are; teach me to know my own
insufficiency. See how thou hast measured
6 my years with a brief span, how my life is
nothing in thy reckoning! Nay, what is any
7 man living but a breath that passes? Truly
man walks the world like a shadow; with
what vain anxiety he hoards up riches,
when he cannot tell who will have the
8 counting of them! What hope then is
mine, Lord? In thee alone I trust. Clear
9 me of that manifold guilt which makes me
the laughing-stock of fools, tongue-tied
10 and uncomplaining, because I know that
11 my troubles come from thee; spare me this

punishment; I faint under thy powerful
 12 hand. When thou dost chasten man to
 punish his sins, gone is all he loved, as if
 the moth had fretted it away; a breath that
 13 passes, and no more. Listen, Lord, to my
 prayer, let my cry reach thy hearing, and
 my tears win answer. What am I in thy
 sight but a passer-by, a wanderer, as all
 14 my fathers were? Thy frown relax, give
 me some breath of comfort, before I go
 away and am known no more.

39 (40)

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

2 PATIENTLY I waited for the Lord's help,
 and at last he turned his look towards me;
 3 he listened to my plea, drew me up out of
 a deadly pit, where the mire had settled
 deep, and gave me a foothold on the rock,
 4 with firm ground to tread. He has framed
 a new music on my lips, a song of praise to
 our God, to fill all that stand by with
 reverence, and with trust in the Lord.
 5 Happy is the man whose trust is there
 bestowed, who shuns the rites of strange
 6 gods, the lure of lies. O Lord my God,
 how long is the story of thy marvellous
 deeds! Was ever care like thine? How
 should I tell the tale of those mercies, past
 7 all numbering? No sacrifice, no offering
 was thy demand; enough that thou hast
 given me an ear ready to listen.¹ Thou hast
 not found any pleasure in burnt-sacrifices,
 8 in sacrifices for sin. See then, I said, I am
 coming to fulfil what is written of me,
 9 where the book lies unrolled; to do thy
 will, O my God, is all my desire, to carry
 out that law of thine which is written in
 10 my heart. And I told the story of thy just
 dealings before a great throng; be witness,
 11 Lord, that I do not seal my lips. Thy just
 dealings are no secret hidden away in my
 heart; I boast of thy faithful protection,
 proclaim that mercy, that faithfulness of
 thine for all to hear it.
 12 Lord, do not withhold thy pity from me;
 let thy mercy and faithfulness be now, as
 13 ever, my shield. I am beset with evils past
 numbering, overtaken by my sins; they fill
 my prospect, countless as the hairs on my
 14 head; my courage fails me. Deign, Lord,
 to set me free; Lord, give heed and help.

Disappointment and shame be theirs, who 1:
 lay plots against my life; may they sink
 away covered with confusion, who now
 rejoice over my downfall. Joy, joy! is their 16
 cry; dumb-stricken let them stand, their
 hopes belied. Rejoicing and triumph for 17
 all the souls that look to thee; Praise to the
 Lord, will ever be their song, who now
 long for thy aid. I, so helpless, so destitute, 18
 and the Lord is concerned for me! Thou
 art my champion and my refuge; do not
 linger, my God, do not linger on the way.

40 (41)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

BLESSED is that man who takes thought 2
 for the poor and the destitute; the Lord
 will keep him safe in time of trouble. The 3
 Lord will watch over him, and give him
 long life and happiness on earth, and baulk
 his enemies of their will. The Lord will 4
 sustain him when he lies bed-ridden, turn
 all to health in his sickness.

Lord have mercy on me, is my prayer; 5
 bring healing to a soul that has sinned
 against thee. Bitterly my enemies taunt 6
 me; How long, they ask, ere he will die,
 and his name be forgotten? When one 7
 comes to visit me, he comes with smooth
 words, his heart full of malice, ready to go 8
 out and plot against me. There they stand,
 my enemies, talking of me in whispers,
 devising hurt; Here is a foul plague loosed 9
 on him; he will leave his bed no more.
 Why, the very man I trusted most, my own 10
 intimate friend, who shared my bread, has
 lifted his heel to trip me up.² Lord, have 11
 mercy on me; give me back health, and let
 me requite them! Proof of thy favour, my 12
 enemies are baulked of their triumph; thou 13
 dost befriend my innocence; nevermore
 wilt thou banish me from thy presence.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from 14
 the beginning to the end of time, Amen,
 Amen.

41 (42)

(To the choir-master. A maskil.
Of the sons of Core.)

O GOD, my whole soul longs for thee, as 2
 a deer for running water; my whole soul 3

¹ The Septuagint Greek has 'thou hast prepared a body for me'; cf. Heb. 10. 5.² Jn. 13. 18.

43

(44)

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core.
A maskil.)

thirsts for God, the living God; shall I never again make my pilgrimage into God's presence? Morning and evening, my diet still of tears! Daily I must listen to the taunt, Where is thy God now? Memories come back to me yet, melting the heart; how once I would join with the throng, leading the way to God's house, amid cries of joy and thanksgiving, and all the bustle of holiday. Soul, art thou still downcast? Wilt thou never be at peace? Wait for God's help; I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.

In my sad mood I will think of thee, here in this land of Jordan and Hermon, here on Misar mountain. One depth makes answer to another 'amid the roar of the floods thou sendest; wave after wave, crest after crest overwhelms me. Would he but lighten the day with his mercy, what praise would I sing at evening to the Lord God who is life for me! Thou art my stronghold, I cry out to him still; hast thou never a thought for me? Must I go mourning, with enemies pressing me hard; racked by the ceaseless taunts of my persecutors, Where is thy God now? Soul, art thou still downcast? Wilt thou never be at peace? Wait for God's help; I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.

42

(43)

O GOD, sustain my cause; give me redress against a race that knows no piety; save me from a treacherous foe and cruel. Thou, O God, art all my strength; why hast thou cast me off? Must I go mourning, with enemies pressing me hard? The light of thy presence, the fulfilment of thy promise, let these be my escort, bringing me safe to thy holy mountain, to the tabernacle where thou dwellest. There I will go up to the altar of God, the giver of triumphant happiness; thou art my own God, with the harp I hymn thy praise. Soul, art thou still downcast? Wilt thou never be at peace? Wait for God's help; I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.²

¹ These 'depths' are ordinarily understood as being waterfalls; but the second part of the verse would seem to be a metaphor derived from storms at sea. Cf. Jon. 2. 4. ² The repetition here of the refrain used in Psalm 41 makes it probable that these two were originally a single psalm.

O GOD, the tale has come to our ears— have not our fathers told it?—of the great things thou didst in their time, in days long ago; it was thy power that gave them a home by rooting out the heathen, crushing and dispossessing nations to make room for them. It was not by their own sword that our fathers won the land, it was not their own strength that brought them victory; it was the work of thy hand, thy strength; thy smile shone upon them, in proof of thy favour. I too have no King, no God, save thee; who else sent deliverance to Jacob? Through thee we routed our enemies; under thy protection we crushed their onslaught. Not in my bow I trusted, not to my sword I looked for safety; thine it was to save us from our enemies, and cover their malice with confusion. In God was ever our boast; his name we praise unceasingly.

And now? Now, O God, thou hast disowned us, and put us to shame, by refusing to go into battle with our armies. Thou dost put us to flight before our enemies; our ill-wishers plunder us as they will. Thou hast made us like sheep sold for food, scattered here and there among the heathen; thou hast bartered away thy people without profit, asking no rich amends for thy loss. Thou hast turned us into a laughing-stock for our neighbours, mocked and derided by all who dwell around; till the heathen make a by-word of us, and Gentiles toss their heads at us in scorn. Ever my disgrace confronts me; my cheeks are covered with blushes, as I hear nothing but reproach and reviling, see none but enemies, none but persecutors.

All this has come upon us, and it was not that we had forgotten thee. We have not been untrue to thy covenant, or withdrawn our hearts from thee, that we should let our steps wander away from thy paths. And all the while thou wouldst bring us low, anguish on every side, darkness hanging over us. If we had forgotten the name of our own God, and spread out our hands in prayer to the gods of the alien, would not

he know of it? He can read the secrets of
 23 men's hearts. No, it is for thy sake that we
 face death at every moment, reckoned no
 better than sheep marked down for slaugh-
 24 ter. Bestir thyself, Lord, why dost thou
 sleep on? Awake, do not banish us from
 25 thy presence for ever. How canst thou
 turn thy face away, without a thought for
 26 our need and our affliction? Our pride is
 bowed in the dust; prostrate, we cannot
 27 lift ourselves from the ground. Arise,
 Lord, and help us; in thy mercy, claim us
 for thy own.

bring; the noblest of its citizens will be
 courting thy favour. She comes, the
 princess, all fair to see, her robe of golden
 cloth, a robe of rich embroidery, to meet
 the King. The maidens of her court follow
 her into thy presence, all rejoicing, all
 triumphant, as they enter the king's
 palace! Thou shalt have sons worthy of
 thy own fathers, and divide a world be-
 tween them for their domains. While time
 lasts, mine it is to keep thy name in
 remembrance; age after age, nations will
 do thee honour.

44 (45)

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Lilies. Of the
 sons of Core. A maskil. A love-song.)

2 JOYFUL the thoughts that well up from
 my heart, the King's honour for my theme;
 my tongue flows readily as the pen of a
 3 swift writer. Thine is more than mortal
 beauty, thy lips overflow with gracious
 utterance; the blessings God has granted
 4 thee can never fail. Gird on thy sword at
 thy side, great warrior, gird thyself with
 all thy majesty and all thy beauty; ride on
 5 triumphant, in the name of faithfulness
 and justice. Dread counsel thy own might
 6 shall give thee; so sharp are thy arrows,
 subduing nations to thy will, daunting the
 7 hearts of the king's enemies. Thy throne,
 O God, endures for ever and ever, the
 sceptre of thy royalty is a rod that rules
 8 true;¹ thou hast been a friend to right, an
 enemy to wrong, and God, thy own God,
 has given thee an unction to bring thee
 9 pride beyond any of thy fellows. Thy gar-
 ments are scented with myrrh, and aloes,
 and cassia; from ivory palaces there are
 10 harps sounding in thy honour. Daughters
 of kings come out to meet thee; at thy right
 hand stands the queen, in Ophir gold
 11 arrayed. (Listen, my daughter, and con-
 sider my words attentively; thou art to
 forget, henceforward, thy own nation, and
 12 the house of thy father; thy beauty, now,
 is all for the king's delight; he is thy Lord,
 13 and worship belongs to him.) The people
 of Tyre, too, will have its presents to

45 (46)

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core.
 Melody: The Virgins. A song.)

GOD is our refuge and stronghold; sove-
 reign aid he has brought us in the hour of
 peril. Not for us to be afraid, though earth
 should tumble about us, and the hills be
 carried away into the depths of the sea. See
 how its waters rage and roar, how the hills
 tremble before its might! The Lord of
 hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our
 refuge.

But the city of God, enriched with
 flowing waters, is the chosen sanctuary of
 the most High;² God dwells within her,
 and she stands unmoved; with break of
 dawn³ he will grant her deliverance. Na-
 tions may be in turmoil, and thrones totter,
 earth shrink away before his voice; but the
 Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob
 is our refuge. Come near, and see God's
 acts, his marvellous acts done on earth;
 how he puts an end to wars all over the
 world, the bow shivered, the lances shat-
 tered, the shields burnt to ashes! Wait
 quietly, and you shall have proof that I am
 God, claiming empire among the nations,
 claiming empire over the world. The Lord
 of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our
 refuge.

¹ 'Thy throne, O God'; various other ways of taking these words have been suggested, as, for example, 'God is (the support of) thy throne'. None of these has met with general acceptance. This verse and the following are applied to our Lord in the Epistle to the Hebrews (1. 8). ² There may be a reference here to II Par. 32. 4. ³ Literally, 'very early in the morning'; which sense may be intended if those scholars are right who connect this psalm with the defeat of Sennacherib (cf. IV Kg. 19. 35).

46 (47)

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

2 CLAP your hands, all you nations, in
 3 applause; acclaim your God with cries of
 4 rejoicing. The Lord is high above us, and
 5 worthy of dread; he is the sovereign Ruler
 6 of all the earth; he has tamed the nations
 7 to our will, bowed the Gentiles at our feet,
 8 claimed us for his own portion, Jacob the
 9 fair, the well beloved. God goes up, loud
 10 are the cries of victory; the Lord goes up,
 11 loudly the trumpets peal. A psalm, a psalm
 12 for our God, a psalm, a psalm for our
 13 King! God is King of all the earth; sound
 14 the hymn of praise! God reigns over the
 15 heathen, God sits enthroned in holiness.
 16 The rulers of the nations throw in their lot
 17 with us, that worship Abraham's God;
 18 a God so high, he has all earth's princes
 19 for his vassals.

47 (48)

(A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Core.)

2 THE Lord is great, great honour is his due,
 3 here in the city where he, our God, dwells.
 4 Fair rises the peak of his holy mountain,
 5 the pride of the whole world, and the true
 6 pole of earth, mount Zion, the city of the
 7 great King; within those walls, God has
 8 proved himself a sure defence. See, how
 9 the kings of the earth have made common
 10 cause, and met there in arms! At the sight
 11 of her all was bewilderment, and con-
 12 fusion, and dismay; fear took hold of them,
 13 sudden as the throes of a woman in travail;
 14 not more ruinously on ocean-going ships
 15 falls the east wind. Here, in this city of the
 16 Lord of hosts, the city of our own God, we
 17 have proved the tale long since told us, that
 18 God upholds her for all eternity; sheltered
 19 in thy temple, we give thanks for our de-
 20 liverance. O God, wherever thy name is
 21 known on earth, thy praise is told, ever just
 22 in thy dealings; well may the hill of Zion
 23 rejoice, well may the townships of Juda
 24 triumph, at the decrees which thou, Lord,
 25 hast executed. Walk about Zion, make the
 26 round of her towers, and count the number
 27 of them; mark well the defences that are
 28 hers, pass all her strongholds in review;
 29 then give word to the next generation,
 30 Such is the God, who is our God for ever
 31 and ever; our Shepherd eternally.

48 (49)

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core.

A psalm.)

2 LISTEN, you nations far and wide; let all
 3 the world give hearing, poor clods of earth,
 4 and men nobly born, for rich and poor the
 5 same lesson. Here are wise words,
 6 thoughts of a discerning heart; mine to
 7 overhear mysteries, and reveal, with the
 8 harp's music, things of deep import.

9 What need have I to be afraid in troubled
 10 times, when malice dogs my heels and
 11 overtakes me, malice of foes who trust in
 12 their own strength, and boast of their great
 13 possessions? No man can deliver himself
 14 from his human lot, paying a ransom-price
 15 to God; too great is the cost of a man's
 16 soul; never will the means be his to prolong
 17 his days eternally and escape death. True
 18 it is, wise men die; but reckless fools perish
 19 no less; their riches will go to others, and
 20 the grave will be their everlasting home.
 21 Age after age, they will live on there, under
 22 the fields they once called their own. Short
 23 is man's enjoyment of earthly goods;
 24 match him with the brute beasts, and he is
 25 no better than they.

26 Fatal path, that ensnares the reckless!
 27 Pitiful end of the men that love life! There
 28 they lie in the world beneath, huddled like
 29 sheep, with death for their shepherd, the
 30 just for their masters; soon, soon their
 31 image fades, the grave for its tenement.
 32 But my life God will rescue from the
 33 power of that lower darkness, a life that
 34 finds acceptance with him. Do not be
 35 disturbed, then, when a man grows rich,
 36 and there is no end to his household's
 37 magnificence; he cannot take all that with
 38 him when he dies, magnificence will not
 39 follow him to the grave. While life lasts, he
 40 calls himself happy: None but will envy
 41 my success; but soon he will be made one
 42 with the line of his fathers, never again to
 43 see the light. Short is man's careless en-
 44 joyment of earthly goods; match him with
 45 the brute beasts, and he is no better than
 46 they.

49 (50)

2 IT is the Lord God that speaks; his mes-
 3 sage goes out to all the earth, from the sun's
 4 rise to its setting. Out of Zion, in perfect

3 beauty, God comes, revealed; he will keep
silence no longer. Before him goes a raging
fire; there is a whirling storm round about
4 him. So, from on high, he summons
heaven and earth to witness the judgement
5 pronounced on his people: Muster in my
presence my faithful servants, who honour
6 my covenant still with sacrifice. The heavens
themselves pronounce him just, God
who is our judge.

7 Listen, my people, to these words of
mine, listen, Israel, to the protestation I
make thee; I, the God thou ownest as God.
8 I do not find fault with thee over thy
sacrifices; why, all day long thy burnt-
9 offerings smoke before me. But the gifts
I accept are not cattle from thy stock, or
10 buck-goats from thy folds; I own already
every wild beast in the forest, the hills are
mine, and the herds that people them.

11 There is no bird flies in heaven, no life stirs
12 in the country-side, but I know of it. If I
am hungry, I will not complain of it to
thee, I, who am master of earth and all that
13 earth contains. Wouldst thou have me eat
bull's flesh, and drink the blood of goats?
14 The sacrifice thou must offer to God is a
sacrifice of praise, so wilt thou perform thy
15 vows to the most High. So, when thou criest
to me in time of trouble, I will deliver thee;
then thou shalt honour me as thou wilt.

16 But thus, to the sinner, God speaks:
How is it that thou canst repeat my com-
mandments by rote, and boast of my cov-
17 nant with thee, and thou, all the while, hast
no love for the amendment of thy ways,
casting every warning of mine to the
18 winds? Swift thou art to welcome the thief
who crosses thy path, to throw in thy lot
19 with the adulterers. Malice wells up from
thy lips, and thy tongue is a ready engine
20 of deceit; thou wilt sit there in conclave,
speaking evil of thy brother, traducing thy
21 own mother's son. Such were thy ways,
and should I make no sign? Should I let
thee think I am such as thou? Here is thy
reproof; here is thy indictment made plain
22 to thee. Think well on this, you that forget
God, or his hand will fall suddenly, and
23 there will be no delivering you. He honours
me truly, who offers me a sacrifice of
praise; live aright, and you shall see the
saving power of God.

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David, when the prophet Nathan came to reproach him for his adultery with Bethsabee.)

HAVE mercy on me, O God, as thou art ever rich in mercy; in the abundance of thy compassion, blot out the record of my misdeeds. Wash me clean, cleaner yet, from my guilt, purge me of my sin, the guilt which I freely acknowledge, the sin which is never lost to my sight. Thee only my sins have offended; it is thy will I have disobeyed; thy sentence was deserved, and still when thou givest award thou hast right on thy side. For indeed, I was born in sin; guilt was with me already when my mother conceived me. But thou art a lover of faithfulness, and now, deep in my heart, thy wisdom has instructed me. Sprinkle me with a wand of hyssop, and I shall be clean; washed, I shall be whiter than snow; tidings send me of good news and rejoicing, and the body that lies in the dust shall thrill with pride.

Turn thy eyes away from my sins, blot out the record of my guilt; my God, bring a clean heart to birth within me; breathe new life, true life, into my being. Do not banish me from thy presence, do not take thy holy spirit away from me; give me back the comfort of thy saving power, and strengthen me in generous resolve. So will I teach the wicked to follow thy paths; sinners shall come back to thy obedience. My God, my divine Deliverer, save me from the guilt of bloodshed! This tongue shall boast of thy mercies; O Lord, thou wilt open my lips, and my mouth shall tell of thy praise. Thou hast no mind for sacrifice, burnt-offerings, if I brought them, thou wouldst refuse; here, O God, is my sacrifice, a broken spirit; a heart that is humbled and contrite thou, O God, wilt never disdain. Lord, in thy great love send prosperity to Sion, so that the walls of Jerusalem may rise again. Then indeed thou wilt take pleasure in solemn sacrifice, in gift and burnt-offering; then indeed bullocks will be laid upon thy altar.¹

¹ If this verse is part of the original psalm, it seems to imply that the sacrifice of beasts, though of no avail in reparation for grievous sin (verse 18), was a legitimate form of thanksgiving ceremony. (Cf. Ps. 49. 15.)

51 (52)

¹ (To the choir-master. A maskil. Of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, David went into Abimelech's house.)

² WILT thou still take pride, infamous tyrant, in thy power to harm? Evermore
³ thou settest thy heart on mischief; thy words are razor-edged, and thou a traitor.
⁴ Cruelty, never kindness, is thy study,
⁵ treason, never honest speech; well thy false lips love the word that brings men to
⁶ ruin. And will not God destroy thee utterly, root thee up, drive thee from thy home, till thy stock is known among living
⁷ men no more? Honest folk will watch, and wonder, and taunt him then; So much for the man who would have none of God's help, but relied on his store of riches, and found his strength in knavery? And I?
⁸ rooted like a fruitful olive-tree in the house of my God, I will trust for ever in his divine mercy; I will give thee eternal thanks for all thou hast done, and boast, as men should ever boast, of thy name, the faithful for my company.

52 (53)

(To the choir-master. The Melody, Mahalat. A maskil. Of David.)

¹ THERE is no God above us, is the fond thought of reckless hearts. Warped natures everywhere and hateful lives, there is not
² an innocent man among them. God looks down from heaven at the race of men, to find one soul that reflects, and goes in
³ search of him; but no, all have missed the mark and rebelled against him; an innocent man is nowhere to be found. What, can they learn nothing, all these traffickers in iniquity, who feed themselves fat on this people of mine, as if it were bread for their eating, and never invoke God's name?
⁴ What wonder if fear unmans them, where they have no cause for fear? Where are the foes that hemmed thee round?² God has scattered their bones far and wide, forgotten as his enemies must ever be. Oh, may Sion bring deliverance to Israel! Day

of gladness for Jacob, day of Israel's triumph, when God restores the fortunes of his own people.

53 (54)

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A maskil. Of David, when the men of Ziph told Saul that David was in hiding among them.)

¹ LORD, by the virtue of thy name deliver me, let thy sovereign power grant me redress; give a hearing, Lord, to my plea; let me speak, and know thou art listening. Scornful foes take arms against me, fierce foes that grudge me life itself, with no thought of God to check them. Ah, but God is here to help me; the Lord has my safety in his keeping. Let the blow recoil on my persecutors; ever faithful to thy word, do thou overthrow them. So will I joyfully offer thee sacrifice, and praise thy name, Lord, as praised it must ever be; who else has delivered me from all peril, and let me see the downfall of my enemies?

54 (55)

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A maskil. Of David.)

¹ GIVE audience to my prayer, O God; do not spurn this plea of mine; hear and grant relief. No rest I find in my distress, daunted ever by the hue and cry of godless enemies, whose malicious spite would compass my ruin. My heart is full of whirling thoughts; the fear of death stands over me; trembling and terrified, I see perils closing round me. Had I but wings, I cry, as a dove has wings, to fly away and find rest! Far would I flee; the wilderness should be my shelter, so I might find speedy refuge from the whirlwind and the storm.

Plunge them deep, Lord, in ruin, bring dissension into their councils! Do I not see, already, violence and sedition in the city? Day and night they make the round of its walls, and all the while there is wrong and oppression at the heart of it, its treacherous heart; cruelty and cunning walk

¹ *vv.* 1-7. See notes on Ps. 13. In the part common to the two psalms, this one uses 'God' where the earlier psalm uses 'the Lord', but otherwise there is no substantial variation except in verse 6.
² Some think that this verse was inserted to celebrate the destruction of Sennacherib's army (IV Kg. 19. 35).

- 13 ever in its streets. Had some enemy decried me, I could have borne it patiently; some open ill-wisher, I could have sheltered myself from his attack. But thou,
- 14 my second self, my familiar friend! How pleasant was the companionship we shared, thou and I; how lovingly we walked as fellow pilgrims in the house of God! May death overtake them, may the abyss swallow them up alive, their homes, their hearts so tainted with evil!
- 17 Still I will call upon God, and the Lord will save; still at evening and morn and noon I will cry aloud and make my plea known; he will not be deaf to my appeal.
- 19 He will win my soul peace, will rescue me from attack, when many take part against me. He, the God who reigned before time was, will listen to me, will bring them low. Never a change of heart, never the fear of God; not one but will turn against his friend, break his pledged word. Smooth as butter their looks, when their hearts are all hatred; soft as oil their speech, yet never was drawn sword so deadly.
- 23 Cast the burden of thy cares upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee; never will he let thee stumble, his servant if thou be.
- 24 These, O God, thou wilt sink in a pit of ruin; the blood-thirsty, the treacherous, will not live out half their days; but I, Lord, will put my trust in thee.

55

(56)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Yonat Elem Rehoqim. Of David. A miktam. When the Philistines had him in their hands at Gath.)

- 2 HAVE mercy on me, O God, downtrodden
- 3 evermore by man's cruel oppression; evermore my enemies tread me under foot, so many there are to make war upon me. In thee, the most High, I will put my trust
- 5 when peril overtakes me. I claim God's promise; my trust is in God, no mortal threat can daunt me. Evermore they traduce me, have no thought but for my undoing; conspire in secret, watching my
- 7 steps as they plot against my life! O God, requite their treachery; trample on the
- 9 Gentiles in thy anger. My wandering life none knows as thou; no tear of mine but thou dost hoard and record it. One cry raised to thee, and my enemies are driven

back; shall I doubt God is on my side? I claim God's promise; my trust is in God, man's threats cannot daunt me. The vows, which thou claimest from me, O God, my sacrifice of praise shall fulfil; hast thou not saved my life from every peril, my feet from every slip? And shall I not enjoy God's favour, while the light of life is with me?

56

(57)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Do not destroy. Of David. A miktam. When he took refuge from Saul in a cave.)

HAVE mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me; here is a soul that puts its trust in thee, I will take refuge under the shelter of thy wings, till the storms pass by. I will cry out to the most high God, the God who has ever befriended me: may he send aid now from heaven to deliver me, and bring confusion on my oppressors; his mercy, his faithfulness be my speed! Fallen among lions I, that hungrily eat men's flesh; here are envious teeth that bite deeper than spear or arrow, tongues sharp as any sword. O God, mount high above the heavens, till thy glory overshadows the whole earth. See where they have laid a snare for my feet, to bring me low, dug a pit in my path; may it be their own undoing! A true heart, my God, a heart true to thy service; its song, its music are for thee! Wake, my soul, wake, echoes of harp and viol; dawn shall find me watching; so will I give thee thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear it, sing psalms while the Gentiles listen, of thy mercy, high as heaven itself, of thy faithfulness, that reaches to the clouds. O God, mount high above the heavens, till thy glory overshadows the whole earth.

57

(58)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Do not destroy. Of David. A miktam.)

NOBLES all, are they honest words you utter? And you, common folk, do you make just award? See how you devise treachery in your hearts, deal out to this land nothing but oppression! Sinners that left the womb only to go a-straying; rene-

gades and liars their mothers bore them!
 5 They are venomous as serpents, as the asp
 6 that turns a deaf ear and will not listen to
 the snake-charmer's music, skilful player
 7 though he be. My God, break their cruel
 fangs; Lord, shatter their jaws, strong as
 8 the jaws of lions. Like spilt water let them
 run to waste, shoot none but harmless
 9 arrows; melt into nothing, the snail's way,
 perish like the untimely birth that sees
 10 never the light of the sun. Green stalks
 the whirlwind carries away, while yonder
 11 pot still waits for fuel! The innocent man
 will triumph at the sight of their punish-
 12 ment, as he dips his hands in the blood of
 the evil-doer; Sure enough, men will say,
 innocence has its reward, sure enough,
 there is a God who grants redress here on
 earth.

58 (59)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Do not destroy.
 Of David. A miktam. When Saul had his house
 watched, so as to put him to death.)

2 O GOD, deliver me from my enemies,
 3 rescue me from their assaults; thwart their
 treacherous designs, disappoint their lust
 4 for blood. See how they plot against my
 life, how strong is their confederacy! Yet
 never, Lord, through any fault or offence
 5 of mine; unprovoked, they rush to the
 attack. Bestir thyself, come to my side and
 6 witness my wrongs. Lord of hosts, God of
 Israel, awake; a world chastise, and shew
 7 the treacherous no mercy. See how they
 come back at nightfall, like yelping dogs,
 8 to prow! about the city! Tongues that
 boast, lips that rail, as if none could hear
 9 them; and all the while thou, Lord, makest
 light of them, thou, in whose esteem all the
 10 nations are as nothing. To thee I look, the
 God who strengthens me, the God who
 11 watches over me; my God, and all my hope
 of mercy.

With that divine aid, may I triumph
 2 over my enemies. Smite them down, my
 God, before they compass the overthrow of
 my people; let that power of thine overawe
 and crush them, my protector, my Master!
 3 Down with the guilty tongues, the boastful

lips; let their own pride ensnare them,
 their cursing and their lies. Ruinous, 14
 ruinous be thy vengeance, overwhelming
 them; shew them that there is a God who
 rules over Jacob, rules over the utmost
 ends of the earth. Back come they at night- 15
 fall, like yelping dogs, and prow! about the
 city; far and wide they will roam in search 16
 of their prey, and snarl with rage when
 they go unfed at last.¹ And I, ere long, 17
 will be proclaiming thy greatness, will be
 triumphing in the mercy thou hast shewn
 me, thou, my stronghold and my refuge in
 my hour of peril. To thee I will sing, the 18
 God who strengthens me, the God who
 watches over me, my God, and all my hope
 of mercy.

59 (60)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Lily of the Law.
 A miktam. Of David. To be used for teaching.
 This was when he marched against the Syrians of
 Naharaim and Soba, and Joab on his way home
 defeated the men of Edom in the Valley of Salt,
 twelve thousand of them.)

T O O long, O God, hast thou disowned us, 3
 and scattered our armies in flight; thy
 wrath forgo, and bring us back to our own.
 Heal the wounds of the land thou hast 4
 shaken and torn asunder, the land that
 trembles still. Heavy the burden thou 5
 didst lay on us; such a draught thou didst
 brew for us as made our senses reel. But 6
 now thou hast set up a standard to rally thy
 faithful servants, and to protect them from
 the archers' onset; now bring aid to the 7
 men thou lovest, give our prayer answer,
 and lift thy right hand to save.

God's word came to us from his sanc- 8
 tuary, In triumph I will divide up Sichem,
 and parcel out the valley of Tents; to me 9
 Galaad, to me Manasses belongs; Ephraim
 is my helmet, Juda the staff I bear. Now 10
 Moab, too, shall be my drudge; over
 Edom I will claim my right; I will lead the
 Philistines away in triumph.² Such was 11
 the oracle;³ but now who is to lead me on
 my march against this fortress, who is to
 find an entrance for me into Edom, when 12
 thou, O God, hast disowned us, and wilt
 not go into battle with our armies? It is 13

¹ *vv.* 15, 16. The enemies of the Psalmist, who are patrolling the city to keep him in, will find that he has escaped, and will be scattered far and wide in their disappointed search for him. ² *v.* 8-10. This would seem to be a quotation from some old prophecy, referring to the conquest of Chanaan. 'Claim my right' is literally 'cast out my shoe'; cf. Ruth 4. 7. ³ The words 'such was the oracle' are not expressed in the original.

- 14 thou that must deliver us from peril; vain is the help of man. Only through God can we fight victoriously; only he can trample our oppressors in the dust.

60 (61)

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. Of David.)

- 2 LISTEN, Lord, to this cry of appeal; do not let my prayer go unheeded, though it be from the ends of the earth that I call upon thee. When my heart misgives me, thou wilt set me high up on a rock, thou wilt bring me repose; thou, my only hope, my strong tower against the assault of my enemies. Oh let me dwell for ever in thy tabernacle, let me take refuge under the shelter of thy wings! Lord, thou hast listened to my prayer, a domain thou hast given me where thy name is held in awe.
- 7 Year upon year do thou add to the king's reign; while generations come and go, may his life still last. For ever may he reign under God's favour; let mercy and faithfulness be his escort. Eternally I will sing thy praises, day after day perform my vows.

61 (62)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Idithun. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 NO rest has my soul but in God's hands; to him I look for deliverance. I have no other stronghold, no other deliverer but him; safe in his protection, I fear no deadly fall. Still one man my enemies single out for their onslaught, not gaping hedge or ruinous wall more ripe for overthrow;
- 5 from my safe fastness they would fain dislodge me, ready liars that speak me fair, but ever with a curse in their hearts. Yet even now, my soul, leave thyself in God's hands; all my trust is in him. He is my stronghold and my deliverer, my protector, that makes me stand unmoved.
- 8 God is all my defence and all my boast; my rock-fastness, my refuge is in God.
- 9 Israelites, put ever your trust in him, and lay the homage of your hearts at his feet; God is our defence.
- 10 Man is a breath that passes; in Adam's sons there is no trust; high in the scales their rise, weighed all together and lighter

than a breath. Put your faith in extortion no more, boast no more of plunder; set never your heed on mounting store of riches. Not once, but twice I have heard God's voice of warning; all power is God's. To thee, Lord, mercy belongs; thou wilt repay every man the reward of his deeds.

62 (63)

(A psalm. Of David. This was when he was in the desert of Juda.)

O GOD, thou art my God; how eager my quest for thee, body athirst and soul longing for thee, like some parched wilderness, where stream is none! So in the holy place, I contemplate thee, ready for the revelation of thy greatness, thy glory. To win thy favour is dearer to me than life itself; my songs of praise can no more be withheld. So, all my life long, I will bless thee, holding up my hands in honour of thy name, my heart filled, as with some rich feast, my mouth, in joyful accents, singing thy praise. My thoughts shall go out to thee at dawn, as I lie awake remembering thee, and the protection thou hast given me. Gladly I take shelter under thy wings, cling close to thee, borne up by thy protecting hand. In vain do my enemies plot against my life, soon to be swallowed up in the depths of earth, a prey to the sword, carrion for jackals! The king shall triumph in God's protection, blessed as they are ever blessed who take their vows in his name; silence shall fall on the lips that muttered treason.

63 (64)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

O GOD, listen to my prayer when I plead with thee, save me from the threats of my mortal foe. Thine to defend me from this conspiracy of malice, this throng of evil-doers; the tongues that wound like a sharpened sword, the poisoned words aimed at me, like arrows. Stealthily they attack the innocent: suddenly, from a safe vantage-point, they wound him. See them pledged to an infamous resolve, plotting to lay snares for me, sure that they will go unseen! With what care they hatch their designs, planning treason double-dyed!

Let the thoughts of man's heart be deep as they will, yet God has arrows, too, to smite them with, sudden wounds to deal them; all their conspiring plays them false. Scornfully the onlookers shake their heads, awe-stricken every one; who but will acclaim God's power, who but will ponder his great acts? Honest men will rejoice and put their trust in the Lord; upright hearts will not boast in vain.

64

(65)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David. A song.)

O GOD, thou shalt yet have praise in Sion; to thee let the vow be paid, hearer of prayer. To thee all mankind must look for pardon, weighed down by its sinfulness till thou dost forgive. Blessed the man on whom thy choice falls, whom thou takest to dwell with thee in thy own domain! Fill these hearts with love of thy house, with awe of thy holy temple. Wonderful the miracles thou shewest when in mercy thou dost hear us, O God our Saviour; at the bounds of earth, far over the seas, in thee we hope. What power girds thee about! In thy strength the mountains stand firm; thou dost calm the raging of the sea, raging sea-billows, ay, and the turmoil of angry nations. Thy portents strike terror at the world's end, fill the lands of sunrise and sunset with rejoicing. And now thou hast brought relief to this land of ours, hast watered and greatly enriched it; deep flows the channel whence thy divine providence grants us food; long time thou dost prepare it, watering the furrow, loosening the clods, multiplying, with soft showers, the grain. Thy bounty it is that crowns the year; where thy feet have passed, the stream of plenty flows; flows through the desert pastures, till all the hill-sides are gaily clad, herds through the fields, and the valleys stand deep in corn; the shout of joy everywhere, everywhere the hymn of praise.

65

(66)

(To the choir-master. A song. A psalm.)

LET the whole world keep holiday in God's presence, sing praise to his name,

pay homage to his glory! Cry out to God, What dread, Lord, thy acts inspire! How great is that might of thine, which makes thy enemies cringe before thee! Let the whole earth worship thee, sing of thee, sing praises to thy name. Come near, and see what God does, how wonderful he is in his dealings with human kind, how he turns the sea into land, and lets men cross a river dry-shod; ours to rejoice in his mercy. In that power of his he reigns for ever, and has eyes for what the Gentiles do; let rebellious souls tame their pride. Bless the name of our God, you Gentiles, echo the sound of his praise.

God's will is we should live yet; he does not suffer our steps to falter. Yes, Lord, thou hast put us to the proof, tested us as men test silver in the fire; led us into a snare, and bowed our backs with trouble, while human masters rode us down; our way led through fire and water, yet in the end thou hast granted us relief. See, I come into thy house with burnt-offerings, to pay thee all the vows these lips have framed, this mouth has uttered, when trouble came upon me. Fat burnt-offerings of sheep shall be thine, and the smoke of ram's flesh; bullocks and goats shall be thy sacrifice. Come and give ear, all you who worship God, while I tell of the great mercies he has shewn me; how this voice of mine cried out to him, this tongue did him honour. Would God listen to me, if my heart were set on wrong? And God has listened to me; given heed to my cry for succour. Blessed be God, who does not reject my prayer, does not withhold his mercy from me.

66

(67)

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.)

MAY God be merciful to us, and bless us; may he grant us the favour of his smile. Make known thy will, O God, wide as earth; make known among all nations thy saving power. Honour to thee, O God, from the nations, honour from all the nations! The Gentiles, too, may rejoice and be glad; a whole world abides thy judgement, and the Gentiles, too, obey on earth thy sovereignty. Honour to thee, O God,

from the nations, honour from all the nations!
 7 The land has yielded its harvest; such bounty God, our own God, affords.
 8 God grant us ever his blessing, and may earth, far and wide, do him reverence.

67 (68)

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.
 A song.)

2 LET God bestir himself, needs must his foes be scattered, their malice take flight
 3 before his coming. Vanish the wicked at God's presence as the smoke vanishes, as
 4 wax melts at the fire, while the just keep holiday and rejoice at the sight of him, glad
 5 and content. Sing, then, in God's honour, praise his name with a psalm; a royal progress
 6 through the wilderness for the God whose name tells of omnipotence!
 7 Triumph in his presence; he is a father to the orphan, and gives the widow redress,
 8 this God who dwells apart in holiness.
 9 This is the God who makes a home for the outcast, restores the captives to a land of plenty,
 10 leaves none but the rebels to find their abode in the wilderness.
 11 O God, when thou didst go forth at the head of thy people, on that royal progress
 12 of thine through the desert, how the earth trembled, how the sky broke at God's
 13 coming, how even Sinai shook, when the God of Israel came! And on this thy own
 14 land, O God, thou sendest rain abundantly; all parched it lies, and thou dost bring it
 15 relief. Pasture-land of thy own flock; and shouldst thou not make bounteous provision
 16 here, O God, for thy pensioners?
 17 Word has come from the Lord, good news borne on a multitude of lips: Routed
 18 the kings, routed their armies; they have left their spoils for housewives to carry
 19 away; never shone silver so bright on a dove's feathers, never gold so fair on a
 20 dove's wings; and you, all the while, resting quiet among the sheep-folds! White
 21 fell the snows on Salmon, when the Almighty put kings to rout.¹
 22 Basan's hills are high, Basan's hills are

rugged; must you turn your eyes, rugged
 23 hills, towards God's mountain, and envy what you see? The mountain where God
 24 loves and will ever love to dwell. See where
 25 God comes, with chariots innumerable for his escort; thousands upon thousands;
 26 comes from Sinai to this his sanctuary. Thou dost mount up on high, thou dost
 27 capture thy spoil, and men must be thy tribute,² will they or no, yonder heathen
 28 must have the Lord God for their neighbour. Blessed be the Lord now and ever,
 29 the God who bears our burdens, and wins us the victory. Our God is a God of
 30 deliverance; the Lord is our Master, that saves men from peril of death. God will
 31 smite the heads of his enemies, smite the proud locks of the men who live at ease in
 32 their wickedness. I will restore my people, the Lord says; I will restore them to their
 33 land, from Basan, from the shore of the high seas. Soon the blood of thy enemies
 34 will stain thy feet, never a jackal that follows thee but shall lick its prey. Thou comest,
 35 O God, a mark for all eyes; he comes, my God and my king, to visit his sanctuary.
 36 Before him go the singers, and the minstrels follow, while the maids play on their
 37 tambours between: Give praise to the Lord God in this solemn assembly, sons
 38 of Israel! Here is Benjamin, youngest of the tribes, that marches in the van; here
 39 are the chieftains of Juda with their companies, chieftains, too, from Zabulon,
 40 chieftains from Nephtali.

Shew thy power, O God, shew thy
 41 Divine power, perfect thy own achievement for us; to honour thy temple at
 42 Jerusalem, kings shall bring gifts before thee. Tame the wild beasts of the marshes,
 43 fierce bulls that lord it over the peaceful herd of nations; down fall they, bringing
 44 silver pieces for their ransom. Scatter the nations that delight in war, till Egypt sends
 45 hither her princes, till Ethiopia makes her peace with God. Kingdoms of the earth,
 46 raise your voices in God's honour, sing a psalm to the Lord; a psalm to God, who
 47 mounts on the heavens, the immemorial heavens, and utters his word in a voice of
 48 thunder. Pay honour to God, the God whose splendour rests over Israel, who

¹ The early part of this psalm clearly refers to the victory of Barac over King Sisera; verses 8 and 9 being actually repeated from Jg. 5. 4 and 5, and verse 14 from Jg. 5. 16. ² St Paul in Eph. 4. 5. apparently using some other text, has 'gave gifts to men' instead of 'men must be thy tribute'.

holds dominion high among the clouds.
 16 Awe dwells about him in his holy place!
 The God of Israel gives his people
 strength and courage; blessed be God!

68 (69)

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Lilies.
 Of David.)

2 O God, save me; see how the waters close
 3 about me, shoulder-high! I am like one
 who sticks fast in deep mire, with no
 ground under his feet, one who has ven-
 4 tured out into mid-ocean, to be drowned
 by the storm. Hoarse my throat with
 crying wearily for help; my eyes ache with
 5 looking up for mercy to my God. Count-
 less as the hairs on my head are my wanton
 enemies, I am no match for the oppressors
 that wrong me. Should I make amends to
 6 them, I, that never robbed them? O God,
 thou knowest my rash doings, no fault of
 7 mine is hidden from thy sight. Master,
 Lord of hosts, shall ill fortune of mine
 bring shame to those who trust in thee,
 8 make men repent of looking for aid to thee,
 the God of Israel? It is for thy sake that
 I have met with reproach, that I have so
 9 often blushed with confusion, an outcast
 among my own brethren, a stranger to my
 own mother's children. Was it not jealousy
 for the honour of thy house that consumed
 me; was it not uttered against thee, the
 reproach I bore?

1 What more could I do? I humbled
 myself before them by fasting; and that,
 2 too, was matter for finding fault; I dressed
 in sackcloth, and they made a by-word of
 3 me. Idlers in the market-place taunt me;
 the drunkards make a song of me over
 4 their wine. To thee, Lord, I make my
 prayer; never man more needed thy good
 will. Listen to me, O God, full of mercy
 as thou art, faithful as thou art to thy
 5 promise of aid. Save me from sinking in
 the mire, rescue me from my enemies,
 from the deep waters that surround me;
 6 let me not sink under the flood, swallowed
 up in its depths, and the well's mouth
 7 close above me. Listen to me, Lord, of thy
 gracious mercy, look down upon me in the
 8 abundance of thy pity; do not turn thy face
 away from thy servant in this time of

¹ Mt. 27. 48.² Rom. 11. 9.³ Ac. 1. 20.

trouble, give a speedy answer to my prayer.
 Draw near in my distress, and grant deli-
 19 verance; relieve me, so hard pressed by
 my enemies. Lord, thou knowest how
 20 they reproach me, how I blush with
 shame; thou seest how many are my per-
 secutors. Heart-broken with that shame,
 21 I pine away, looking round for pity, where
 pity is none, for comfort, where there is no
 22 comfort to be found. They gave me gall to
 eat, and when I was thirsty they gave me
 vinegar to drink.¹ Let their feast be turned
 23 into a trap, a net to catch them and theirs,²
 ever the blind eye be theirs, ever the
 24 halting loin. Pour out thy anger upon
 them, let them be overtaken by the tide of
 thy vengeance; let their dwelling-place be
 26 deserted, their tents for ever uninhabited.³
 Who is it they persecute? A man already
 27 afflicted by thee; hard was my hurt to bear,
 and these have added to it. Do thou add
 28 guilt to guilt in their reckoning; let them
 never claim thy acquittal; let their names
 29 be blotted out from the record of the
 living, and never be written among the
 just.

See how friendless I am, and how dis-
 30 tressed! Let thy help, O God, sustain me.
 I will sing in praise of God's name, herald
 31 it gratefully; a more acceptable sacrifice,
 32 this, to the Lord than any young bullock,
 for all its promise of horn and hoof. Here
 33 is a sight to make the afflicted rejoice; to
 cheer men's spirits in their quest for God.
 The Lord listens to the prayer of the desti-
 34 tute; he does not forget his servants in their
 chains. To him be praise from sky, earth
 35 and sea, and from all the creatures that
 move about them. God will grant deli-
 36 verance to Sion; the cities of Juda will rise
 from their ruins, inhabited now and held
 37 firmly in possession, an inheritance for the
 race that serves him, a home for all true
 lovers of his name.

69 (70)

(To the choir-master. Of David.
 A commemoration.⁴)

DEIGN, O God, to set me free; Lord,
 2 make haste to help me. Disappoint them,
 3 put them to the blush, the enemies who
 plot against my life! Baffled let them go

⁴ This psalm is nearly a repetition of Ps. 39. 14-18.

their way, that rejoice at my ill fortune;
 4 slink away in confusion, that crowded over
 5 me so loud! Triumphant joy be theirs,
 who long for thee; Praise to the Lord, be
 ever their song, who look eagerly now for
 6 thy succour. Thou seeest me helpless and
 destitute; my God, help me. Thou art my
 champion and my deliverer; Lord, do not
 delay thy coming.

70

(71)

To thee, O God, I turn for succour; may
 2 I never be disappointed! Rescue and deli-
 ver me, faithful as thou art; listen to my
 3 cry for succour. Let me find in thee a
 rock-fastness, a citadel of defence; I have
 no other stronghold, no other refuge, but
 4 thee. Rescue me, O God, from the power of
 the wicked, from the grasp of lawlessness
 5 and oppression; thou, my God and Master,
 the hope and confidence of my youth.
 6 Thou hast upheld me from birth, thou hast
 guarded me ever since I left my mother's
 7 womb; ever in thee was my trust. Men
 stare at me now as a strange portent,¹ so
 signal the protection thou hast given me.
 8 And evermore praise was on my lips, my
 constant theme thy glory.

9 Do not cast me off now, in my old age;
 slowly my strength ebbs, do not thou for-
 10 sake me. A mark thou seeest me for envious
 eyes and tongues; they conspire together,
 11 and whisper, God has abandoned him;
 now is the time to overtake and seize him;
 12 no one can bring him rescue now. O God,
 do not keep thy distance from me; hasten,
 13 my God, to aid me. Defeat their plot
 against my life, and bring it to nothing;
 cover my ill-wishers with confusion and
 shame.

14 Still will I hope on, praising thee ever
 15 more and more. Day in, day out, these
 lips shall tell of thy faithfulness, of thy
 saving power, and find no end to them;
 16 thy divine wonders, thy matchless justice,
 17 Lord, they shall proclaim. It is thou, O
 God, that hast inspired me ever since the
 days of my youth, and still I am found
 18 telling the tale of thy wonders. O God, do
 not fail me, now when I am old and grey-
 headed, till I have made known the proofs

of thy power to this, to all the generations
 that will follow; that faithfulness of thine
 which reaches up, O God, to the heavens,
 so signally made manifest. There is none
 like thee, O God, none like thee. Ah, how
 2 often thou hast burdened me with bitter
 trouble! And still thou wouldst relent, and
 give me back life, and bring me up again
 from the very depths of the earth. Lift my
 3 head high; turn back, and comfort me. So
 true to thy word, and shall I not give thee
 thanks with psalm-music, praise thee on
 the harp, O God, the Holy One of Israel?
 Gladly these lips will sing of thee, this
 4 heart, which owes thee its deliverance.
 Day in, day out, I will repeat the story of
 thy faithfulness, what shame fell, what
 confusion, on the men who sought to
 wrong me.

71

(72)

(Of Solomon.)

GRANT to the king, O God, thy own skill
 in judgement; the inheritor of a throne,
 may he be just, as thou art just; may he
 give thy people right awards, and to thy
 poor, redress. Such the harvest his sub-
 jects shall reap, peace on every mountain,
 justice on every hill-side. Watch and ward
 he will keep over the friendless, protect the
 children of the poor, and crush the op-
 pressor. Ageless as sun or moon he shall
 endure; kindly as the rain that drops on
 the meadow grass, as the showers that
 water the earth. Justice in his days shall
 thrive, and the blessings of peace; and may
 those days last till the moon shines no
 more.

From sea to sea, from the great river to
 the ends of earth, his sway shall reach. In
 his presence rebels shall bend the knee, all
 his enemies will be humbled in the dust;
 gifts shall flow in from the lords of Tharsis
 and the islanders, tribute from the kings
 of Arabia and of Saba; all kings must needs
 bring their homage, all nations serve him.
 He will give the poor redress when they
 cry to him, destitute folk, with none to
 befriend them; in their need and helpless-
 2 ness, they shall have his compassion. Their
 lives he will take into his keeping, set them

¹ It is not clear in what sense the Psalmist was a portent or sign to his contemporaries, but the context suggests that he may be referring to his great age, and God's long preservation of him.

free from the power of wrong and oppression, dearly avenge their blood. Long life shall be his, and gold from Arabia shall be given him; men will pray for him continually, bless his name evermore. The land shall have good store of corn, high up the hill-sides, rustling like the woods of Lebanon; shall multiply its citizens like grass on the ground. For ever let his name be used in blessing, a name to endure while the sun gives light; in him all the tribes of the earth shall be enriched, all the nations shall extol him.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who does wonderful deeds as none else, and blessed for ever be his glorious name; all the earth shall be filled with his glory, Amen, Amen.

72

(73)

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

WHAT bounty God shews, what divine bounty, to the upright, to the pure of heart! Yet I was near losing my foothold, felt the ground sink under my steps, such heart-burning had I at seeing the good fortune of sinners that defy his law; for them, never a pang; healthy and sleek their bodies shew. Not for these to share man's common lot of trouble; the plagues which afflict human kind still pass them by. No wonder if pride clings to them like a necklace, if they flaunt, like fine clothes, their wrong-doing. From those pampered hearts what malice proceeds, what vile schemes are hatched! Ever jeering, ever talking maliciously, throned on high they preach injustice; their clamour reaches heaven, and their false tales win currency on earth.

Enviously the men of my own race look on, to see them draining life's cup to the full; Can God, they ask, be aware of this? Does the most High know of all that passes? Look at these sinners, how they live at peace, how they rise to greatness! Why then, thought I, it is to no purpose that I have kept my heart true, and washed my hands clean in pureness of living; still, all the while, I am plagued for it, and no

morning comes but my scourging is renewed. Was I to share their thoughts? Nay, that were to put the whole company of thy children in the wrong. I set myself to read the riddle, but it proved a hard search, until I betook myself to God's sanctuary, and considered, there, what becomes of such men at last. The truth is, thou art making a slippery path for their feet, ready to plunge them in ruin; in a moment they are fallen, in a storm of terrors vanished and gone. And thou, Lord, dost rise up and brush aside all their imaginings, as a waking man his dream.

What if my mind was full of bitterness, what if I was pierced to the heart? I was all dumbness, I was all ignorance, standing there like a brute beast in thy presence. Yet ever thou art at my side, ever holdest me by my right hand. Thine to guide me with thy counsel, thine to welcome me into glory at last. What else does heaven hold for me, but thyself? What charm for me has earth, here at thy side? What though flesh of mine, heart of mine, should waste away? Still God will be my heart's stronghold, eternally my inheritance. Lost those others may be, who desert thy cause, lost are all those who break their troth with thee; I know no other content but clinging to God, putting my trust in the Lord, my Master; within the gates of royal Sion I will be the herald of thy praise.

73

(74)

(A maskil. Of Asaph.)

O GOD, hast thou altogether abandoned us? Sheep of thy own pasturing, must we feel the fires of thy vengeance? Bethink thee of the company thou hast gathered, long ago; of the tribe thou hast chosen to be thy domain; of mount Sion, where thou hast thy dwelling-place. Hither turn thy steps, where all is ruin irretrievable; see what havoc thy enemies have wrought in the holy place, how their malice has raged in thy very precincts,¹ setting up its emblems for a trophy of conquest. Blow after blow, like woodmen in the forest, they have plied their axes, brought it down,

¹ Literally, 'thy solemn feast'.

- 7 with pick and mallet, to the ground. They have set fire to thy sanctuary, sullied the dwelling-place of thy glory in the dust.
- 8 They think to destroy us like one man, sweep away every shrine of God in the land. Our own emblems are nowhere to be seen; there are no prophets left now, none can tell how long we must endure.
- 10 O God, shall our enemy taunt us everlastingly, shall blasphemy still defy thy name? Why dost thou withhold thy hand? That right hand of thine, must it always lie idle in thy bosom?
- 12 Mine is a King who reigned before time was; here on earth he was the means to bring deliverance. What power but thine could sunder the shifting sea, crush the power of the monster beneath its waters; shatter Leviathan's power, and give him up as prey to the sea-beasts?¹ Thou didst open up fountains and streams of water; thou, too, madest the swollen rivers run dry. Thine is the day, thine the night; moon and sun are of thy appointment; thou hast fixed all the bounds of earth, madest the summer, madest the cool of the year.
- 18 Wilt thou take no heed, when thy enemies taunt thee, and in their recklessness set the divine name at defiance? Must the dove be the vulture's prey? Souls unbefriended, but for thee, wilt thou leave us quite forgotten? Bethink thee of thy covenant; everywhere oppression lurks, or walks openly through the fields. Do not let the humble go away disappointed; teach the poor and the helpless to exalt thy name. Bestir thyself, O God, to vindicate thy own cause; do not forget the taunts which reckless men hurl at thee, day after day; do not overlook them, the triumphant shouts of thy enemies, the ever growing clamour that here defies thee.

74

(75)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Do not destroy.
A psalm. Of Asaph. A song.)

- 2 WE praise thee, O God, and, praising thee, call upon thy name, tell the story of thy

wondrous deeds. When the time is ripe, I will judge strictly; earth rocks to its fall, and all that dwell on it; I alone support its fabric.² Rebel no more, I cry to the rebels, Abate your pride, to the transgressors; would they match themselves against the most High, hurl defiance at God? Look east, look west, it will avail you nothing; no help comes from the desert, or the high hills; it is God who rules all, humbling one man and exalting another. In the Lord's hand foams a full cup of spiced wine; he holds it to men's lips, that must empty it to the dregs, sinners everywhere must drink them. Evermore will I triumph, singing praises to the God of Jacob; mine to crush the pride of every sinner, and raise high the courage of the just.

75

(76)

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments.)

A psalm. Of Asaph. A song.

IT is in Juda God makes himself known, in Israel that his name is extolled; there, in Salem, he makes his abode, dwells in Sion. It was there he broke the archers' volleys, broke shield, and sword, and battle array. How princely was thy dawning over the everlasting hills! Brave hearts, foiled of their purpose, they slept their long sleep; lay there, no hand stirring, the warriors in their pride; lay there, chariots and horsemen, overthrown, God of Jacob, at thy word of rebuke.

Who can resist thee, so terrible, so sudden in thy anger? Loud rings in heaven the doom thou utterest; earth trembles and is silent when God rouses himself to execute his sentence, giving redress to those who are scorned on earth. Its madness tamed, Edom shall do thee honour; to thee the spared remnant of Emath shall keep holiday. To the Lord your God let vows be made and paid; bring gifts from every side to God, the terrible; he it is that crows the hearts of princes, feared among all the kings of the earth.

¹ vs. 12-15. Some think these verses refer to the escape of Israel from Egypt and the miracles done in the wilderness, Leviathan (perhaps the crocodile) being used as a symbol of Egypt. Others think the whole is an allegorical account of the Creation.

² vs. 3, 4. It is not clear whether the speaker is God or man, nor whether he is still the speaker in verses 5 sqq. The two verses are ordinarily interpreted as God's own utterance, but a comparison of verse 10 below suggests that an earthly judge may be intended.

76 (77)

(To the choir-master. Melody: Idithun.
Of Asaph. A psalm.)

1 A CRY to my God in loud appeal, a cry to
2 my God, to win his hearing! To the Lord
3 I look when distress comes upon me; in
4 his presence I lift up my hands amid the
5 darkness, never wearied; grief like mine
6 there is no comforting. Of God I bethink
7 me, yet sighing still; of God I muse, yet
8 ever faint-hearted. Sleepless that thought
9 holds me, yet bewildered and dumb. I re-
10 flect upon days long past, the immemorial
11 years possess my mind; deep musings
12 occupy my thoughts at midnight, never
13 will my mind be at rest. Can it be that God
14 will always leave us forsaken, will never
15 shew us again his old kindness? Can his
16 favour desert us altogether, his promise be
17 set aside eternally? Can God forget to be
18 gracious, can anger move him to withhold
19 his mercy? For me, I tell myself, this
20 sorrow was reserved; the most High has
21 altered the fashion of his dealings with
22 men.

1 To remember all the Lord has done, to
2 recall those wonderful acts of thine, long
3 ago! To ponder over all thy doings, pass
4 thy wonders in review! Thy path, O God,
5 is hedged about with holiness; what god
6 is great as our God is great? Thy own
7 wonderful acts acclaim thy Deity; even to
8 the Gentiles thou wouldst make thy power
9 known, by forcing them to set free thy
10 people, the sons of Jacob and of Joseph.
11 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters
12 trembled at the sight of thee, moved to
13 their inmost depths; how the waves roared,
14 how the clouds volleyed rain, what echoes
15 from their midst! To and fro thy arrows
16 passed, thy crackling thunders rolled, till
17 all the world shone with thy lightning, and
18 the troubled earth shook. Thy way led
19 through the sea, the deep tide made a road
20 for thee, and none may read the traces of
21 thy passage, where thou, with Moses and
22 Aaron for thy shepherds, didst bring thy
23 people out on their journey.

77 (78)

(A maskil. Of Asaph.)

1 LISTEN, my people, to this testament of
2 mine, do not turn a deaf ear to the words
3 I utter; I speak to you with mysteries for
4 my theme, read the riddles of long ago. It
5 is a story often heard, well known among
6 us; have not our fathers told it to us? And
7 shall we keep it back from their children,
8 from the generation which follows? Speak
9 we of God's praise, of his great power, of
10 the wonderful deeds he did. He gave
11 Jacob a rule to live by, framed for Israel a
12 law, commanding our fathers to hand on
13 the message, so that a new generation
14 might learn it; sons would be born to take
15 their place, and teach it to their own sons
16 after them. They were to put their trust in
17 God, ever remembering his divine dealings
18 with them, ever loyal to his commands;
19 they were not to be like their fathers, a
20 stubborn and defiant breed, a generation
21 of false aims, of a spirit that broke faith
22 with God.

So it was that the sons of Ephraim, bow
1 in hand,¹ were routed in the day of battle.
2 They were false to God's covenant, refused
3 to follow his law, as if they had forgotten
4 all his mercies, all those wonderful deeds
5 of his they had witnessed. Had not their
6 fathers seen wonders enough in Egypt, on
7 the plains of Tanis, when he parted the
8 sea to let them pass through it, making its
9 waters stand firm as a mound of earth;
10 when he led them with a cloud by day, with
11 glowing fire all through the night? He
12 pierced the rock, too, in the desert, and
13 slaked their thirst as if from some deep
14 pool, bidding the very stones yield water,
15 till fountains gushed from them, abundant
16 as rivers.

And still they went on offending him,
1 there in the wilderness, rebelling against
2 the most High, challenging God in their
3 thoughts to give them the food they craved
4 for. Defiantly they asked, Can God spread
5 a table for us in the wilderness? True, he
6 smote the rock, and made water flow from
7 it, till the stream ran in flood, but can he
8 give bread too, and provide meat for his
9 people? All this the Lord heard, and his
10

¹ 'Ephraim' is probably used here to represent the people of Israel, as often in the prophets, who contrast it with 'Juda' (cf. verse 67). The reference may be to the refusal to invade Palestine (Num. 14), but the chronology of this psalm is difficult to disentangle.

indignation blazed out; its mounting fires
 Jacob had fed, its fury must break on
 22 Israel. What, had they no faith in God, no
 23 trust in his power to save? He laid his
 command upon the clouds above them,
 24 threw open the doors of heaven, and rained
 down manna for them to eat. The bread of
 25 heaven was his gift to them; man should
 eat the food of angels,¹ and so their want
 26 should be supplied abundantly. Next, he
 summoned his east wind from the sky: it
 was his power brought the southern gale,
 27 raining down meat on them thick as dust,
 birds on the wing, plentiful as the sea-sand.
 28 Into their very camp it fell, close about their
 29 tents; and they ate, and took their fill. All
 30 they asked, he granted them; and now,
 their craving still unsatisfied, while the
 31 food was yet in their mouths, God's anger
 against them reached its height, and slew
 their lordliest, brought them low, all the
 flower of Israel.

32 Yet, with all this, they continued to
 offend him; all his wonderful deeds left
 33 them faithless still. And ever he took away
 their lives untimely, hurried their days to
 34 an end. When he threatened them with
 death, they would search after him, feel
 35 their need of God once more; they would
 remind themselves that it was God who
 had protected them, his almighty power
 36 that had delivered them. But still they
 were lying lips, they were false tongues
 37 that spoke to him; their hearts were not
 true to him, no loyalty bound them to his
 38 covenant. Yet, such is his mercy, he would
 still pardon their faults, and spare them
 from destruction; again and again he
 39 curbed his indignation, to his vengeance
 would not give place. He would not forget
 that they were flesh and blood, no better
 40 than a breath of wind, that passes by and
 never returns. How often the desert saw
 them in revolt against him, how often, in
 those solitudes, they defied his anger!
 41 Always new challenges to God's power,
 new rebellions against the Holy One of
 Israel.

42 Had they forgotten all he did for them,
 that day when he set them free from the
 43 power of their oppressor, all those miracles
 among the men of Egypt, those portents
 44 in the plain of Tanis, when he turned all

their streams, all their channels into blood,
 so that they could not drink? He sent out
 45 flies, to their ruin, frogs to bring devastation
 on them, gave all their harvest over to
 46 the caterpillar, their tillage to the locust,
 sent hail on their vineyards, frost on their
 47 mulberry-trees, let the hail have its way
 48 with their cattle, the lightning with their
 flocks. He let his anger loose on them in
 49 all its vehemence; what rage, what fury,
 what havoc, as the angels of destruction
 thronged about them! So, the way made
 50 ready for his vengeance, he took toll of
 their lives, doomed even their cattle to the
 51 pestilence; on every first-born creature in
 Egypt, on the first-fruits of increase in all
 the dwellings of Cham, his stroke fell.
 52 Then, like a shepherd, he set his own
 people on their way, led them, his own
 flock, through the wilderness; guided
 53 them in safety, free from all alarm, while
 the sea closed over their enemy. So he
 54 brought them to that holy land of his, the
 mountain slopes he took, with his own
 right hand for title; so he drove out the
 55 heathen at their onset, parcelled out the
 land to them by lot, to each his own inheri-
 tance, bidding the tribes of Israel dwell
 where the heathen had dwelt before them.

These were the men who defied the
 56 most high God, and rebelled against him;
 would not observe his decrees, but turned
 57 away and broke faith with him as their
 fathers had done, like a bow that plays the
 archer false; made mountain shrines, to
 58 court his anger, carved images, to awake
 his jealousy! The Lord heard the bruit of
 59 it, and burned with anger, cast Israel away
 in bitter scorn; he forsook his tabernacle
 60 in Silo, that tabernacle where once he
 dwelt among men. Plunder, now, in the
 61 enemy's hands, the ark that is shrine of his
 strength and majesty; he would leave his
 62 people at the mercy of the sword, disdain
 his own inheritance. Their young men fed
 63 the flames, and the maidens must go un-
 wed; their priests fell by the sword, and
 64 never a widow left to mourn for them.

Then suddenly, like a man that wakes
 65 up from sleep, like some warrior that lay,
 till now, bemused with wine, the Lord
 66 roused himself; he smote his enemies as
 they turned to flee,² branded them for ever

¹ Literally, 'of the strong'; but the Angels are probably meant; cf. *Wisd.* 16. 10.

² Or possibly
'in their buttocks' (*I Kg.* 5. 9).

67 with shame. But he refused, now, to make
 his dwelling with Joseph, it was not the
 68 tribe of Ephraim he would choose; he
 chose the tribe of Juda, and the hill of
 69 Sion, there to bestow his love. And there
 he built his sanctuary, immovable as
 heaven or earth, his own unchanging
 70 handiwork. He chose David, too, for his
 servant; took him away from herding the
 71 sheep; bade him leave off following the
 ewes that were in milk, and be the shep-
 herd of Jacob's sons, his own people, of
 72 Israel, his own domain. His was the loyal
 heart that should tend them, his the skilful
 hand that should be their guide.

78

(79)

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

O God, the heathen have broken into thy
 inheritance; they have profaned the
 temple, thy sanctuary, and left Jerusalem
 2 in ruins. They have thrown the corpses of
 thy servants to feed all the birds of heaven;
 wilt beasts prey on the carrion of the just;
 3 blood has flowed like water on every side
 of Jerusalem, and there was none to bury
 4 the dead. What a triumph was this for the
 nations that dwell around us; how have our
 5 neighbours mocked and derided us! Lord,
 must we always taste thy vengeance, must
 thy jealous anger still burn unquenched?
 6 Pour out this indignation of thine upon the
 nations that do not acknowledge thee, on
 the kingdoms that never invoke thy name;
 7 see how they have made Jacob their prey,
 8 and left his dwelling-place in ruins! Forget
 the long record of our sins, and haste in
 mercy to our side; never was need so sore
 as this.
 9 O God, our Saviour, help us; deliver us,
 Lord, for the glory of thy name, pardon
 our sins for the sake of thy own renown!
 10 Shall the heathen ask, What has become
 of their God? Shall our eyes never witness
 thy vengeance upon the Gentiles, that
 open vengeance thou wilt take for thy
 11 servants' blood? Could but the groaning
 of the captive reach thy presence! Thy
 arm has not lost its strength; from our
 bonds deliver us, a race doomed to die.
 12 Pour out seven-fold retribution into the
 laps of our neighbours, for all the insults,

Lord, which they have put upon thee; and 13
 we, thy own people, sheep of thy pas-
 turing, will give thee thanks for ever, echo,
 from one generation to the next, the story
 of thy renown.

79

(80)

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Lily of
 the Law. Of Asaph. A psalm.)

GIVE audience, thou that art the guide of 2
 Israel, that leadest Joseph with a shep-
 herd's care. Thou who art enthroned above
 the Cherubim, reveal thyself to Ephraim, 3
 Benjamin, and Manasses; exert thy sove-
 reign strength, and come to our aid.
 O God, restore us to our own; smile upon 4
 us, and we shall find deliverance. Lord 5
 God of hosts, wilt thou always turn away
 in anger from thy servants' prayer; daily 6
 wilt thou allot us, for food, for drink, only
 the full measure of our tears? Thou hast 7
 made us a coveted prize to our neighbours,
 enemies mock at our ill fortune! O God of 8
 hosts, restore us to our own; smile upon
 us, and we shall find deliverance. Long 9
 ago, thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt,
 rooting out the heathen to plant it here;
 thou didst prepare the way for its spread- 10
 ing, and it took root where thou hadst
 planted it, filled the whole land. How it 11
 overshadowed the hills, how the cedars,
 divinely tall, were overtopped by its 12
 branches! It spread out its tendrils to the
 sea, its shoots as far as the great river. Why 13
 is it that in these days thou hast levelled
 its wall, for every passer-by to rob it of its
 fruit? See how the wild boar ravages it, 14
 how it gives pasture to every beast that
 roams! God of hosts, relent, look down 15
 from heaven, look to this vine, that needs
 thy care. Revive the stock which thy own 16
 hand has planted, branches that by thee
 thrive, and thrive for thee. Death be in 17
 thy frown for the men that have cut it
 down and burned it. Thy chosen friends, 18
 a race¹ by thee thriving, and thriving for
 thee, O let thy hand protect them still!
 Henceforth we will never forsake thee; 19
 grant us life, and we will live only to invoke
 thy name. Lord God of hosts, restore us 20
 to our own; smile upon us, and we shall
 find deliverance.

¹ Literally, 'the man of thy right hand, the son of man whom thou hast strengthened for thyself'. This probably refers to Israel personified.

80 (81)

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Winepresses. Of Asaph.)

- 2 REJOICE we all in honour of the God who
aids us; cry out with gladness to the God
3 of Jacob. Ring psaltery, and tambour,
beat the harp, sweetly sounding, and the
4 zither! A new month, and a full moon;
blow the trumpet loud, to grace our festi-
5 val! Duty demands it of Israel; the God
6 of Jacob has decreed it, made it a law for
Joseph, since the day he left Egypt, and
gained the further shore. In a tongue un-
7 known the message came to me; I have
eased his shoulder of the burden, freed his
8 hands from the slavery of the hod! Such
deliverance I brought, when thou didst
cry out to me in thy misery; gave thee
audience under a canopy of cloud, and
tested thee at the Waters of Rebellion.
- 9 Give heed, my people, to this warning
of mine; Israel, wouldst thou but listen!
10 Then let no strange worship find a home
with thee; never let thy knees be bowed to
an alien God; am not I the Lord thy God,
11 I, who rescued thee from Egypt? Open
thy mouth wide, and thou shalt have thy
12 fill. So I spoke, but my people would not
13 listen; Israel went on unheeding, till I was
fain to give their hard hearts free play, let
them follow their own devices. Ah, if my
14 people did but listen to me! Did Israel but
15 take me for their guide! How lightly, then,
would I bring their enemies low, smite
16 down their persecutors! The very men
that were once the Lord's enemies would
be cringing at his feet; such, for ever,
17 should be their destiny; Israel should have
full ears of wheat to nourish them, and
honey dripping from the rock to their
heart's content.

81 (82)

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

- SEE, where he stands, the Ruler of all,
among the rulers' assembled, comes for-
ward to pronounce judgement on the
2 rulers themselves! Will you never cease
perverting justice, espousing the cause of

the wicked? Come, give redress to the
poor and the friendless, do right to the
afflicted and the destitute; to you need and
poverty look for deliverance, rescue them
from the hand of wickedness. But no,
ignorant and unperceiving, they grope
their way in darkness; see how unstable
are the props of earth! Gods you are,
I myself have declared it; favoured chil-
dren, every one of you, of the most High;
yet the doom of mortals awaits you, you
shall fall with the fall of human princes.
Bestir thyself, Lord, bring the world to
judgement; all the nations are thy own
domain.

82 (83)

(A song. A psalm. Of Asaph.)

BE silent, Lord, no longer. O God, do not
keep still now, do not hold back now!
What turmoil among thy enemies; how
their malice lifts its head! Busily they plot
against thy people, compass the ruin of the
men thou hast in thy keeping. Come, thy
whisper, let us put an end to their sove-
reignty, so that the very name of Israel will
be remembered no more. All are agreed,
all alike are ranged in confederacy against
thee; here Edom lies encamped, there Is-
mael; Moab, too, and the Agarenes;
Gebal, Ammon and Amelec, the Philis-
tines, and the folk that dwell at Tyre.
Even Assyria has made common cause
with them, lends her aid to these children
of Lot.³

Do to these what thou didst to Madian,
to Sisara and Jabin at the brook of Cison:
the men who died at Endor, rotted there
like dung on the ground.⁴ May their
princes fare as Oreb fared, and Zeb; may
the doom of Zebec and Salmana be the
doom of all their chieftains. And did they
think to make God's chosen portion their
spoil? My God, send them whirling thus
way and that, like leaves, like straws before
the wind. See how the fire burns up the
forest, how its flames scorch the mountain-
side! So let the fury of thy onset rout
them, thy fury dismay them. Let their
cheeks blush crimson with shame, Lord,

¹ Literally, 'gods', as in verse 6, the Divine name being specially applied in this way to judges (cf. Ex. 21. 6). ² Jn. 10. 34. ³ *ibid.* 7-9. It is not certain what was the occasion of this psalm. The names given suggest a simultaneous attack on the Jews by all their neighbours; the children of Lot are the Moabites and the Ammonites (Gen. 19. 37). ⁴ *ibid.* 10-12. See Jg. 4; 7. 25; 8.

18 till they come to sue for thy favour; confusion and dismay be theirs for ever, for ever let them be abashed and brought to nothing, till they, too, know the meaning of the divine name, acknowledge thee as the most high God, the Overlord of earth.

83 (84)

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Winepresses. Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

2 LORD of hosts, how I love thy dwelling-place! For the courts of the Lord's house, my soul faints with longing. The living God! at his name my heart, my whole being thrills with joy. Where else should the sparrow find a home, the swallow a nest for her brood, but at thy altar, Lord of hosts, my king and my God? How blessed, Lord, are those who dwell in thy house! They will be ever praising thee. 6 How blessed is the man who finds his strength in thee! Where there are hearts set on pilgrimage, the parched ravine turns into a water-course at their coming, new-cled by the bounty of returning rain. So, at each stage refreshed, they will reach Sion, and have sight there of the God who is above all gods.

9 Lord of hosts, listen to my prayer; God of Israel, grant me audience! God, ever our protector, do not disregard us now; look favourably upon him whom thou hast anointed!¹ Willingly would I give a thousand of my days for one spent in thy courts! Willingly reach but the threshold of my God's house, so I might dwell no more in the abode of sinners! Sun to enlighten, shield to protect us, the Lord God has favour, has honour to bestow. To innocent lives he will never refuse his bounty; Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who puts his confidence in thee.

84 (85)

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

2 WHAT blessings, Lord, thou hast granted to this land of thine, restoring Jacob's fortunes, pardoning thy people's guilt, bury-

¹ It is not certain whether King David, or the people of Israel, is here referred to as the anointed (or Christ) of God. ² *v.* 11, 12. These verses perhaps imply that God's fidelity to his promises and God's mercy have combined to restore the Jewish people; that his justice, satisfied with the expiation of their sins, no longer grudges them peace and well-being; that loyalty to the old covenant is once more a native growth in the land of Israel, and that God looks down to reward it. But the picture may be a more general one.

ing away the record of their sins, all thy anger calmed, thy fierce displeasure forgotten! And now, God of our deliverance, do thou restore us; no longer let us see thy frown. Wouldst thou always be indignant with us? Must thy resentment smoulder on, age after age? Wilt thou never relent, O God, and give fresh life, to rejoice the spirits of thy people? Shew us thy mercy, Lord; grant us thy deliverance!

Let me listen, now, to the voice of the Lord God; it is a message of peace he sends to his people; to his loyal servants, that come back, now, with all their heart to him. For us, his worshippers, deliverance is close at hand; in this land of ours, the divine glory is to find a home. See, where mercy and faithfulness meet in one; how justice and peace are united in one embrace! Faithfulness grows up out of the earth, and from heaven, redress looks down.² The Lord, now, will grant us his blessing, to make our land yield its harvest; justice will go on before him, deliverance follow where his feet tread.

85 (86)

(A prayer. Of David.)

TURN thy ear, Lord, and listen to me in my helplessness and my need. Protect a life dedicated to thyself; rescue a servant of thine that puts his trust in thee. In thee, my own God; have mercy, O Lord, for mercy I plead continually; comfort thy servant's heart, this heart that aspires, Lord, to thee. Who is so kind and forgiving, Lord, as thou art, who so rich in mercy to all who invoke him? Give a hearing, then, Lord, to my prayer; listen to my plea when I cry out to thee in a time of sore distress, counting on thy audience. There is none like thee, Lord, among the gods; none can do as thou doest. Lord, all the nations thou hast made must needs come and worship thee, honouring thy name, so great thou art, so marvellous in thy doings, thou who alone art God.

Guide me, Lord, thy own way, thy faithful care my escort; be all my heart's

12 direction reverence for thy name. O Lord
 my God, with all my heart I will praise
 thee, eternally hold thy name in honour
 13 for the greatness of the mercy thou hast
 shewed me, in rescuing me thus from the
 14 lowest depths of hell. And now, O God,
 see how scornful foes have set upon me,
 how their dread conspiracy threatens my
 life, with no thought of thee to restrain it!
 15 But thou, Lord, art a Lord of mercy and
 pity, patient, full of compassion, true to
 16 thy promise. Look upon me and be merciful
 to me; rescue, with thy sovereign aid,
 one whose mother bore him to thy service!
 17 Shew me some token of thy favour; let my
 enemies see, abashed, how thou, Lord,
 dost help me, how thou, Lord, dost comfort
 me.

86

(87)

(Of the sons of Core. A psalm. A song.)

HIS own building amidst the inviolate
 2 hills, dearer to the Lord are Sion walls
 3 than any other home in Israel. How high
 4 a boast, city of God, is made for thee, Mine
 it is to reckon the folk of Egypt, of Babylon,
 too, among my citizens! Philistines,
 Tyrians, Ethiopians, all must claim Sion
 5 as their birthplace; None was ever born,
 the proverb shall run, that did not take his
 birth from her; it was the most High, none
 6 other, that founded her. This was thy
 birthplace, the Lord shall write over the
 7 muster-roll of the nations; nor any but
 shall tell her praises with song and dance,
 each claiming from her its only origin.¹

87

(88)

(A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Core. To the choir-master. Melody: Mahalat. For singing. A maskil. Of Heman the Ezrahite.)

LORD God, day and night I cry bitterly
 2 to thee; let my prayer reach thy presence,
 3 give audience to my entreaty, for indeed
 4 my heart is full of trouble. My life sinks
 5 ever closer to the grave; I count as one of
 those who go down into the abyss, like one
 6 powerless. As well lie among the dead,
 men laid low in the grave, men thou re-
 memberest no longer, cast away, now,
 7 from thy protecting hand. Such is the
 place where thou hast laid me, in a deep
 8 pit where the dark waters swirl; heavily

thy anger weighs down on me, and thou
 dost overwhelm me with its full flood.
 Thou hast estranged all my acquaintance
 9 from me, so that they treat me as a thing
 accursed; I lie in a prison whence there is
 no escape, my eyes grow dim with tears.
 10 On thee I call, to thee stretch out my
 hands, each day that passes.

Not for the dead thy wonderful power
 11 is shewn; not for pale shadows to return
 and give thee thanks. There in the grave,
 12 how shall they recount thy mercies; how
 shall they tell of thy faithfulness, now that
 life is gone? How can there be talk of thy
 13 marvels in a world of darkness, of thy
 favour in a land where all is forgotten? To
 14 prayer, Lord, fall I lustily; it shall reach
 thee, while there is yet time. Why dost
 15 thou reject my plea, Lord, and turn thy
 face away from me? Ever since youth,
 16 misery and mortal sickness have been my
 lot; wearily I have borne thy visitations;
 I am overwhelmed with thy anger, dis-
 17 mayed by thy threats, that still cut me off
 18 like a flood, all at once surrounding me.
 Friends and neighbours gone, a world of
 19 shadows is all my company.

88

(89)

(A maskil. Of Ethan the Ezrahite.)

HERE is a song to put the Lord's mercies
 2 on record for ever; ages will pass, and still
 these words of mine shall proclaim thy
 faithfulness. Charter of everlasting mercy
 3 thy own lips have given; there, in the
 heavens, thy faithful promise rests: I have
 4 made a sworn covenant with my chosen
 servant David: To all time I will make thy
 5 posterity continue, age after age I will bid
 thy throne endure.

And are not those heavens, Lord, wit-
 6 nesses of thy wonderful power, of thy
 faithfulness, before the court of the holy
 7 ones? Who is there above the clouds to
 rival the Lord; where is the Lord's like
 8 among all the sons of God? How is God
 feared, in that assembly of the holy ones;
 how great he is, how high in reverence
 9 above all that stand about him! Lord God
 of hosts, who can compare with thee; in
 the power, Lord, that is thine, in the faith-
 10 fulness that everywhere attends thee? It

¹ The Latin version here rendered involves several corrections of the Hebrew text, which is very obscure.

is that thou dost curb the pride of the sea,
 11 and calm the tumult of its waves; wounded
 lies Rahab¹ at thy feet, by the strong arm
 12 that has routed thy enemies. Thine are the
 heavens, thine the earth; author, thou, of
 13 the world and all it holds. The north wind
 and the south are of thy fashioning; thy
 name wakes the glad echoes of Thabor and
 14 Hermon. God of the strong arm, the sure,
 15 the uplifted hand, right and justice are the
 pillars of thy throne; mercy and faithful-
 ness the heralds of thy coming.

Happy is the people that knows well the
 shout of praise, that lives, Lord, in the
 17 smile of thy protection! Evermore they
 take pride in thy name, rejoice over thy
 18 just dealings. What else but thy glory in-
 spires their strength? What else but thy
 19 favour bids us lift our heads? From the
 Lord, the Holy One of Israel, that royal
 protection comes which is our shield.

20 Long ago, in a vision, thou didst make
 a promise to thy faithful servants. Thou
 saidst, I have crowned you a warrior king,
 chosen out among the common folk a man
 21 to honour. Here was my servant David;
 on him my consecrating oil has been
 22 poured. My hand shall never leave him
 unprotected, my arm shall give him
 23 courage; no enemy shall take him un-
 aware, no envious rival have power,
 24 henceforth, to crush him; beaten down,
 every foe, at his onset, baffled, all their ill
 25 will. My faithfulness and mercy shall go
 with him; by my favour he shall rise to pre-
 26 eminence. I will make his power rest on
 the sea; to the streams of the great river
 27 his hand shall reach out.² Thou art my
 Father, he will cry out to me, thou art my
 28 God, my stronghold and my refuge; and
 I will acknowledge him as my first-born,
 29 overlord to all the kings of earth. I will
 continue my favour towards him for ever,
 my covenant with him shall remain un-
 30 broken; I will give him a posterity that
 never fails, a throne enduring as heaven
 31 itself. Do his children forsake my law, to
 32 follow paths not mine; do they violate my
 33 decrees, leave my will undone? Then they
 shall feel the rod for their transgressions,
 34 I will scourge them for their sin, but I will
 not cancel my gracious promise to him;

never will I be guilty of unfaithfulness,
 never will I violate my covenant, or alter
 35 the decree once spoken. Pledged stands
 my inviolable word, I will never be false
 36 to David; his posterity shall continue for
 37 ever, his royalty, too, shall last on in my
 presence like the sun; like the moon's
 38 eternal orb, that bears witness in heaven
 unalterable.

And now? Now thou hast only loathing
 39 and scorn for us; heavy thy hand falls on
 him thou hast anointed. Spurned lies the
 40 covenant thou didst make with thy servant,
 thou hast dishonoured his royalty in the
 dust, broken down all the walls about him,
 41 and made a ruin of his stronghold, till he is
 42 plundered by every passer-by, a laughing-
 stock to all his neighbours. Thou hast
 43 granted aid to the attacking armies,
 triumph to all his enemies, foiling the
 44 thrust of his sword, and denying him thy
 succour in battle. Thou hast robbed him
 45 of the bright glory³ that once was his; thou
 hast cast down his throne to earth, cut his
 46 manhood short before its time; confusion
 overwhelms him.

Lord, wilt thou always turn thy face
 47 away so obdurately, will the flame of thy
 anger never be quenched? Remember how
 48 frail a thing I am, how brief a destiny thou
 hast granted to all Adam's sons. Where is
 49 the man that can live on, and leave death
 untasted; can ransom his life from the
 power of the world beneath? Lord, where
 50 are those mercies of an earlier time,
 promised so faithfully to David? Remember
 51 how a world's taunts assail thy people, and
 this one heart must bear them all; shall
 52 they hurl taunts, Lord, these, thy enemies,
 after the man thou thyself hast anointed?

Blessed be the Lord for ever. Amen, 53
 Amen.

89

(90)

(A prayer. Of Moses, the man of God.)

LORD, thou hast been our refuge from
 generation to generation. Before the hills
 2 came to birth, before the whole frame of
 the world was engendered, from eternity
 to eternity, O God, thou art. And wilt thou
 3 bring man to dust again, that thou sayest,
 Return, children of Adam, that thou you

¹ 'Insolence' in the original is 'Rahab', either referring to Egypt (as in 86. 4), or personifying the principle of Chaos destroyed by the Creation (73. 13).

² 'The great river' is Euphrates, as in 71. 8, 79. 12.

³ Literally, 'purification'.

4 were? In thy sight, a thousand years are
 but as yesterday, that has come and gone,
 5 or as one of the night-watches. Swiftly
 thou bearest our lives away, as a waking
 6 dream, or the green grass that blooms
 fresh with the morning; night finds it
 7 faded and dead. Still thy anger takes toll
 8 of us, thy displeasure denies us rest, so
 jealous thy scrutiny of our wrong-doing,
 so clear our hidden sins shew in the light
 9 of thy presence. Day after day vanishes,
 and still thy anger lasts; swift as a breath
 10 our lives pass away. What is our span of
 days? Seventy years it lasts, eighty years,
 if lusty folk we be; for the more part, toil
 and frustration; years that vanish in a
 11 moment, and we are gone. Alas, that so
 few heed thy vengeance, measure thy anger
 12 by the reverence we owe thee! Teach us
 to count every passing day, till our hearts
 find wisdom.

13 Relent, Lord; must it be for ever? Be
 14 gracious to thy servants. For us thy timely
 mercies, for us abiding happiness and content;
 15 happiness that shall atone for the time
 when thou didst afflict us, for the long
 16 years of ill fortune. Let these eyes see thy
 purpose accomplished, to our own sons
 17 reveal thy glory; the favour of the Lord our
 God smile on us! Prosper our doings,
 Lord, prosper our doings yet.

90

(91)

CONTENT if thou be to live with the most
 High for thy defence, under his Almighty
 2 shadow abiding still, him thy refuge, him
 thy stronghold thou mayst call, thy own
 3 God, in whom is all thy trust. He it is
 who will rescue thee from every treacherous lure,
 4 every destroying plague. His wings for
 refuge, nestle thou shalt under his care,
 5 his faithfulness thy watch and ward. No-
 thing shalt thou have to fear from nightly
 terrors, from the arrow that flies by day-
 6 light, from pestilence that walks to and fro
 in the darkness, from the death that wastes
 7 under the noon. Though a thousand fall
 at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand,
 it shall never come next or near thee;
 8 rather, thy eyes shall look about thee, and
 see the reward of sinners.

9 He, the Lord, is thy refuge; thou hast
 found a stronghold in the most High.

There is no harm that can befall thee, no
 10 plague that shall come near thy dwelling.
 He has given charge to his angels con-
 11 cerning thee, to watch over thee where-
 soever thou goest; they will hold thee up
 12 with their hands lest thou shouldst chance
 to trip on a stone. Thou shalt tread safely
 13 on asp and adder, crush lion and serpent
 under thy feet.

He trusts in me, mine it is to rescue him; 14
 he acknowledges my name, from me he
 shall have protection; when he calls upon
 15 me, I will listen, in affliction I am at his
 side, to bring him safety and honour.
 Length of days he shall have to content
 16 him, and find in me deliverance.

91

(92)

(A psalm. A song. On the sabbath day.)

SWEET it is to praise the Lord, to sing,
 2 most high God, in honour of thy name;
 to proclaim thy mercy and faithfulness at
 3 daybreak and at the fall of night. Here is
 4 a theme for ten-stringed harp and viol, for
 music of voice and zither; so delightful,
 5 Lord, is all thou doest, so thrills my heart
 at the sight of all thou hast made. How
 6 magnificent is thy creation, Lord, how
 unfathomable are thy purposes! And still,
 too dull to learn, too slow to grasp his
 7 lesson, the wrong-doer goes on in his busy
 wickedness. Still he thrives, makes a brave
 8 show like the grass in spring, yet is he
 doomed to perish eternally, whilst thou,
 9 Lord, art for ever exalted on high.
 Vanished away thy enemies, Lord, van-
 10 ished away, and all their busy wickedness
 scattered to the winds!

Strength thy power gives me, that gives
 11 strength to the wild oxen; refreshes me as
 with the touch of pure oil. Blessed are
 12 these eyes with the sight of my enemies'
 downfall, these ears with the tidings of in-
 13 solvent malice defeated. The innocent man
 will flourish as the palm-tree flourishes;
 14 he will grow to greatness as the cedars
 grow on Lebanon. Planted in the temple
 of the Lord, growing up in the very courts
 of our God's house, the innocent will
 15 flourish in a green old age, all freshness
 and vigour still; theirs to proclaim how
 16 just is the Lord my refuge, his dealings
 how clear of wrong.

92 (93)

THE Lord reigns as king, robed in majesty; royalty the Lord has for robe and girdle. He it was that founded the solid earth, to abide immovable. Firm stood thy throne ere ever the world began; from all eternity, thou art. Loud the rivers echo, Lord, loud the rivers echo, crashing down in flood. Magnificent the roar of eddying waters; magnificent the sea's rage; magnificent above these, the Lord reigns in heaven. How faithful, Lord, are thy promises! Holy is thy house, and must needs be holy until the end of time.

93 (94)

IN thy divine vengeance, Lord, in thy divine vengeance stand revealed! Judge of the world, mount thy throne, and give the proud their deserts! Must it be the sinners still, Lord, the sinners still that triumph? Shall there be no end to the prating, the rebellious talk, the boastfulness of wrong-doers? See, Lord, how they crush down thy people, afflict the land of thy choice, murder the widow and the stranger, slay the orphan! And they think, The Lord will never see it, the God of Israel pays no heed. Pay heed, rather, yourselves, dull hearts that count among my people; fools, learn your lesson ere it is too late. Is he deaf, the God who implanted hearing in us; is he blind, the God who gave us eyes to see? He who gives nations their schooling, who taught man all that man knows, will he not call you to account? The Lord looks into men's hearts, and finds there illusion.

Happy, Lord, is the man whom thou dost chasten, reading him the lesson of thy law! For him, thou wilt lighten the time of adversity, digging a pit all the while to entrap the sinner. God will not abandon his people, will not desert his chosen land; ere long his justice will reappear in judgement, claiming all upright hearts for its own. Who takes my part against the oppressor? Who rallies to my side against the

wrong-doers? It is the Lord that helps me; but for that, the grave would soon be my resting-place. Still, when my foothold seems lost, thy mercy, Lord, holds me up; amid all the thronging cares that fill my heart, my soul finds comfort in thy consolation. What part have these unjust judges with thee, that make mischief in the name of law? Let them harry the just as they will, pass sentence of death upon the innocent, the Lord will be my defence, in my God I shall find a rock-fastness still. He will punish the wrong, destroy them in their wickedness; doubt not the Lord our God will destroy them.

94 (95)

COME, friends, rejoice we in the Lord's honour; cry we out merrily to God, our strength and deliverer; with praises court his presence, singing a joyful psalm! A high God is the Lord, a king high above all the gods;¹ beneath his hand lie the depths of earth, his are the mountain peaks; his the ocean, for who but he created it? What other power fashioned the dry land? Come in, then, fall we down in worship, bowing the knee before God who made us. Who but the Lord is our God? And what are we, but folk of his pasturing, sheep that follow his beckoning hand?

Would you but listen to his voice to-day! Do not harden your hearts, as they were hardened once at Meriba, at Massa in the wilderness.² Your fathers put me to the test, challenged me, as if they lacked proof of my power, for forty years together; from that generation I turned away in loathing;³ These, I said, are ever wayward hearts, these have never learned to obey me. And I took an oath in anger, They shall never attain my rest.⁴

95 (96)

SING the Lord a new song; in the Lord's honour, let the whole earth make melody!

¹ The Gallican Psalter, which is used in the liturgical recitation of the psalm, adds at the end of this verse 'God will not abandon his people' (cf. 93. 14). ² Ex. 17. 7. ³ The Gallican Psalter has, 'When I lived close to that generation'. ⁴ *vv.* 8-11. See Heb. 3. 7-19. ⁵ This psalm is to be found in a slightly altered form in I Par. 16 (verses 23 and following).

2 Sing to the Lord, and bless his name;
 never cease to bear record of his power to
 3 save. Publish his glory among the heathen;
 his wonderful acts for all the world to hear.
 4 How great is the Lord, how worthy of
 honour! What other god is to be feared as
 5 he? They are but fancied gods the heathen
 call divine; and the Lord, not they, made the
 6 heavens. Honour and beauty are his
 escort; worship and magnificence the
 attendants of his shrine.
 7 Tribes of the heathen, make your offering
 to the Lord, an offering to the Lord of
 8 glory and homage, an offering of glory to
 the Lord's name; bring sacrifice, come
 9 into his courts, worship the Lord in holy
 array. Before the Lord's presence let the
 10 whole earth bow in reverence; tell the
 heathen, The Lord is king now, he has put
 the world in order, never to be thrown into
 confusion more; he gives the nations a just
 11 award. Rejoice, heaven, and let earth be
 glad; let the sea, and all the sea contains,
 12 give thunderous applause. The fields, and
 all the burden they bear, full of expect-
 13 ancy; no tree in the forest but will rejoice
 to greet its Lord's coming. He comes to
 rule the earth; brings the world justice, to
 every race of men its promised award.

96

(97)

THE Lord reigns as king; let earth be glad
 of it, let the isles, the many isles, rejoice!
 2 See where he sits, clouds and darkness
 about him, justice and right the pillars of
 3 his throne; see where he comes, fire sweep-
 ing on before him, burning up his enemies
 4 all around. In the flash of his lightning, how
 shines the world revealed, how earth trem-
 5 bles at the sight! The hills melt like wax
 at the presence of the Lord; his presence,
 6 whom all the earth obeys. The very hea-
 vens proclaim his faithfulness; no nation
 7 but has sight of his glory. Shame upon the
 men that worship carved images, and make
 their boast of false gods! him only all the
 powers of heaven, prostrate, adore.
 8 Glad news for Sion, rejoicing for Juda's
 townships, when thy judgements, Lord,
 9 are made known; art thou not sovereign
 Lord of earth, beyond measure exalted
 10 above all gods? They are the Lord's
 friends, who were never friends to wrong;

souls that are true to him he guards ever,
 rescues them from the power of evil-doers.
 Dawn of hope for the innocent, dawn of
 gladness for honest hearts! Rejoice and
 triumph, just souls, in the Lord, of his holy
 name publish everywhere the renown.

97

(98)

(A psalm.)

SING the Lord a new song, a song of
 wonder at his doings; how his own right
 hand, his own holy arm, brought him vic-
 tory. The Lord has given proof of his
 saving power, has vindicated his just deal-
 ings, for all the nations to see; has remem-
 bered his gracious promise, and kept faith
 with the house of Israel; no corner of the
 world but has witnessed how our God can
 save. In God's honour let all the earth
 keep holiday; let all be mirth and rejoicing
 and festal melody! Praise the Lord with
 the harp, with harp and psaltery's music;
 with trumpets of metal, and the music of
 the braying horn! Keep holiday in the
 presence of the Lord, our King; the sea
 astir, and all that the sea holds, the world
 astir, and all that dwell on it; the rivers
 echoing their applause, the hills, too, re-
 joicing to see the Lord come. He comes
 to judge the earth; brings the world justice,
 to every race of men its due award.

98

(99)

THE Lord is king, the nations are adread;
 he is throned above the Cherubim, and
 earth trembles before him. Great is the
 Lord who dwells in Sion, sovereign ruler
 of all peoples! Let them all praise that
 great name of thine, a name terrible and
 holy. He reigns in might, that right loves,
 to all assuring redress, giving the sons of
 Jacob doom and award. Praise, then, the
 Lord our God, and bow down before his
 footstool; that, too, is holy. Remember
 Moses and Aaron, and all those priests of
 his, Samuel and those others who called
 on his name, how the Lord listened when
 they called upon him. His voice came to
 them from the pillar of cloud; so it was
 they heard the decrees, the command he
 gave them. And thou, O Lord our God,
 didst listen to them, and they found thee

a God of pardon; yet every fault of theirs
 9 thou wert quick to punish. Praise the Lord
 our God, and do worship on the holy
 mountain where he dwells; the Lord our
 God is holy.

99 (100)

(A psalm. For thanksgiving.)

LET the whole earth keep holiday in God's
 2 honour; pay to the Lord the homage of
 your rejoicing, appear in his presence with
 3 glad hearts. Learn that it is the Lord, no
 other, who is God; his we are, he it was
 4 that made us; we are his own people, sheep
 of his own pasturing. Pass through these
 5 gates, enter these courts of his, with hymns
 of praise, give him thanks, and bless his
 name. Gracious is the Lord, everlasting
 his mercy; age after age, he is faithful to
 his promise still.

100 (101)

(Of David. A psalm.)

OF mercy and of justice my song shall be;
 2 a psalm in thy honour, Lord, from one that
 would guide his steps ever more perfectly.
 Ah, when wilt thou grant me thy pre-
 3 sence? Here in my house I would live
 with stainless heart; no ill purpose cloud-
 4 ing my view, the transgressors of the law
 my enemies. None such will I have at my
 5 side; here treachery shall find no place,
 knavery no countenance; of whispered
 6 calumny, death shall be the reward; on
 scornful looks and proud thoughts I will
 7 have no mercy. To plain, honest folk in the
 land I will look for my company; my ser-
 8 vants shall be such as follow the path of
 innocence. No welcome here for schemers,
 no standing in my presence for men who
 talk deceitfully. Mine, as the days pass,
 to root out from the land every guilty soul,
 till I purge the Lord's city of all evil-doing.

101 (102)

(A prayer for the friendless man, when he is
 troubled, and is pouring out his griefs before the
 Lord.)

2 O LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry
 3 come unto thee. Do not turn thy face

away from me, but lend me thy ear in time
 of affliction; give me swift audience when-
 ever I call upon thee. See how this life of
 4 mine passes away like smoke, how this
 frame wastes like a tinder! Drained of
 5 strength, like grass the sun scorches, I
 leave my food untasted, forgotten; I am
 6 spent with sighing, till my skin clings to
 my bones. I am no better than a pelican
 7 out in the desert, an owl on some ruined
 dwelling; I keep mournful watch, lonely
 8 as a single sparrow on the house top. Still
 my enemies taunt me, in their mad rage
 9 make a by-word of me. Ashes are all my
 10 food, I drink nothing but what comes to
 me mingled with my tears; I shrink before
 11 thy vengeful anger, so low thou hast
 brought me, who didst once lift me so
 high. Like a tapering shadow my days
 12 dwindle, wasting away, like grass in the
 sun!

Lord, thou endurest for ever, thy name,
 13 age after age, is not forgotten; surely thou
 14 wilt bestir thyself, and give Sion redress!
 It is time, now, to take pity on her, the hour
 has come. See how thy servants love her
 15 even in ruin, how they water her dust with
 their tears! Will not the heathen learn
 16 reverence, Lord, for thy glorious name, all
 those monarchs of the earth, when they
 17 hear that the Lord has built Sion anew;
 that he has revealed himself there in glory,
 has given heed to the prayer of the afflicted,
 18 neglects their appeal no more? Such
 19 legend inscribe we for a later age to read it;
 a new people will arise, to praise the Lord;
 the Lord, who looks down from his sanctu-
 20 ary on high, viewing earth from heaven,
 who has listened to the groans of the pris-
 21 oners, delivered a race that was doomed
 to die. There will be talk of the Lord's
 22 name in Sion, of his praise in Jerusalem,
 when peoples and kings meet there to pay
 23 him their homage.

Here, on my journey, he has brought
 24 my strength to an end, cut short my days.
 What, my God, wilt thou snatch me away,
 25 my life half done? Age after age thy years
 endure; it was thou, Lord, that didst lay
 26 the foundations of earth when time began,
 it was thy hand that built the heavens.
 They will perish, but thou wilt remain;
 27 they will all be like a cloak that grows
 threadbare, and thou wilt lay them aside

¹ This is thought by some commentators to mean the coming of the Ark to Jerusalem (II Kg. 6).

like a garment, and exchange them for
 28 new; thou art unchanging, thy years can
 29 never fail. The posterity of thy servants
 shall yet hold their lands in peace, their
 race shall live on in thy keeping.

103 (103)

(Of David.)

BLESS the Lord, my soul, unite, all my
 2 powers, to bless that holy name. Bless the
 Lord, my soul, remembering all he has
 3 done for thee, how he pardons all thy sins,
 4 heals all thy mortal ills, rescues thy life
 from deadly peril, crowns thee with the
 5 blessings of his mercy; how he contents
 all thy desire for good, restores thy youth,
 6 as the eagle's plumage is restored. The
 Lord's acts are acts of justice, every
 7 wronged soul he offers redress. The Lord,
 who told Moses his secrets, who shewed
 the sons of Israel his power!

8 How pitying and gracious the Lord is,
 how patient, how rich in mercy! He will
 not always be finding fault, his frown does
 10 not last for ever; he does not treat us as
 our sins deserve, does not exact the penalty
 11 of our wrong-doing. High as heaven above
 the earth towers his mercy for the men that
 12 fear him; far as the east is from the west,
 13 he clears away our guilt from us. For his
 own worshippers, the Lord has a father's
 14 pity; does he not know the stuff of which
 we are made, can he forget that we are only
 15 dust? Man's life is like the grass, he
 blooms and dies like a flower in the fields;
 16 once the hot wind has passed over, it has
 gone, forgotten by the place where it grew.

17 But the Lord's worshippers know no be-
 ginning or end of his mercy; he will keep
 18 faith with their children's children, do they
 but hold fast by his covenant, and live
 19 mindful of his law. The Lord has set up
 his throne in heaven, rules with universal
 20 sway. Bless the Lord, all you angels of his;
 angels of sovereign strength, that carry out
 his commandment, attentive to the word
 21 he utters; bless the Lord, all you hosts of
 his, the servants that perform his will;
 22 bless the Lord, all you creatures of his, in
 every corner of his dominion; and thou,
 my soul, bless the Lord.

103 (104)

BLESS the Lord, my soul; O Lord my
 God, what magnificence is thine! Glory
 and beauty are thy clothing. The light is
 2 a garment thou dost wrap about thee, the
 heavens a curtain thy hand unfolds. The
 3 waters of heaven are thy ante-chamber, the
 clouds thy chariot; on the wings of the
 wind thou dost come and go. Thou wilt
 have thy angels be like the winds,¹ the ser-
 vants that wait on thee like a flame of fire.

The earth thou hast planted on its own
 5 firm base, undisturbed for all time. The
 6 deep once covered it, like a cloak; the
 waters stood high above the mountains;²
 then covered before thy rebuking word,
 7 fled away at thy voice of thunder, leaving
 8 the mountain heights to rise, the valleys
 to sink into their appointed place! And to
 9 these waters thou hast given a frontier they
 may not pass; never must they flow back,
 and cover the earth again. Yet there shall
 10 be torrents flooding the glens, water-
 courses among the hills that give drink to
 11 every wild beast; here the wild asses may
 slake their thirst. The birds of heaven, too,
 12 will roost beside them; vocal is every
 bough with their music.

From thy high dwelling-place thou dost
 13 send rain upon the hills; thy hand gives
 earth all her plenty. Grass must grow for
 14 the cattle; for man, too, she must put forth
 her shoots, if he is to bring corn out from
 her bosom; if there is to be wine that will
 15 rejoice man's heart, oil to make his face
 shine, and bread that will keep man's
 strength from failing. Moisture there must
 16 be for the forest trees, for the cedars of
 Lebanon, trees of the Lord's own planting.
 Here it is the birds build their nests; the
 17 stork makes its home in the fir-branches;
 finds refuge there such as the goats find in
 18 the high hills, the coney in its cave.

He has given us the moon for our
 19 calendar; the sun knows well the hour of
 his setting. Thou dost decree darkness,
 20 and the night falls; in the night all the
 forest is astir with prowling beasts; the
 21 young lions go roaring after their prey,
 God's pensioners, asking for their food.
 22 Then the sun rises, and they slink away to
 lie down in their dens, while man goes
 23

¹ Some would render 'Thou makest the winds thy messengers', but the second half of the verse is against this.

² See Gen. 1. 9.

abroad to toil and drudge till the evening.
 24 What diversity, Lord, in thy creatures!
 What wisdom has designed them all!
 There is nothing on earth but gives proof
 of thy creative power.
 25 There lies the vast ocean, stretching
 wide on every hand; this, too, is peopled
 with living things past number, great
 26 creatures and small; the ships pass them
 on their course. Leviathan himself is
 among them; him, too, thou hast created
 27 to roam there at his pleasure.¹ And all look
 to thee to send them their food at the ap-
 28 pointed time; it is through thy gift they
 find it, thy hand opens, and all are filled
 29 with content. But see, thou hidest thy
 face, and they are dismayed; thou takest
 their life from them, and they breathe no
 more, go back to the dust they came from.
 30 Then thou sendest forth thy spirit, and
 there is fresh creation; thou dost repeople
 the face of earth.
 31 Glory be to the Lord for ever; still let
 32 him take delight in his creatures. One
 glance from him makes earth tremble; at
 his touch, the mountains are wreathed in
 33 smoke. While life lasts, I will sing in the
 Lord's honour; my praise shall be his
 34 while I have breath to praise him; oh, may
 this prayer with him find acceptance, in
 35 whom is all my content! Perish all sinners
 from the land, let the wrong-doers be for-
 gotten! But thou, my soul, bless the Lord.
 Alleluia.

104 (105)

PRaise the Lord, and call upon his name;
 tell the story of his doings for all the nations
 2 to hear; greet him with song and psalm,
 3 recount his acts of miracle. Triumph
 in that holy name; let every heart that longs
 4 for the Lord rejoice. On the Lord, on the
 Lord's greatness still let your hearts dwell,
 on the Lord's presence be your hearts set.
 5 Remember the marvellous acts he did, his
 6 miracles, his sentences of doom; are you
 not the posterity of Abraham, his own
 servant, sons of that Jacob on whom his
 7 choice fell? And he, the Lord, is our own
 God, wide though his writ runs through
 8 all the world. He keeps in everlasting

memory that covenant of his, that promise
 which a thousand ages might not cancel.
 He gave Abraham a promise, bound him-
 9 self to Isaac by an oath; by that law Jacob
 10 should live, his Israel, bound to him with
 an eternal covenant. To thee, he said, I will
 11 give the land of Chanaan, a portion allotted
 to thee and thine. So few they were in
 12 number, only a handful, living there as
 strangers! And ever they passed on from
 13 country to country, the guests of king or
 people; but he suffered none to harm
 14 them;² to kings themselves the warning
 came; Lay no hand on them, never hurt
 15 them, servants anointed and true spokes-
 men of mine.

And now he brought famine on the land,
 16 cutting off all their supply of bread. But
 he had sent an envoy to prepare the way
 for them, that very Joseph, who was sold
 as a slave. Fetters held his feet, the yoke
 18 galled his neck, but he proved a true
 19 prophet at last, the Lord's accomplished
 word to vindicate him.³ Then the king
 20 sent to release him; the proud ruler of
 many peoples set him free, and appointed
 21 him master of his household, lord of all the
 possessions that were his. Joseph should
 22 teach his courtiers to be as Joseph was,
 should train his aged counsellors in wis-
 dom. So it was that Israel came into
 23 Egypt, that Jacob dwelt as an alien in the
 country of Cham.

Time passed, and he gave his people
 24 great increase of numbers, till it out-
 25 matched its rivals. And in these he
 wrought a change of heart; they grew
 weary of his people's presence, devised
 26 ruin for his worshippers. And now he sent
 his servant Moses, and Aaron, the man of
 his choice, to bring about those signs, those
 27 miracles of his which the country of Cham
 would witness. Dark night he sent to be-
 28 night them, and still his warnings went
 unheeded.⁴ He turned their supply of
 29 water into blood, killing all the fish; frogs
 30 swarmed out of the ground, even in their
 royal palaces; at his word, flies attacked
 31 them, and gnats all their land over; hail
 32 was the rain he gave them, and it brought
 fire that burned up their countryside; he
 33 shattered their vines and fig-trees, broke

¹ It is possible to read another sense; namely, that God has made the whale (or whatever creature Leviathan represents) as a jest for his own enjoyment.

² See Gen. 12. 17.

³ See Gen. 40, 41.

⁴ The Hebrew text gives 'And they (? Moses and Aaron) heeded his words'.

down all the wood that grew in their domains. He gave the word, and locusts came, grasshoppers, too, past all numbering, capping up all the grass they had, eating up all the crops their land yielded. Then, his hand fell upon Egypt's first-born, on the first-fruits of all they had engendered; and so he brought his people out, enriched with silver and gold, no foot that stumbled among all their tribes. Glad indeed was Egypt at their going, such fear of them had overtaken it. He spread out a cloud to cover them, that turned to fire in the darkness, lighting their journey. Quails came, when they asked for food; he satisfied their desire, too, with bread from heaven, and pierced the rock so that water flowed down, running streams in the wilderness. So well did he remember that holy promise of his, made to his servant Abraham; in joy and triumph he led them out, his chosen people, and gave them the lands of the heathen for their own. There, on soil Gentile hands had tilled, his commandments should be kept sacred, his law should reign. Alleluia.

105

(106)

(Alleluia.)

PRaise the Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endures for ever; what tongue can recount all the great deeds of the Lord, can echo all his praise? Blessed are they who abide ever by his decrees, ever do the right! Remember me, Lord, with loving thoughts towards thy people, come and strengthen me with thy aid, to witness the prosperity of thy chosen servants, to rejoice with thy people that rejoices, to share the glory of thy own domain. We have taken part in our fathers' sins; we are guilty men, rebels against thee. So it was with our fathers in Egypt; unremarked, thy wonderful doings, unremembered, thy abundant mercies; even at the Red Sea they must prove rebellious. Yet, for his own honour, to make known his power, he delivered them, checking the Red Sea, so that it dried up, and leading them through its depths as safely as if they trod the desert sands. From a cruel tyrant's grasp he rescued them, claimed them for

his own; and the water overwhelmed their pursuers, till not one of them was left. They believed, then, in his promises, sang songs, then, in his honour, but soon they forgot what he had done, and could not wait upon his will. They must needs give way to their cravings in the wilderness, challenge God's power, there in the desert, till he granted their will, then sent a wasting sickness to plague them. Faction raised its head in the camp against Moses, against Aaron, the Lord's chosen priest; and now earth gaped, swallowing up Dathan, overwhelming Abiron and his conspiracy; fire broke out in their company, and the rebels perished by its flames. They made a calf, too, at Horeb, casting a golden image and worshipping it, as if they would exchange the glory that dwelt among them for the semblance of a bullock at grass. So little they remembered the God who had delivered them, those portents of his in Egypt, strange things seen in the land of Cham, terrible things down by the Red Sea! What wonder if he threatened to make an end of them? But Moses, the man of his choice, stood in the breach to confront his anger, to ward off destruction.

And now they poured scorn on the land of their desire, distrusting his promise; the camp was all disaffection. So the Lord, finding they would not listen to his voice, lifted his hand and threatened to smite them down, there in the wilderness; they should be lost among the peoples, scattered wide through the world. They dedicated themselves to Beelphegor, in honour of the dead gods sat down to feast; till their wicked ways roused God's anger, and a plague fell upon them. Nor might the destruction cease, till Phinees rose up and made amends, winning himself such title to God's favour as shall be remembered, age after age, eternally. They provoked his anger, too, at the waters of Meriba, so that Moses was punished for their sake; because, in his heart's bitterness, he broke out into open complaint.

Not theirs to root out the heathen, as the Lord had bidden them; they mingled with the heathen instead, and learned their ways; worshipping carved images, to their own undoing, sacrificing their sons and daughters in honour of devils. Innocent blood, the blood of their own sons and

daughters, was poured out in worship to the idols of Chanaan; with blood the whole land was polluted, so heinous the guilt of its people, so wanton their ways. Then God's anger blazed up against his people, his chosen race became abominable to him, and he handed them over to the Gentiles; despised slaves, they were oppressed by their enemies, bowed down under the yoke. Again and again he brought them deliverance, but ever there were fresh shifts to provoke him, there was fresh guilt to drag them in the dust. And still, when he saw their distress, when he heard their appeals to him, the thought of his covenant availed them; in his great mercy he would relent; their very captors should be moved to pity.

Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us again, scattered as we are among the heathen, to praise thy holy name, to triumph in thy renown.

Blessed be the God of Israel from all eternity to all eternity; let all the people cry, Amen, Alleluia.

106 (107)

PRaise the Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endures for ever; be this the cry of men the Lord has rescued, rescued them from the enemy's hand, and gathered them in from sunrise and sunset, from the north country and the south.

Some have wandered in parched deserts, missing the way to the city that was their home, hungry and thirsty, so that their spirits died within them. So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, guiding them surely to the place where they should find a home. Praise they the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men; poor souls that were thirsty, contented now, poor souls that were hungry, satisfied now with all good.

Some lay where darkness overshadowed them, helpless in bonds of iron; their punishment for rebelling against God's decrees, for thwarting the will of the most High. Their hearts bowed down with sorrow, none else to aid their faltering steps, they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,

and he relieved their distress, rescuing them from darkness, from the shadows, tearing their chains asunder. Praise they the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men; the Lord who has shattered the gates of brass, riven the bonds of iron.

Some for their own fault must needs be humbled; for their guilt they lay sick, with no stomach for food, close to death's door. So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, uttered the word of healing, and saved them from their peril. Praise they the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men; theirs to offer him sacrifice in thanksgiving, and proclaim joyfully what he has done for them.

Some there were that ventured abroad in ships, trafficking over the high seas; these are men that have witnessed the Lord's doings, his wonderful doings amid the deep. At his word the stormy wind rose, churning up its waves; high up towards heaven they were carried, then sank into the trough, with spirits fainting at their peril; see them reeling and staggering to and fro as a drunkard does, all their seamanship forgotten! So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, stilling the storm into a whisper, till all its waves were quiet. Glad hearts were theirs, when calm fell about them, and he brought them to the haven where they longed to be. Praise they the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men; let them extol his name, where the people gather, glorify him where the elders sit in council.

Here, he changes rivers into desert sand, wells into dry ground; land that once was fruitful into a salty marsh, to punish its people's guilt. There, he turns the wilderness into pools of water, desert ground into springs; and establishes hungry folk there, so that they build themselves a city to dwell in, sow fields, and plant vineyards, and reap the harvest; he blesses them, so that their numbers increase beyond measure, and to their cattle grants increase. Once, they were but few, worn down by stress of need and ill fortune; but now the same power that shames proud chieftains, and keeps them wandering in a pathless desert, has rescued the poor from need, their

households thrive like their own flocks.

- 42 Honest men will rejoice to witness it, and malice will stand dumb with confusion.
43 Heed it well, if thou wouldst be wise; be these thy study, the mercies of the Lord.

107

(108)

(A song. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 A TRUE heart, my God, a heart true to thy service; I will sing of thee and praise thee.
3 Wake, my heart, wake, echoes of harp and viol; dawn shall find me watching. Let me give thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear
5 it, sing psalms while the Gentiles listen, of thy mercy, high above heaven itself, of thy
6 faithfulness, that reaches the clouds! O God, mount high above the heavens! till thy glory overshadows the whole earth.
7 Now bring aid to the men thou lovest, give our prayer answer, and lift thy right hand
8 to save. God's word came to us from his sanctuary: In triumph I will divide up Sichem, and parcel out the valley of Tents;
9 to me Galaad, to me Manasses belongs; Ephraim is my helmet, Juda the staff I
10 bear. Now Moab, too, shall be my drudge; over Edom I will claim my right; I will
11 lead the Philistines away in triumph. Such was the oracle; but now who is to lead me on my march against this fortress, who is
12 to find an entrance for me into Edom, when thou, O God, hast disowned us, and wilt
13 not go into battle with our armies? It is thou that must deliver us from peril; vain is the help of man. Only through God can
14 we fight victoriously; only he can trample our oppressors in the dust.²

108

(109)

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

- GOD that guardest my renown, do not
2 leave me unbefriended; there are malicious lips, treacherous lips, that decry me; whispering against me, hedging me about with
3 a conspiracy of hatred, in unprovoked attack. On their side, all calumny in return for love, on mine all prayer;

kindness is repaid with injury, love with ill will.

An ill master let him have,³ and an accuser ready at his side; let him leave the court of judgement a doomed man, pleading with heaven in vain. Swiftly let his days come to an end, and his office be entrusted to another;⁴ orphanry for the children, widowhood for the wife! Driven from a ruined home, to and fro let his children wander, begging their bread, while eager creditors eye his goods, and strangers divide the fruits of his toil. May no friend be left to do him a kindness, none to have pity on his defenceless kin; a speedy end to his race, oblivion for his name before a generation passes! Still may the sin of his fathers be remembered in the Lord's sight, his mother's guilt remain indelible; still may the Lord keep it in mind, and wipe out their memory from the earth. Did he himself keep mercy in mind, when he persecuted the helpless, the destitute, the grief-stricken, and marked them down for death? Cursing he loved, upon him let the curse fall; for blessing he cared little, may blessing still pass him by. Let cursing wrap him about, sink like water into his inmost being, soak, like oil, into the marrow of his bones! Let it be the garb he wears, cling to him like a girdle he can never take off.

So, in their own coin, may the Lord repay them,⁵ my accusers that defame me so cruelly. But do thou, my Lord and Master, take my part, to defend thy own honour; no mercy is so tender as thine. Deliver me in my helpless need; my heart is pierced through with anguish. Like a tapering shadow I depart, swept away like a locust on the wing. My knees are weak with fasting, my strength pines away un-nourished. They make a laughing-stock of me, toss their heads in derision as they pass by. Help me, O Lord my God; deliver me in thy mercy; prove to them that my woes are a visitation from thee, sent by no hand but thine. Bless me, thou, and let them curse as they will; disappoint my adversaries, and grant thy servant relief. Let these, my accusers, be covered with shame, wrapped in the mantle of their own

¹ vv. 2-6. See Ps. 56. 8-12.² See Ps. 59. 6-14.³ Verses 6-19 are perhaps spoken, not

by the Psalmist, but by his detractors.

⁴ Ac. 1. 20.⁵ This is a doubtful interpretation of

the Hebrew; it is possible to render 'Such are the proceedings of my accusers'.

30 confusion. Loudly will I give the Lord
 31 thanks, praise him before multitudes that
 listen; the Lord who has stood at the right
 hand of the friendless, brought redress to
 an innocent soul misjudged.

verance; to all eternity stands his cove-
 nant. Unutterable is his name and
 worshipful; vain without his fear is
 learning. Wise evermore are you who
 follow it; yours the prize that lasts for
 ever.

109

(110)

(Of David. A psalm.¹)

To the Master I serve the Lord's promise
 was given, Sit here at my right hand while
 I make thy enemies a footstool under thy
 2 feet. The Lord will make thy empire spring
 up like a branch out of Zion; thou art to
 bear rule in the midst of thy enemies.
 3 From birth, princely state shall be thine,
 holy and glorious; thou art my son, born
 4 like dew before the day-star rises. The
 Lord has sworn an oath there is no re-
 tracting, Thou art a priest for ever in the
 5 line of Melchisedech.² At thy right hand,
 the Lord will beat down kings in the day
 6 of his vengeance; he will pass sentence on
 the nations, heap high the bodies, scatter
 7 far and wide the heads of the slain. Let
 him but drink of the brook by the wayside,
 he will lift up his head in victory.³

110

(111)

(Alleluia.)

ALL my heart goes out to the Lord in
 praise, before the assembly where the just
 2 are gathered. Chant we the Lord's won-
 derous doings, delight and study of all who
 3 love him. Ever his deeds are high and
 glorious, faithful he abides to all eternity.
 4 Great deeds, that he keeps still in remem-
 brance! He, the Lord, is kind and mercif-
 5 ful. In abundance he fed the men who
 feared him, keeping his covenant for ever.
 6 Lordly the power he shewed his people,
 making the lands of the heathen their pos-
 7 session. No act but shews him just and
 faithful; of his decrees there is no relent-
 8 ing. Perpetual time shall leave them
 changeless; right and truth are their founda-
 9 tion. So he has brought our race deli-

111

(112)

(Alleluia.)

A BLESSED man is he, who fears the Lord,
 bearing great love to his commandments.
 Children of his shall win renown in their
 2 country; do right, and thy sons shall find
 a blessing. Ease shall dwell in his house,
 3 and great prosperity; fame shall ever re-
 cord his bounty. Good men see a light
 4 dawn in darkness; his light, who is mercif-
 ul, kind and faithful. It goes well with the
 5 man who lends in pity, just and merciful
 in his dealings. Length of days shall leave
 6 him still unshaken; men will remember
 the just for ever. No fear shall he have of
 7 evil tidings; on the Lord his hope is fixed
 unchangeably. Patient his heart remains
 8 and steadfast, quietly he waits for the
 downfall of his enemies. Rich are his alms
 9 to the needy; still his bounty abides in
 memory.⁴ The Lord will lift up his head
 in triumph; ungodly men are ill content to
 10 see it. Vainly they gnash their teeth in
 envy; worldly hopes must fade and perish.

112

(113)

(Alleluia.)

PRAISE the Lord, you that are his servants,
 praise the name of the Lord together.
 Blessed be the Lord's name at all times,
 2 from this day to all eternity; from the sun's
 3 rise to the sun's setting let the Lord's name
 be praised continually. The Lord is sove-
 4 reign king of all the nations; his glory is
 high above the heavens. Who is like the
 5 Lord our God, so high above us, that
 6 stoops to regard both heaven and earth,
 lifting up the poor from the dust he lay in,
 7 raising the beggar out of his dung-hill, to
 8 find him a place among the princes, the

¹ This psalm, the meaning of which is in any case obscure, is further confused in the Latin, and in the Septuagint Greek, by the use of the same rendering for two different words in the Hebrew, here translated by 'Lord' and 'Master' respectively. Cf. Mt. 22. 44, Mk. 12. 36, Lk. 20. 42, Ac. 2. 34. ² See Heb. 5. 6, and elsewhere. ³ There is no agreement as to the precise meaning of this verse; some would render, 'they will drink', understanding the first half as an ironic reference to the princes lying slaughtered by the road side. ⁴ II Cor. 9. 9.

9 princes that rule over his people? He gives the barren woman a home to dwell in, a mother rejoicing in her children.

113

(114)

(Alleluia.)

WHEN Israel came out of Egypt, and the sons of Jacob heard no more a strange language, the Lord took Juda for his sanctuary, Israel for his own dominion. The seas fled at the sight they witnessed, backward flowed the stream of Jordan; up leapt, like rams, the startled mountains, up leapt the hills, like yearling sheep. What ailed you, seas, that you fled in terror, Jordan's stream, what drove thee back? Why did you leap up like rams, you mountains, leap up, you hills, like yearling sheep? Let earth thrill at its Master's presence; it is he that comes, the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into pools of water, the flint-stone into a springing well. Not to us, Lord, not to us the glory; let thy name alone be honoured; thine the merciful, thine the faithful; why must the heathen say, Their God deserts them? Our God is a God that dwells in heaven; all that his will designs, he executes. The heathen have silver idols and golden, gods which the hands of men have fashioned. They have mouths, and yet are silent; eyes they have, and yet are sightless; ears they have, and want all hearing; noses, and yet no smell can reach them; hands unfeeling, feet unstirring; never a sound their throats may utter. Such be the end of all who make them, such the reward of all who trust them. It is the Lord that gives hope to the race of Israel, their only help, their only stronghold; the Lord that gives hope to the race of Aaron, their only help, their only stronghold; the Lord that gives hope to all who fear him, their only help, their only stronghold. The Lord keeps us in mind, and grants us blessing, blesses the race of Israel, blesses the race of Aaron; all those who fear the Lord, small and great alike, he blesses. Still may the Lord grant you increase, you and your children

after you; the blessing of the Lord be upon you. It is he that made both heaven and earth; to the Lord belongs the heaven of heavens, the earth he gives to the children of men. From the dead, Lord, thou hast no praises, the men who go down into the place of silence; but we bless the Lord, we the living, from this day to all eternity.

114

(115)

(Alleluia.)

MY heart is aflame, so graciously the Lord listens to my entreaty; the Lord, who grants me audience when I invoke his name. Death's noose about me, caught in the snares of the grave, ever I found distress and grief at my side, till I called upon the Lord, Save me, Lord, in my peril. Merciful the Lord our God is, and just, and full of pity; he cares for simple hearts, and to me, when I lay humbled, he brought deliverance. Return, my soul, where thy peace lies; the Lord has dealt kindly with thee; he has saved my life from peril, banished my tears, kept my feet from falling. Mine to walk at ease, enjoying the Lord's presence, in the land of the living.

115

(116)

I TRUSTED, even when most I bewailed my unhappy lot; bewildered, I said, Man's faith is false; but the Lord's mercies have never failed me; what return shall I make to him? I will take the cup that is pledge of my deliverance, and invoke the name of the Lord upon it; I will pay the Lord my vows in the presence of all his people. Dear in the Lord's sight is the death of those who love him; and am not I, Lord, thy servant, born of thy own handmaid? Thou hast broken the chains that bound me; I will sacrifice in thy honour, and call on the name of the Lord. Before a throng of worshippers I will pay the Lord my vows, here in the courts of the Lord's house, here, Jerusalem, in thy heart.

¹ *vv.* 1-3. The sense here is obscure, and much disputed. It is usually supposed that what the Psalmist said comes to an end with verse 2; but it is difficult to see how this could be described as a confident utterance (see II Cor. 4. 13), and it seems best to take verse 3, and part or the whole of what follows, as falling within the quotation.

116 (117)

(Alleluia.)

1 PRAISE the Lord, all you Gentiles, let all
2 the nations of the world do him honour.
3 Abundant has his mercy been towards us;
4 the Lord remains faithful to his word for
5 ever.

117 (118)

(Alleluia.)

1 GIVE thanks to the Lord; the Lord is
2 gracious, his mercy endures for ever. Echo
3 the cry, sons of Israel; the Lord is gracious,
4 his mercy endures for ever. His mercy
5 endures for ever, echo the cry, sons of
6 Aaron; his mercy endures for ever; echo
7 the cry, all you who are the Lord's wor-
8 shippers. I called on the Lord when
9 trouble beset me, and the Lord listened,
10 and brought me relief. With the Lord at
11 my side, I have no fear of the worst man
12 can do; with the Lord at my side to aid me,
13 I shall yet see my enemies baffled. Better
14 trust the Lord than rely on the help of
15 man; better trust the Lord than rely on the
16 word of princes. Let all heathendom ring
17 me round, see, in the power of the Lord
18 I crush them! They cut me off from every
19 way of escape, but see, in the power of the
20 Lord I crush them! They swarm about
21 me like bees, their fury blazes up like fire
22 among thorns, but see, in the power of the
23 Lord, I crush them! I reeled under the
24 blow, and had well-nigh fallen, but still the
25 Lord was there to aid me. Who but the
26 Lord is my protector, my stronghold; who
27 but the Lord has brought me deliverance?
28 The homes of the just echo, now, with
29 glad cries of victory; the power of the Lord
30 has triumphed. The power of the Lord has
31 brought me to great honour, the power of
32 the Lord has triumphed. I am reprieved
33 from death, to live on and proclaim what
34 the Lord has done for me. The Lord has
35 chastened me, chastened me indeed, but
36 he would not doom me to die. Open me
37 the gates where right dwells; let me go in
38 and thank the Lord! Here is the gate that
39 leads to the Lord's presence; here shall
40 just souls find entry. Thanks be to thee,
41 Lord, for giving me audience, thanks be to
42 thee, my deliverer. The very stone which

the builders rejected has become the chief
stone at the corner; this is the Lord's
doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.¹
This day is a holiday of the Lord's own
choosing; greet this day with rejoicing,
greet this day with triumph!

Deliverance, Lord, deliverance; Lord,
grant us days of prosperity! Blessed is he
who comes in the name of the Lord!
A blessing from the Lord's house upon
your company! The Lord is God; his
light shines out to welcome us; marshal
the procession aright, with a screen of boughs
that reaches to the very horns of the altar.
Thou art my God, mine to thank thee,
thou art my God, mine to extol thee. Give
thanks to the Lord; the Lord is gracious,
his mercy endures for ever.

118 (119)

AH, blessed they, who pass through life's
journey unstained, who follow the law of
the Lord! Ah, blessed they, who cherish
his decrees, make him the whole quest of
their hearts! Afar from wrong-doing, thy
sure paths they tread. Above all else it
binds us, the charge thou hast given us to
keep. Ah, how shall my steps be surely
guided to keep faith with thy covenant?
Attentive to all thy commandments, I go
my way undismayed. A true heart's wor-
ship thou shalt have, thy just awards
prompting me. All shall be done thy laws
demand, so thou wilt not forsake me
utterly.

Best shall he keep his youth unstained,
who is true to thy trust. Be thou the whole
quest of my heart; never let me turn aside
from thy commandments. Buried deep in
my heart, thy warnings shall keep me clear
of sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me
to know thy will. By these lips let the
awards thou makest ever be recorded.
Blithely as one that has found great pos-
sessions, I follow thy decrees. Bethinking
me still of the charge thou givest, I will
mark thy footsteps. Be thy covenant ever
my delight, thy words kept in memory.

Crown thy servant with life, to live
faithful to thy commands. Clear sight be
mine, to contemplate the wonders of thy

¹ vs. 22, 23. Mt. 21. 42.

19 law. Comfort this earthly exile; do not
 20 refuse me the knowledge of thy will.
 21 Crushed lies my spirit, longing ever for thy
 22 just awards. Chastener of the proud, thy
 23 curse lies on all who swerve from thy
 24 covenant. Clear me of the reproach that
 25 shames me, as I was ever attentive to thy
 26 claims. Closeted together, princes plot
 27 against me, thy servant, that thinks only of
 28 thy decrees. Claims lovingly cherished,
 29 decrees that are my counsellors!
 30 Deep lies my soul in the dust, restore
 31 life to me, as thou hast promised. Deign,
 32 now, to shew me thy will, thou who hast
 33 listened when I opened my heart to thee.
 34 Direct me in the path thou biddest me
 35 follow, and all my musing shall be of thy
 36 wonderful deeds. Despair wrings tears
 37 from me; let thy promises raise me up
 38 once more. Deliver me from every false
 39 thought; make me free of thy covenant.
 40 Duty's path my choice, I keep thy bidding
 41 ever in remembrance. Disappoint me,
 42 Lord, never, one that holds fast by thy
 43 commandments. Do but open my heart
 44 wide, and easy lies the path thou hast
 45 decreed.
 46 Expound, Lord, thy whole bidding to
 47 me; faithfully I will keep it. Enlighten me,
 48 to scan thy law closely, and keep true to it
 49 with all my heart. Eagerly I long to be
 50 guided in the way of thy obedience. Ever
 51 let my choice be set on thy will, not on
 52 covetous thoughts. Eyes have I none for
 53 vain phantoms; let me find life in following
 54 thy ways. Establish with me, thy servant,
 55 the promise made to thy worshippers.
 56 Ease me of the reproach my heart dreads,
 57 thou, whose awards are gracious. Each
 58 command of thine I embrace lovingly; do
 59 thou in thy faithfulness grant me life.
 60 For me too, Lord, thy mercy, for me too
 61 the deliverance thou hast promised! Fit
 62 answer for those who taunt me, that I rely
 63 on thy truth. Faithful thy promise, let me
 64 not boast in vain; in thy covenant lies my
 65 hope. For ever and for evermore true to
 66 thy charge thou shalt find me. Freely shall
 67 my feet tread, if thy will is all my quest.
 68 Fearlessly will I talk of thy decrees in the
 69 presence of kings, and be never abashed.
 70 Fain would I have all my comfort in the
 71 law I love. Flung wide my arms to greet
 72 thy law, ever in my thoughts thy bidding.
 73 Go not back on the word thou hast

pledged to thy servant; there lies all my
 50 hope. Good news in my affliction, thy
 51 promises have brought me life. Ground
 52 down by the scorn of my oppressors, never
 53 from thy law I swerve aside. Gracious
 54 comfort, Lord, is the memory of thy just
 55 dealings in times long past. Great rith
 56 have I to see wrong-doers, and how they
 57 abandon thy law. Gone out into a land of
 58 exile, of thy covenant I make my song.
 59 Gloom of night finds me still thinking of
 60 thy name, Lord, still observant of thy bid-
 61 ding. Guerdon I ask no other, but the
 62 following of thy will.

Heritage, Lord, I claim no other, but to
 57 obey thy word. Heart-deep my supplica-
 58 tion before thee for the mercies thou hast
 59 promised. Have I not planned out my
 60 path, turned aside to follow thy decrees?
 61 Haste such as mine can brook no delay in
 62 carrying out all thy bidding. Hemmed in
 63 by the snares which sinners laid for me,
 64 never was I forgetful of thy law. Hearken
 65 when I rise at dead of night to praise thee
 66 for thy just dealings. How well I love the
 67 souls that fear thee, and are true to thy
 68 trust! How thy mercy fills the earth,
 69 Lord! Teach me to do thy will.

In fulfilment of thy promise, Lord, what
 65 kindness thou hast shewn thy servant!
 66 Inspire, instruct me still; all my hope is in
 67 thy covenant. Idly I strayed till thou didst
 68 chasten me; no more shall thy warnings go
 69 unheeded. Indeed, indeed thou art gra-
 70 cious; teach me to do thy bidding. In vain
 71 my oppressors plot against me; thy will is
 72 all my quest. Inhuman hearts, curdled
 73 with scorn! For me, thy law is enough. It
 74 was in mercy thou didst chasten me,
 75 schooling me to thy obedience. Is not the
 76 law thou hast given dearer to me than rich
 77 store of gold and silver?

Jalous for the handiwork thou hast
 78 made, teach me to understand thy com-
 79 mandments. Joy shall be theirs, thy true
 80 worshippers, to see the confidence I have
 81 in thy word. Just are thy awards; I know
 82 well, Lord, it was in faithfulness thou didst
 83 afflict me. Judge me no more; pity and
 84 comfort thy servant as thou hast promised.
 85 Judge me no more; pardon and life for one
 86 that loves thy will! Just be their fall, who
 87 wrong me scornfully; thy law is all my
 88 study. Joined to my company be every
 89 soul that worships thee and heeds thy

180 warnings. Jealously let my heart observe thy bidding; let me not hope in vain.

181 **Keeping watch for thy aid, my soul languishes, yet I trust in thy word. Keeping watch for the fulfilment of thy promise, my eyes languish for comfort still delayed.**

183 **Kitchen-smoke shrivels the wine-skin; so waste I, yet never forget thy will. Knowest thou not how short are thy servant's days?**

185 **Soon be my wrongs redressed. Knaves will be plotting against me still, that are no friends to thy law. Knaves they are that wrong me; bring aid, as thy covenant stands unchanging. Keep thy bidding I would, though small hope of life they had left me. Kind as thou ever wert, preserve me; then utter thy bidding, and I will obey.**

189 **Lord, the word thou hast spoken stands ever unchanged as heaven. Loyal to his promise, age after age, is he who made the enduring earth. Long as time lasts, these shall stand, obeying thy decree, Master of all. Lest I should sink in my affliction, thou hast given thy covenant to be my comfort. Life-giving are thy commands, never by me forgotten. Lend me thy aid, for thine I am, and thy bidding is all my quest. Let sinners go about to destroy me, I wait on thy will. Look where I may, all good things must end; only thy law is wide beyond measure.**

197 **My delight, Lord, is in thy bidding; ever my thoughts return to it. Musing still on thy commandments, I have grown more prudent than my enemies. More wisdom have I than all my teachers, so well have I pondered thy decrees. More learning have I than my elders, I that hold true to thy charge. Mindful of thy warnings, I guide my steps clear of every evil path. Meek under thy tuition, thy will I keep ever in view. Meat most appetizing are thy promises; never was honey so sweet to my taste. Made wise by thy law, I shun every path of evil-doing.**

205 **No lamp like thy word to guide my feet, to shew light on my path. Never will I retract my oath to give thy just commands observance. Nothing, Lord, but affliction, never the saving help thou didst promise me? Nay, Lord, accept these vows of mine; teach me to do thy bidding. Needs must I carry my life in my hands, yet am I ever mindful of thy law. Nearly the**

snare of the wicked caught my feet, yet would I not swerve from thy obedience. Now and ever thy covenant is my prize, is my heart's comfort. Now and ever to do thy will perfectly is my heart's aim.

113 **Out upon the men that play traitor to the law I love! Other defence, other shield have I none; in thy law I trust. Out of my path, lovers of wrong; I will keep my God's commandments. Only let thy promised aid preserve me; do not disappoint me of the hope I cherish. Only do thou sustain me in safety, looking ever to thy will. Obey thee who will not, shall earn thy disdain; idle is all their scheming. Outcasts they are that profane the land with wrong; for me, thy law is enough. Overcome is my whole being with the fear of thee; I am adread of thy judgements.**

121 **Protect the justice of my cause; never leave me at the mercy of my oppressors. Pledge thyself still to befriend me; save me from the oppression of my enemies. Pining away, I look for thy saving help, the faithful keeping of thy promises. Pity thy own servant, and teach him thy decrees. Perfect in thy own servant's heart the knowledge of thy will. Put off the hour, Lord, no more; too long thy commandment stands defied. Precious beyond gold or jewel I hold thy law. Prized be every decree of thine; forsworn be every path of evil-doing.**

129 **Right wonderful thy decrees are, hard to read, and well my heart heeds them. Revelation and light thy words disclose to the simple. Rises ever a sigh from my lips as I long after thy covenant. Regard and pity me, as thou hast pity for all that love thy name. Rule thou my path as thou hast promised; never be wrong-doing my master. Rescue me from man's oppression, to wait henceforth on thy bidding. Restore to thy servant the smile of thy living favour, and teach him to know thy will. Rivers of tears flow from my eyes, to see thy law forgotten.**

137 **So just, Lord, thou art, thy awards so truly given! Strict justice and utter faithfulness inspire all thy decrees. Stung by love's jealousy, I watch my enemies defy thy bidding. Shall not I, thy servant, love thy promises, tested and found true? Still despised and disinherited, I do not forget thy charge. Stands thy faithfulness eter-**

143 nally, thy law for ever changeless. Sorrow
and distress have fallen on me; in thy
144 commandments is all my comfort. Sen-
tence eternal is thy decree; teach me the
wisdom that brings life.

145 Thy audience, Lord, my whole heart
146 claims, a heart true to thy trust. To thee
I cry, O grant deliverance; I will do all thy
147 bidding. Twilight comes, and I awake to
plead with thee, hoping ever in thy prom-
148 ises. Through the night my eyes keep
149 watch, to ponder thy sayings. Thine, Lord,
to listen in thy mercy, and grant life
150 according to thy will. Treacherous foes
draw near, that are strangers to thy cove-
151 nant. Thou, Lord, art close at hand; all thy
152 awards are true. Taught long since by thy
decrees, I know well thou hast ordained
them everlastingly.

153 Blessed is my lot; look down and
rescue me, that still am mindful of thy
154 law. Uphold my cause, and deliver me;
155 true to thy promise, grant me life. Un-
known thy mercy to the sinner that defies
156 thy bidding. Unnumbered, Lord, are thy
blessings; as thy will is, grant me life.
157 Under all the assaults of my oppressors,
158 I keep true to thy charge. Unhappy I, that
watch thy warnings to the sinner go un-
159 heeded! Up, Lord, and witness the love
I bear thy covenant; in thy mercy bid me
160 live! Unchanging truth is thy word's
fountain-head, eternal the force of thy just
decrees.

161 Vexed by the causeless malice of princes,
162 my heart still dreads thy warnings. Victors
rejoice not more over rich spoils, than I in
163 thy promises. Villainy I abhor and re-
164 nounce; thy law is all my love. Votive
thanks seven times a day I give thee for the
165 just awards thou makest. Very great peace
is theirs who love thy law; their feet never
166 stumble. Valiantly, Lord, I wait on thee
for succour, keeping ever true to thy
167 charge. Vanquished by great love, my
168 heart is ever obedient to thy will. Vigilantly
I observe precept and bidding of thine,
living always as in thy sight.

169 Wilt thou not admit my cry, Lord, to
thy presence, and grant me thy promised
170 gift of wisdom? Wilt thou not coun-
tenance my plea, redeem thy pledge to
171 deliver me? What praise shall burst from
my lips, when thou makest known thy
172 will! What hymns of thankfulness this

tongue shall raise to the author of all just
17 decrees! Wouldst thou but lift thy hand
to aid me, that take my stand on thy cove-
17 nant! Weary it is, Lord, waiting for
17 deliverance, but thy law is my comfort.
When will thy just award grant redress,
17 that I may live to praise thee? Wayward
17 thou seest me, like a lost sheep; come to
look for thy servant, that is mindful still of
thy bidding.

119

(120)

(A song of ascents.)

NOT unheeded I cry to the Lord in the
hour of my distress. Lord, have pity and
deliver me from the treacherous lips, the
perjured tongue. Perjurer, he will give
thee all thy deserts and more; sharp arrows
from a warrior's bow, blazing faggots of
broom. Unhappy I, that live an exile in
Mosoch, or dwell among the tents of
Cedar! Long banished here among the
enemies of peace, for peace I plead, and
their cry is still for battle.

120

(121)

(A song of ascents.)

I LIFT up my eyes to the hills, to find
deliverance; from the Lord deliverance
comes to me, the Lord who made heaven
and earth. Never will he who guards thee
allow thy foot to stumble; never fall asleep
at his post! Such a guardian has Israel,
one who is never weary, never sleeps; it is
the Lord that guards thee, the Lord that
stands at thy right hand to give thee shelter.
The sun's rays by day, the moon's by
night, shall have no power to hurt thee.
The Lord will guard thee from all evil; the
Lord will protect thee in danger; the Lord
will protect thy journeying and thy home-
coming, henceforth and for ever.

121

(122)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

WELCOME sound, when I heard them
saying, We will go into the Lord's house!
Within thy gates, Jerusalem, our feet stand
at last; Jerusalem, built as a city should be

- 4 built that is one in fellowship. There the tribes meet, the Lord's own tribes, to give praise, as Israel is ever bound, to the Lord's name; there the thrones are set for judgement, thrones for the house of David.
6 Pray for all that brings Jerusalem peace!
7 May all who love thee dwell at ease! Let there be peace within thy ramparts, ease in thy strongholds! For love of my brethren and my familiar friends, peace is still my prayer for thee; remembering the house of the Lord our God, for thy happiness I plead.

122 (123)

(A song of ascents.)

- UNTO thee I lift up my eyes, unto thee, who dwellest in the heavens. See how the eyes of servants are fixed on the hands of their masters, the eyes of a maid on the hand of her mistress! Our eyes, too, are fixed on the Lord our God, waiting for him to shew mercy on us. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us; we have had our fill of man's derision. Our hearts can bear no more to be the scorn of luxury, the derision of the proud.

123 (124)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

- IF the Lord had not been on our side, Israel may boast, if the Lord had not been on our side when human foes assailed us, it seemed as if they must have swallowed us up alive, so fierce their anger threatened us. It seemed as if the tide must have sucked us down, the torrent closed above us; closed above us the waters that ran so high. Blessed be the Lord, who has not let us fall a prey to those ravening mouths! Safe, like a bird rescued from the fowler's snare; the snare is broken and we are safe! Such help is ours, the Lord's help, that made heaven and earth.

124 (125)

(A song of ascents.)

- THOSE who trust in the Lord are strong as mount Sion itself, that stands unmoved for ever. The hills protect Jerusalem; so the Lord protects his people, now and for ever. Domain of the just! No longer shall godless men bear rule in it; else the just, too, might soil their hands with guilt. Deal kindly, Lord, with the kindly, with the true-hearted. Feet that stray into false paths the Lord will punish, as he punishes wrong-doers; but upon Israel there shall be peace.

125 (126)

(A song of ascents.)

- WHEN the Lord gave back Sion her banished sons, we walked like men in a dream; in every mouth was laughter, joy was on every tongue. Among the heathen themselves it was said, What favour the Lord has shewn them! Favour indeed the Lord has shewn us, and our hearts are rejoiced. Deliver us, Lord, from our bondage; our withered hopes, Lord, like some desert water-course renew!¹ The men who are sowing in tears will reap, one day, with joy. Mournful enough they go, but with seed to scatter; trust me, they will come back rejoicing, as they carry their sheaves with them.

126 (127)

(A song of ascents. Of Solomon.)

- VAIN is the builder's toil, if the house is not of the Lord's building; vainly the guard keeps watch, if the city has not the Lord for its guardian. Vain, that you should be astir before daybreak, and sit on over your tasks late into the night, you whose bread is so hardly won; is it not in the hours of sleep that he blesses the men he loves?² Fatherhood itself is the Lord's gift, the fruitful womb is a reward that comes from him. Crown of thy youth, children are like arrows in a warrior's

¹ Some commentators think that the process of deliverance was still incomplete, only a small number of exiles (for example) having returned from captivity; others, that verse 1 expresses, not something which had actually happened, but an imaginary picture. ² The verse is not an incitement to idleness; the gist of the psalm lies in what follows. What is the use of a house to a childless man, of a well-built city with a dwindling number of inhabitants; what is the use of toiling day and night, unless you have a family to provide for?

5 hand. Happy, whose quiver is well filled with these; their cause will not be set aside when they plead against their enemies at the gate.

127 (128)

(A song of ascents.)

BLESSED thou art, if thou dost fear the Lord, and follow his paths! Thyself shall eat what thy hands have toiled to win; blessed thou art; all good shall be thine. Thy wife shall be fruitful as a vine, in the heart of thy home, the children round thy table sturdy as olive-branches. Let a man serve the Lord, such is the blessing that awaits him. May the Lord who dwells in Zion bless thee; mayest thou see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long. Mayest thou live to see thy children's children, and peace resting upon Israel.

128 (129)

(A song of ascents.)

SORE have they beset me even from my youth (let this be Israel's boast); sore have they beset me even from my youth, but never once outmatched me. I bent my back to the oppressor, and long was the furrow ere the plough turned; but the Lord proved faithful, and cut the bonds of tyranny asunder. Let them be dismayed and routed, all these enemies of Zion. Let them be like the stalks on a house-top, that wither there unharvested; never will they be grasped in the reaper's hand, or fill the binder's bosom, no passer-by will say, The Lord's blessing on you; we bless you in the name of the Lord.¹

129 (130)

(A song of ascents.)

OUT of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord; Master, listen to my voice; let but thy ears be attentive to the voice that calls on thee for pardon. If thou, Lord, wilt keep record of our iniquities, Master, who has strength

to bear it? Ah, but with thee there is forgiveness; be thy name ever revered. I wait for the Lord, for his word of promise my soul waits; patient my soul waits, as ever watchman that looked for the day. Patient as watchman at dawn, for the Lord Israel waits, the Lord with whom there is mercy, with whom is abundant power to ransom. He it is that will ransom Israel from all his iniquities.

130 (131)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

LORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes not raised from the earth; my mind does not dwell on high things, on marvels that are beyond my reach. Bear me witness that I kept my soul ever quiet, ever at peace. The thoughts of a child on its mother's breast, a child's thoughts were all my soul knew. Let Israel trust in the Lord, henceforth and for ever.

131 (132)

(A song of ascents.)

IN David's reckoning, Lord, let not his patient care be forgotten, the oath he swore to the Lord, the vow he made to the great God of Jacob: Never will I come beneath the roof of my house, or climb up into the bed that is strewn for me; never shall these eyes have sleep, these eye-lids close, until I have found the Lord a home, the great God of Jacob a dwelling-place. And now, at Ephrata, we have heard tidings of what we looked for, we have found it in the plains of Jaar; now to go into his dwelling, pay reverence at his footstool! Up, Lord, and take possession of thy resting-place, thou and the ark which is shrine of thy glory! Let thy priests go clad in the vesture of innocence, thy faithful people cry aloud with rejoicing.

Think of thy servant David, and do not refuse audience to the king thou hast anointed. Never will the Lord be false to that inviolable oath he swore to David:

¹ Cf. Ruth 2. 4.

² Literally, 'Behold, we have heard of it at Ephrata, and found it in the plains of Jaar'. If this psalm was composed for the dedication of Solomon's Temple (II Par. 6. 41, 42) and commemorates the bringing back of the Ark to Jerusalem (I Par. 13), we should naturally suppose that 'it' means the Ark. It is not clear that the Ark ever rested at Bethlehem-Ephrata; but some think that Ephrata here is another name for Silo (I Kg. 4. 3), and that the other half of the verse refers to Cariathiarim, the 'city of the woods' (I Par. 13. 5).

I will raise to thy throne heirs of thy own
 12 body; if thy sons hold fast to my covenant,
 to the decrees which I make known to
 them, their sons too shall reign on thy
 13 throne for ever. The Lord's choice has
 fallen upon Sion, this is the dwelling he
 14 longed for: Here, for ever, is my resting-
 15 place, here is my destined home. Trust
 me, I will bless her with abundant store,
 the poor shall have bread to their heart's
 16 content; I will clothe her priests in the
 vesture of triumph, cries of rejoicing shall
 17 echo among her faithful people. There the
 stock of David shall bud, there shall a
 lamp burn continually for the king I have
 18 anointed.¹ I will cover his enemies with
 confusion; on his brow the crown I gave
 shall shine untarnished.

132 (133)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

GRACIOUS the sight, and full of comfort,
 2 when brethren dwell united. Gracious as
 balm poured on the head till it flows down
 on to the beard; balm that flowed down
 Aaron's beard, and reached the very skirts
 3 of his robe. It is as if dew like the dews of
 Hermon were falling on this hill of Sion;²
 here, where the Lord grants benediction
 and life everlastingly.

133 (134)

(A song of ascents.)

COME, then, praise the Lord, all you that
 are the Lord's servants; you that wait on
 2 the Lord's house at midnight, lift up your
 hands towards the sanctuary and bless the
 3 Lord. May the Lord who dwells in Sion
 bless thee, the Lord who made heaven and
 earth!

134 (135)

(Alleluia.)

PRaise the Lord's name; praise the Lord,
 2 you that are his servants, you who stand in
 the house of the Lord, in the courts where

our God dwells. Praise to the Lord, a Lord
 so gracious, praise to his name, a name so
 well beloved. Has not the Lord made
 4 choice of Jacob, claimed Israel for his own?

Doubt it never, the Lord is great; he,
 5 our Master, is higher than all the gods. In
 6 heaven and on earth, in the sea and in the
 deep waters beneath us, the Lord accom-
 plishes his will; summoning clouds from
 the ends of the earth, rain-storm wedding
 to lightning-flash, bringing winds out of
 his store-house. He it was that smote the
 8 first-born of the Egyptians, man and beast
 alike; what wonders and portents, Egypt,
 9 thou didst witness, sent to plague Pharaoh
 and all his servants! He it was that smote
 10 nation after nation, and slew the kings in
 their pride, Sehon king of the Amorrites,
 11 and Og the king of Basan, and all the rulers
 of Chanaan, and marked down their lands
 12 for a dwelling-place where his own people
 of Israel should dwell.

Lord, thy name abides for ever; age
 13 succeeds age, and thou art ever unfor-
 gotten. The Lord defends his people, takes
 14 pity on his servants. What are the idols of
 the heathen but silver and gold, gods which
 the hands of men have fashioned? They
 16 have mouths, and yet are silent; eyes they
 have, and yet are sightless; ears they have,
 17 and want all hearing, never a breath have
 they in their mouths. Such the end of all
 18 who make them, such the reward of all
 who trust them. Bless the Lord, sons of
 19 Israel, bless the Lord, sons of Aaron, bless
 the Lord, sons of Levi, bless the Lord, all
 20 you that are the Lord's worshippers. Here,
 21 in Sion his dwelling-place, here, in Jeru-
 salem, let the Lord's name be blessed.

135 (136)

(Alleluia.)

GIVE thanks to the Lord for his goodness,
 his mercy is eternal; give thanks to the
 2 God of gods, his mercy is eternal; give
 3 thanks to the Lord of lords, his mercy is
 eternal. Eternal his mercy, who does great
 4 deeds as none else can; eternal his mercy,
 5

¹ Literally, 'There will I make a horn grow for David, I have trimmed a lamp for my anointed', both metaphors for the continuance of his royal dynasty (III Kg. 15. 4; Lk. 1. 69). ² Literally, 'like the dew of Hermon that falls on the hill of Sion', which, however, was more than a hundred miles distant. It seems clear, therefore, that the dews of Hermon are only mentioned here as typical of exceptionally heavy dews, unless those authors are right who suspect that the reference is to a mount Sion, differently spelt in Hebrew, which was part of the Hermon range (Deut. 4. 48).

6 whose wisdom made the heavens; eternal his mercy, who poised earth upon the
7 floods. Eternal his mercy, who made the
8 great luminaries; made the sun to rule by
9 day, his mercy is eternal; made the moon and the stars to rule by night, his mercy is eternal.

10 Eternal his mercy, who smote the Egyptians by smiting their first-born; eternal his mercy, who delivered Israel from their midst, with constraining power, with his arm raised on high, his mercy is eternal.
11 Eternal the mercy that divided the Red Sea
12 in two, eternal the mercy that led Israel
13 through its waters, eternal the mercy that drowned in the Red Sea Pharaoh and
14 Pharaoh's men. And so he led his people through the wilderness, his mercy is eternal.

15 Eternal the mercy that smote great
16 kings, eternal the mercy that slew the kings in their pride, Sehon king of the Amorrites, his mercy is eternal, and Og the king of Basan, his mercy is eternal. Eternal the mercy that marked down their land to be a dwelling-place; a dwelling-place for his servant Israel, his mercy is eternal. Eternal the mercy that remembers us in our affliction, eternal the mercy that rescues us from our enemies, eternal the mercy that gives all living things their food. Give thanks to the God of heaven, his mercy is eternal.

136

(137)

WE sat down by the streams of Babylon and
2 wept there, remembering Zion. Willow-trees grow there, and on these we hung up
3 our harps when the men who took us prisoner cried out for a song. We must make sport for our enemies; A stave, there,
4 from the music they sing at Zion! What, should we sing the Lord's song in a strange
5 land? Jerusalem, if I forget thee, perish
6 the skill of my right hand! Let my tongue stick fast to the roof of my mouth if I cease
7 to remember thee, if I love not Jerusalem dearer than heart's content! Remember, Lord, how the sons of Edom triumphed when Jerusalem fell; O'erthrow it, they cried, o'erthrow it, till the very foundation

¹ The Hebrew word here translated 'angels' means literally 'gods'. Some think it refers, as in Ps. 81, to earthly rulers, cf. verse 4 below.

is left bare. Babylon, pitiless queen, blessed be the man who deals out to thee the measure thou hast dealt to us; blessed be the man who will catch up thy children, and dash them against the rocks!

137

(138)

(Of David.)

MY heart's thanks, Lord, for listening to the prayer I uttered; angels for my witness, I will sing of thy praise. I bow down in worship towards thy sanctuary, praising thy name for thy mercy and faithfulness; thy own honour and thy pledged word thou hast vindicated for all the world to see. To thee I appealed, and thou didst listen to me, didst fill my heart with courage. All the kings of the earth, Lord, will praise thee now; were not thy promises made in their hearing? Their song shall be of the Lord's doings, how great is his renown, the Lord, who is so high above us, yet looks with favour on the humble, looks on the proud too, but from far off. Though affliction surround my path, thou dost preserve me; it is thy power that confronts my enemies' malice, thy right hand that rescues me. My purposes the Lord will yet speed; thy mercy, Lord, endures for ever, and wilt thou abandon us, the creatures of thy own hands?

138

(139)

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

LORD, I lie open to thy scrutiny; thou knowest me, knowest when I sit down and when I rise up again, canst read my thoughts from far away. Walk I or sleep I, thou canst tell; no movement of mine but thou art watching it. Before ever the words are framed on my lips, all my thought is known to thee; rearguard and vanguard, thou dost compass me about, thy hand still laid upon me. Such wisdom as thine is far beyond my reach, no thought of mine can attain it.

Where can I go, then, to take refuge from thy spirit, to hide from thy view? If I should climb up to heaven, thou art there;

if I sink down to the world beneath, thou art present still. If I could wing my way eastwards, or find a dwelling beyond the western sea, still would I find thee beckoning to me, thy right hand upholding me. Or perhaps I would think to bury myself in darkness; night should surround me, friendlier than day; but no, darkness is no hiding-place from thee, with thee the night shines clear as day itself; light and dark are one.

Author, thou, of my inmost being, didst thou not form me in my mother's womb? I praise thee for my wondrous fashioning, for all the wonders of thy creation. Of my soul thou hast full knowledge, and this mortal frame had no mysteries for thee, who didst contrive it in secret, devise its pattern, there in the dark recesses of the earth. All my acts thy eyes have seen, all are set down already in thy record; my days were numbered before ever they came to be.

A riddle, O my God, thy dealings with me, so vast their scope! As well count the sand, as try to fathom them; and, were that skill mine, thy own being still confronts me. O God, wouldst thou but make an end of the wicked! Murderers, keep your distance from me! Treacherously they rebel against thee, faithlessly set thee at defiance. Lord, do I not hate the men who hate thee, am I not sick at heart over their rebellion? Surpassing hatred I bear them, count them my sworn enemies. Scrutinize me, O God, as thou wilt, and read my heart; put me to the test, and examine my restless thoughts. See if on any false paths my heart is set, and thyself lead me in the ways of old.

139 (140)

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

RESCUE me, Lord, from human malice, save me from the lovers of oppression, always plotting treachery in their hearts, always at their quarrelling, tongues sharp as the tongues of serpents, lips that hide the poison of adders. Preserve me Lord, from the power of sinful men, save me from these lovers of oppression who are

plotting to trip my feet. What hidden snares they set for me, these tyrants, what nets they spread to catch me, what traps they lay in my path!

To the Lord I make my appeal, Thou art my God, listen, Lord, to the voice that pleads with thee. My Lord, my Master, my strong deliverer, it is thou that shieldest my head in the day of battle. Lord, do not let malice have its way with me, do not prosper its evil designs. They carry their heads high as they close in around me; let their conspiracy prove its own undoing; let burning coals rain down on them, be they cast into a pit whence they shall rise no more. Not long the blasphemer's time on earth: misfortune will overtake the oppressor unawares. Can I doubt that the Lord will avenge the helpless, will grant the poor redress? Honest men will yet live to praise thy name; upright hearts to enjoy the smile of thy favour.

140 (141)

(A psalm. Of David.)

COME quickly, Lord, at my cry for succour; do not let my appeal to thee go unheard. Welcome as incense-smoke let my prayer rise up before thee; when I lift up my hands, be it acceptable as the evening sacrifice. Lord, set a guard on my mouth, post a sentry before my lips; do not turn my heart towards thoughts of evil, and deeds of treachery; never let me take part with the wrong-doers, and share the banquet with them. Rather let some just man deal me heavy blows; this shall be his kindness to me; reprove me, and it shall be balm poured over me; such unction never will this head refuse. Their injuries I will still greet with a prayer. . .

. . . My words have won their hearts, a people that had seen their chieftains hurled down the rock-face, a people whose bones lie scattered at the grave's mouth-like seed when the earth is cloven into furrows.

To thee these eyes look, my Lord, my Master; in thee I trust; let not my life be forfeit. Preserve me from the ambush they

¹ It does not seem likely that the word 'their' in this verse refers to the sinners just mentioned; it is more naturally interpreted of the Jewish people generally. This verse, and the verse which follows, are obscure.

10 have laid for me, from the snares of the wrong-doers. Into their own net, sinner upon sinner, may they fall, and I pass on in safety.

141 (142)

(A maskil. Of David, when he was in the cave. A prayer.)

2 **L**OU**D** is my cry to the Lord, the prayer I
3 utter for the Lord's mercy, as I pour out
4 my complaint before him, tell him of the
5 affliction I endure. My heart is ready to
6 faint within me, but thou art watching over
7 my path. They lie in ambush for me, there
8 by the wayside; I look to the right of me,
9 and find none to take my part; all hope of
10 escape is cut off from me, none is concerned
11 for my safety. To thee, Lord, I cry,
12 claiming thee for my only refuge, all that
13 is left me in this world of living men.
14 Listen, then, to my plea; thou seest me all
15 defenceless. Rescue me from persecutors
16 who are too strong for me; restore liberty
17 to a captive soul. What thanks, then, will
18 I give to thy name, honest hearts all about
19 me, rejoicing to see thy favour restored!

142 (143)

(A psalm. Of David.)

1 **L**ISTEN, Lord, to my prayer; give my plea
2 a hearing, as thou art ever faithful; listen,
3 thou who lovest the right. Do not call thy
4 servant to account; what man is there
5 living that can stand guiltless in thy presence?
6 See how my enemies plot against my life,
7 how they have abased me in the dust, set
8 me down in dark places, like the long-forgotten
9 dead! My spirits are crushed within me, my
10 heart is cowed.
11 And my mind goes back to past days; I
12 think of all thou didst once, dwell on the
13 proofs thou gavest of thy power. To thee
14 I spread out my hands in prayer, for thee
15 my soul thirsts, like a land parched with
16 drought.
17 Hasten, Lord, to answer my prayer; my
18 spirit grows faint. Do not turn thy face
19 away from me, and leave me like one sunk
20 in the abyss. Speedily let me win thy
21 mercy, my hope is in thee; to thee I lift up
22 my heart, shew me the path I must follow;

to thee I fly for refuge, deliver me, Lord,
from my enemies. Thou art my God, teach
me to do thy will; let thy gracious spirit
lead me, safe ground under my feet. For
the honour of thy own name, Lord, grant
me life; in thy mercy rescue me from my
cruel affliction. Have pity on me, and
scatter my enemies; thy servant I; make
an end of my cruel persecutors.

143 (144)

(Of David.)

BLESSED be the Lord, my refuge, who
makes these hands strong for battle, these
fingers skilled in fight; the Lord who pities
me and grants me safety, who shelters me
and sets me at liberty, who protects me and
gives me confidence, bowing down nations
to my will. Lord, what is Adam's race, that
thou givest heed to it, what is man, that
thou carest for him? Like the wind he
goes, like a shadow his days pass.

Bid heaven stoop, Lord, and come down
to earth; at thy touch, the mountains will
be wreathed in smoke. Brandish thy light-
nings, to rout my enemies; shoot thy
arrows, and throw them into confusion!
With heavenly aid, from yonder flood deli-
ver me; rescue me from the power of
alien foes, who make treacherous prom-
ises, and lift their hands in perjury.
Then, O my God, I will sing thee a new
song, on a ten-stringed harp I will sound
thy praise; the God to whom kings must
look for victory, the God who has brought
his servant David rescue. Save me from
the cruel sword, deliver me from the power
of alien foes, who make treacherous prom-
ises, and lift their hands in perjury.

So may our sons grow to manhood, tall
as the saplings, our daughters shapely as
some column at the turn of a building, it
may be, the temple itself. Our garner
full, well stored with every kind of plenty,
our sheep bearing a thousand-fold, throng-
ing the pasture in their tens of thousands,
our oxen straining at the load; no ruined
walls, no exile, no lamenting in our streets.
Happy men call such a people as this; and
is not the people happy, that has the Lord
for its God?

144

(145)

(Praises. Of David.)

AND shall I not extol thee, my God, my king; shall I not bless thy name for ever and for evermore? Blessing shall be thine, day after day; for ever and for evermore praised be thy name. Can any praise be worthy of the Lord's majesty, any thought set limits to his greatness? Down the ages the story of thy deeds is told, thy power is ever acclaimed; each magnifies thy unapproachable glory, makes known thy wonders. Fearful are the tales they tell of thy power, proclaiming thy magnificence; grateful their memory of all thy goodness, as they boast of thy just dealings. How gracious the Lord is, how merciful, how patient, how rich in pity! Is he not a loving Lord to his whole creation; does not his mercy reach out to all that he has made?

Joining, then, Lord, in thy whole creation's praise, let thy faithful servants bless thee; let them publish the glory of thy kingdom, and discourse of thy power, making that power known to the race of men, the glory, the splendour of that kingdom! No age shall dawn but shall see thee reigning still; generations pass, and thy rule shall endure. O how true the Lord is to all his promises, how gracious in all his dealings! Prostrate though men may fall, the Lord will lift them up, will revive their crushed spirits.

Quietly, Lord, thy creatures raise their eyes to thee, and thou grantest them, in due time, their nourishment, ready to open thy hand, and fill with thy blessing all that lives. So faithful the Lord is in all he does, so gracious in all his dealings. The Lord draws near to every man that calls upon him, will he but call upon him with a true heart. Utter but the wish, you that fear the Lord, and he will grant it, will hear the cry, and bring aid. Vigilantly the Lord watches over all that love him, marks down the wicked for destruction. While these lips tell of the Lord's praise, let all that lives bless his holy name, for ever, and for evermore.

145

(146)

(Alleluia.)

PRAISE the Lord, my soul; while life lasts, I will praise the Lord; of him, my God, shall my songs be while I am here to sing them. Do not put your trust in princes; they are but men, they have no power to save. As soon as the breath leaves his body, man goes back to the dust he belongs to; with that, all his designs will come to nothing. Happier the man who turns to the God of Jacob for help, puts no confidence but in the Lord his God, maker of heaven and earth and sea and all they contain; the God who keeps faith for ever, who redresses wrong, and gives food to the hungry. The Lord, who brings release to the prisoner, the Lord, who gives sight to the blind, the Lord, who comforts the burdened, the Lord, who befriends the innocent! The Lord, who protects the stranger, who defends orphan and widow, who overturns the counsel of the wicked! The Lord, reigning for ever, thy God, Sion, reigning from age to age! Alleluia.

146

(147. I-11)

(Alleluia.)

PRAISE the Lord; the Lord is gracious; sing to our God, a God who so claims our love; praise is his right. The Lord is rebuilding Jerusalem, is calling the banished sons of Israel home; he it is that heals the broken heart, and binds up its wounds. Does he not know the number of the stars, and call each by its name? How great a Lord is ours, how magnificent his strength, how inscrutable his wisdom! The Lord is the defender of the oppressed, and lays the wicked low in the dust. Strike up, then, in thanksgiving to the Lord, with the harp's music praise our God; the God who curtains heaven with cloud, and lays up a store of rain for the earth, who clothes the mountain-sides with grass, with corn for man's need, gives food to the cattle, food to the young ravens that cry out to him. Not the well-mounted warrior is his choice, not the swift runner wins his favour; the Lord's favour is for those who fear him, and put their trust in his divine mercy.

147 (147. 12-20)

1 PRAISE the Lord, Jerusalem; Zion, exalt
 2 thy God! He it is that bolts thy gates fast,
 and blesses thy children, who dwell safe in
 3 thee; that makes thy land a land of peace,
 and gives thee full ears of wheat to sustain
 4 thee. See how he issues his command to
 5 the earth, how swift his word runs! Now
 he spreads a pall of snow, covers earth with
 6 an ashy veil of rime, doles out the scattered
 crusts of ice, binds the waters at the onset
 7 of his frost. Then, at his word, all melts
 away; a breath from him, and the waters
 8 flow! This is the God who makes his word
 known to Jacob, gives Israel ruling and
 9 decree. Not such his dealings with any
 other nation; nowhere else the revelation
 of his will. Alleluia.

148

(Alleluia.)

1 GIVE praise to the Lord in heaven; praise
 2 him, all that dwells on high. Praise him,
 all you angels of his, praise him, all his
 3 armies. Praise him, sun and moon; praise
 4 him, every star that shines. Praise him,
 you highest heavens, you waters beyond
 5 the heavens. Let all these praise the Lord;
 6 it was his command that created them. He
 has set them there unageing for ever, given
 them a law which cannot be altered.

7 Give praise to the Lord on earth, mon-
 8 sters of the sea and all its depths; fire and
 hail, snow and mist, and the storm-wind
 9 that executes his decree; all you mountains
 10 and hills, all you fruit trees and cedars; all
 you wild beasts and cattle, creeping things
 11 and birds that fly in air; all you kings and
 peoples of the world, all you that are
 12 princes and judges on earth; young men
 13 and maids, old men and boys together; let
 them all give praise to the Lord's name.

His name is exalted as no other, his praise
 reaches beyond heaven and earth; and
 now he has given fresh strength to his
 people. Shall not his faithful servants
 praise him, the sons of Israel, the people
 that draw near to him? Alleluia.

149

(Alleluia.)

1 SING the Lord a new song; here, where
 the faithful gather, let his praise be heard.
 In him, the maker of Israel, let Israel
 triumph; for him, the ruler of Zion, let
 Zion's children keep holiday; let there be
 dancing in honour of his name, music of
 tambour and of harp, to praise him. Still
 the Lord shews favour to his people, still
 he relieves the oppressed, and grants them
 victory. In triumph let thy faithful ser-
 vants rejoice, rejoice and take their rest.
 Ever on their lips they bear the high praise
 of God, ever in their hands they carry
 two-edged swords, ready to take vengeance
 upon the heathen, to curb the nations, to
 chain kings, and bind princes in fetters of
 iron. Long since their doom is written;
 boast it is of his true servants that doom to
 execute. Alleluia.

150

(Alleluia.)

1 PRAISE God in his sanctuary, praise him
 on his sovereign throne. Praise him for his
 noble acts, praise him for his surpassing
 greatness. Praise him with the bray of the
 trumpet, praise him with harp and zither.
 Praise him with the tambour and the
 dance, praise him with the music of string
 and of reed. Praise him with the clang of
 the cymbals, the cymbals that ring merrily.
 All creatures that breath have, praise the
 Lord. Alleluia.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

THESE proverbs were written by David's son Solomon, that was king of Israel, for the better understanding of true wisdom, and self-command. Here is made known the secret of discernment; here men may learn the lesson of insight, the dictates of duty and right and honour. Here simplicity is put on its guard; here you may find instruction and advice both together. The wise, too, may be the wiser for hearing them; they will aid even the discerning to guide his course aright; he will read both parables and the interpretation of parables, both wise words and the hidden thoughts they signify.

True wisdom is founded on the fear of the Lord; who but a fool would despise such wisdom, and the lessons she teaches?

Heed well, my son, thy father's warnings, nor make light of thy mother's teaching; no richer heirloom, crown or necklace, can be thine. Turn a deaf ear, my son, to the blandishments of evil-doers that would make thee of their company.

There are lives to be had for the ambushing, the lives of unsuspecting folk whose uprightness shall little avail them; there are fortunes to be swallowed up whole, as a man is swallowed up by death when he goes to his grave. No lack of treasures here, they say, rich plunder that shall find its way into our houses; thou hast but to throw in thy lot with us; every man shares alike. Such errands, my son, are not for thee; never stir a foot in their company; thou knowest well how eager they are for mischief, how greedy for blood, and the snare is laid to no purpose if the bird is watching. What do they, but compass their own ruin, plot against their own lives? Such is ever the end of greed; he who cherishes it must fall by it at last.

And all the while Wisdom is publishing her message, crying it aloud in the open streets; never a meeting of roads, never a gateway, but her voice is raised, echoing above the din of it. What, says she, are you still gaping there, simpletons? Do the

reckless still court their own ruin? Rash fools, will you never learn? Pay heed, then, to my protest; listen while I speak out my mind to you, give you open warning. Since my call is unheard, since my hand beckons in vain, since my counsel is despised and all my reproof goes for nothing, it will be mine to laugh, to mock at your discomfiture, when perils close about you. Close about you they will, affliction and sore distress, disasters that sweep down suddenly, gathering storms of ruin.

It will be their turn, then, to call aloud; my turn, then, to refuse an answer. They will be early abroad looking for me, but find me never; fools, that grew weary of instruction, and would not fear the Lord. Well for them, if they had followed my counsel, if they had not spurned all the warnings I gave! Now they must eat of the harvest their own wickedness has reaped, make the best of the cheer their own knavish schemes have brought them. Ah, silly souls, what a perilous refusal, what fatal foolhardiness was here!

But let a man give heed to me, peace undisturbed shall be his, happiness shall be his, free from all threat of danger.

2 Here, then, my son, is counsel for thee; take this bidding of mine to heart; ever be thy ear attentive to wisdom, thy mind eager to attain discernment. Wisdom if thou wilt call to thy side, and make discernment welcome, as thou wouldst fain hoard riches, or bring hidden treasure to light, then thou wilt learn what it is to fear God, make trial of what it is to know God. Wisdom is the Lord's gift; only by his word spoken comes true knowledge, true discernment. So it is that he watches over the lives of the upright, bids the innocent walk unharmed; safe and sound the chosen friends of God come and go. Duty and right and honour thou shalt discern, and see ever where the best course lies, if once wisdom finds a lodgement in thy heart, if knowledge once casts her spell upon thee. Watch and ward right counsel

12 shall keep over thee; it shall save thee from
 13 the wrong choice, save thee from the false
 14 counsellor. False counsellors there are,
 15 that leave the high road to walk by dark
 16 alleys; for sin and shame is all their love
 17 and liking; ill guides on a wrong path all
 18 of them! And from her, too, right counsel
 19 shall protect thee, the woman that is no
 20 daughter of Israel, with her mincing
 21 foreign ways, that has forsaken the love
 22 of her youth, forgotten the troth once
 23 plighted to her God. The house she dwells
 24 in is death's antechamber, the road by
 25 which she beckons leads to the grave;
 26 never man went in there that came back
 27 and set his face towards life.¹

28 Thine to choose a nobler course, keeping
 29 ever the path of duty; the upright, the
 30 innocent, shall have lands of their own and
 31 long enjoy them; the goddess, the wrong-
 32 doer will be lost for ever to the scenes they
 33 knew.

3 Forget not then, my son, the teaching
 I give thee; lock these words of mine
 2 close in thy bosom; long years they shall
 3 bring thee of life well spent, and therewith
 4 prosperity. Two things must never leave
 5 thee, kindness and loyalty; be these the
 6 seals that hang about thy neck, graven be
 7 this inscription with thy heart for tablet;
 8 so both to God and man thou shalt be
 9 friend and confidant. Put all thy heart's
 10 confidence in the Lord, on thy own skill
 11 relying never; wilt thou but keep him in
 12 thy thoughts wherever thou goest, he will
 13 shew thee the straight path. Do not give
 14 thyself airs of wisdom; enough that thou
 15 shouldst fear God and shun ill-doing; here
 16 is health for the midmost of thy being, here
 17 is sap for the marrow of thy bones. Pay the
 18 Lord his due with what goods thou hast,
 19 letting him share the first-fruits of every
 20 crop; so shall plenty fill thy barn, so shall
 21 thy wine-press overflow at the vintage.

22 My son, do not undervalue the cor-
 23 rection the Lord sends thee, do not be
 24 unmannered when he reproves thy faults.
 25 It is where he loves that he bestows cor-
 26 rection, like a father whose son is dear to
 27 him.

28 Happy the man whose treasure-trove is

wisdom, who is rich in discernment; silver
 and finest gold are less profitable in the
 handling. More rare is it than all things
 else; no prize thou covetest that can match
 it. Long life wisdom holds out to thee in
 one hand, riches and glory in the other;
 where she guides, journeying is pleasant,
 where she points the way, all is peace. Take
 hold of her, clasp her to thee, and the
 Tree of Life itself could not make thee
 more blessed. Not without these, wisdom
 and discernment, the Lord based earth,
 the Lord framed heaven; not without skill
 of his did the waters well up from beneath
 us, or the dews fall in mist. My son, never
 lose sight of what I am telling thee; cling
 to the wholesome dictates of prudence.
 that will quicken life within thee, sparkle
 like jewels on thy breast. Securely thou
 shalt walk, with no fear of stumbling, fear-
 lessly thou shalt lie down to rest, and enjoy
 untroubled sleep; let no sudden alarm
 affright thee, though godless enemies press
 thee hard; the Lord will be at thy side, and
 keep thy feet clear of the snares they lay
 for thee.

Suffer him to do kindness who may, and
 thou thyself, when thou mayest, do kind-
 ness;² never bid a friend come back to-
 morrow for the gift that might be made to-
 day. Never plot harm against the friend
 that suspects no harm of thee, or pick a
 quarrel with one who has done thee no
 injury. Do not envy the prosperity of the
 wrong-doer, and be led away by his
 example; knavery the Lord hates, and
 keeps for honest men his familiar friend-
 ship. Still on the home of the wicked the
 Lord's ban falls, his blessing where up-
 rightness dwells; he laughs at the mocker,
 grants his favours to the humble, and the
 wise shall win renown; only to their shame
 are fools exalted.

4 Sons of mine, take a lesson from your
 father; a lesson that will make dis-
 cerning men of you, will you but heed it.
 A precious heirloom it is, the tradition I
 teach, not to be lightly bartered away.
 Time was when I had a father of my own;
 and when I was but a boy, my mother's
 darling, in such words as these he would

¹ *vs.* 16-19. Some take this as a literal reference to the habits of light women, as in chapter 7 below; but it is more probably an allegorical reference to apostasy from the Jewish religion. ² The meaning of the Hebrew text is doubtful.

teach me: Ever be thy heart true to my bidding; if thrive thou wouldst, hold fast the charge I give thee. Wisdom be thy quest, thy quest discernment still; thy father's apt and faithful pupil, keep her at thy side, thy guardian; cherish her, thy preserver. Wisdom be thy chief thought, make discernment thine at all hazards; her attainment exalts, her embrace ennobles thee; a wreath of fresh graces she will give thee, a crown of glory, to overshadow thy brow.

Listen, then, my son, and master the charge I give thee, as thou wouldst have long life. Here lies the road to wisdom, here is the path that will bring thee straight to thy goal; here thou mayst walk unhampered, run without fear of stumbling. Hold fast by the instruction thou hast received, and never let it go; guard it as thou wouldst guard thy life. For godless ways and the example of sinful men have thou neither love nor liking; shun their haunts and turn thy back upon them. Rest thy never without some ill deed done; some traveller's feet must stumble, or they lie sleepless on their beds; godlessness is the very bread they eat, they crave for wrongdoing as for wine. See how the path of the just grows ever brighter, like the light of dawn opening out into full day! But these, the sinners, are fain to walk on in darkness, surprised by every fall.

Hear then and heed, my son, these words of warning; never lose sight of them, cherish them in thy inmost heart; let a man master them, they will bring life and healing to his whole being. Use all thy watchfulness to keep thy heart true; that is the fountain whence life springs. Far, very far from thy tongue be the cheating word, from thy lips the whisper of calumny; let thy eyes see straight, thy gaze ever scan the path that lies before thee. Consider¹ that path well, and on safe ground thou shalt journey still; swerving neither to right nor left, but keeping thy steps ever clear of wrong-doing. (To the right lie such ways

as win the Lord's favour, to the left such as miss the goal. He it is that will guide thy course aright, and set thy journey forward in peace.²)

5 My son, here is good advice for thy heeding; listen to wise counsel, if thou wouldst be circumspect, if thou wouldst have ever on thy lips the maxims of prudence. First, give no credence to the wiles of woman; honey-sweet words the temptress³ may use, all her talk be soothing as oil, but oh, the dregs of that cup are bitter; a two-edged sword brings no sharper pang. Death's road she follows, her feet set towards the grave; far from the highway that leads to life is the maze she treads. Heed, then, my warning, and depart from it never; shun her company, do not go near her doors. Wouldst thou squander the pride of thy manhood upon heartless strangers like these?

If thus thou wilt spend all thy hopes, bestow all thy pains, upon an alien home that is no home of thine, a time will come at last when health and strength shall be wasted away. Then thou wilt complain bitterly, Alas, why did I spurn every precept, reject every warning, unheard, unheeded, every lesson I was taught? No marvel, had I paid the last penalty, with the assembled people for my judges!⁴

Nay, drink, and drink deep, at thy own well, thy own cistern; thence let thy offspring abound, like waters from thy own fountain flowing through the public streets;⁵ only let them be thy own, let there be no commerce between thyself and strangers. A blessing on that fountain of thine! take thy pleasure with the bride thy manhood wins for thee. Thy own bride, gentle as a hind, graceful as a doe; be it her bosom that steals away thy senses with the delight of a lover that loves still. What, my son, wouldst thou yield to the wiles of a stranger, dally with her embraces that is none of thine? The Lord is watching, and

¹ Literally, 'direct' in the Latin version, 'weigh' in the Hebrew text. The Hebrew verb is ordinarily interpreted 'smooth out', but it is difficult to see the relevance of such a metaphor here.

² The words, enclosed in brackets are found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. They have perhaps been misplaced by accident; evidently they do not suit the thought of the present passage.

³ Literally, 'harlot', but it would appear from what follows, especially verse 14, that the warning here given is one against adultery, not fornication. It is uncertain, both here and elsewhere in the book, how much the Hebrew term 'strange woman' is meant to convey the sense of foreign birth.

⁴ Lev. 20. 10; cf. Jn. 8. 5. ⁵ Literally, 'Let thy fountains be carried out in channels abroad; distribute thy well-water through the streets'; but the phrase evidently refers to a numerous family born in lawful wedlock.

knows what a man's errand is, let him
 22 betake himself where he will. The sinner
 will be ensnared by his own guilt, caught
 in the toils of his own wrong-doing;
 23 doomed by his own incontinence, by his
 own great folly bemused.

6 My son, has some friend persuaded
 thee to be his surety? Hast thou
 pledged thyself for a bond which is none
 2 of thine? Believe me, that word of assent
 has caught thee in a snare, thou art the
 3 prisoner of thy own promise made. Do
 then, my son, as I bid thee; obtain thy
 freedom; it is ill done to fall into another
 man's power. Quick, no time to lose; wake
 4 ere thou thyself close an eye-lid in sleep;
 5 deer from captivity nor bird from fowler's
 hand so swift to escape!

6 Up with thee, idleness, go to school with
 the ant, and learn the lesson of her ways!
 7 Chief or ruler she has none to give her
 8 commands; yet in summer hours, when
 the harvest is a-gathering, she ever lays up
 9 food for her own nourishment. And thou,
 idleness, art still a-bed; wilt thou never
 10 wake? What, thou wouldst sleep a little
 longer, yawn a little longer; a little longer
 11 thou must pillow head on hand? Ay, but
 poverty will not wait, the day of distress
 will not wait, like an armed vagabond it
 will fall upon thee! (Wouldst thou see the
 good grain flow like water, wouldst thou
 see poverty take wing, thou must be up and
 doing.¹)

12 Worthless men there be, sinners there
 be, that go ever with a cunning smile on
 13 their lips; a wink here, there a pressure of
 the foot, there a beckoning finger; all the
 14 while their wicked hearts are plotting mis-
 chief, are sowing the causes of strife. Such
 15 men will be overtaken by their doom ere
 long, crushed all of a sudden beyond hope
 of remedy.

16 Six things I will tell thee, and name a
 seventh for good measure, the Lord hates
 and will never abide; the haughty look, the
 17 lying tongue, the hands that take innocent
 life, the heart that ever devises thoughts of
 mischief, the feet that hasten upon an ill
 18 errand, the false witness whose every
 breath is perjury, and the sower of strife
 among brethren.

¹ The words enclosed in brackets appear in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

Keep true, my son, to the charge thy
 20 father gives thee, nor make light of thy
 mother's teaching; wear them ever close
 21 to thy heart, hang them like a locket upon
 thy breast; be these, when thou walkest
 22 abroad, thy company, when thou liest
 asleep, thy safeguard, in waking hours, thy
 counsellors. That charge is a lamp to guide
 23 thee, that teaching a light to beckon thee;
 the warnings correction gave thee are a
 road leading to life.

Here is protection for thee against the
 24 temptress that would lure thee away with
 her seductions. Never let her beauty win
 25 thy heart, never let her bold glance deceive
 thee. A harlot's pay is but the price of a
 26 meal; the adulteress costs dearer, her price
 is a man's whole life. Who can carry fire in
 27 his bosom, without singeing the clothes he
 wears, or walk on hot coals without burn-
 28 his feet? No more can a man mate with his
 29 neighbour's wife, and not be defiled by her
 touch. Small blame to the thief, when he
 30 steals to fill his hungry belly, and if he be
 caught, why, he can pay sevenfold, or yield
 up all that he has; the adulterer, in the
 31 hunger of his heart, must risk losing life
 itself. Scathe and scorn he wins for him-
 self, and shame there is no blotting out;
 32 no mercy for him, when the day of reckon-
 ing comes, from the anger of a jealous
 husband that will listen to no man's en-
 33 treaties, will refuse ransom never so
 abundant.

7 My son, do not forget these warnings;
 let this charge of mine be an hei-
 1 loom, kept jealously, as thou lovest thy
 own life; precious to thee as the apple of
 2 thy eye be the teaching I give thee. Bind
 it fast about thy fingers, write it, as upon
 a tablet, on thy heart; give to wisdom a
 3 sister's welcome, and hail discernment as
 thy friend.

So wilt thou learn to shun the temptress
 with her honeyed words, the wife that is
 no wife of thine. Ere now, looking down
 4 from my window through the lattice, I
 have watched the thoughtless crowd, and
 seen some gallant, more insensate than the
 rest, crossing the street at the corner where
 such a woman dwells. Now his steps are
 taking him near that abode of hers; the day
 5 wanes, and the light fades: night spreads

10 her pall of darkness. Who comes to meet
 11 him? A woman in right harlot's guise, that
 12 goes out, ready of speech, to hunt men's
 13 lives. No rest for her, stay at home she
 14 cannot; ever in street and market-place she
 15 lies in ambush, at some corner of the ways.
 16 She draws him to herself and kisses him,
 17 flattering him with her bold speech: Only
 18 to-day I have paid a vow that I owed for
 19 my preservation, and here are my victims
 20 freshly killed; so I came out to find thee,
 21 longing for the sight of thee, and here thou
 22 art! Soft, soft I have made my bed, spread
 23 it with embroidered tapestries of Egyptian
 24 woof; freshly scented is that bower of mine
 25 with myrrh, and aloe, and cinnamon.
 26 Come, let us lose ourselves in dalliance, all
 27 the night through let us enjoy the long-
 28 desired embrace. My home stands master-
 29 less, my husband far away, and his purse
 30 with him; no fear of his returning till the
 moon is full.

1 Alas, the ready speech that beguiles
 2 him, the seducing lips that lead him cap-
 3 tive away! He follows without more ado,
 4 unwitting as the ox that goes to the sham-
 5 bles, or a frisking lamb;¹ nor knows what
 6 fetters await him, till the shaft is already
 7 deep in his bosom. So joyfully flies bird
 8 into snare, heedless of its life's peril. Heed
 9 me well, my son; let not this warning be
 10 given in vain; do not let her steal thy heart
 11 away, do not be enticed by her beckoning.
 12 Many the wounds such a woman has
 13 dealt; a brave retinue she has of men mur-
 14 dered; truly her house is the grave's ante-
 15 chamber, opens the door into the secret
 16 closet of death.

8 And, all the while, the wisdom that
 9 grants discernment is crying aloud, is
 10 never silent; there she stands, on some
 11 high vantage-point by the public way,
 12 where the roads meet, or at the city's ap-
 13 proach, close beside the gates, making pro-
 14 clamations. To every man, high and low,
 15 her voice calls: Here is better counsel for
 16 the simpleton; O foolish hearts, take warn-
 17 ing! Listen to me, I have matters of high
 18 moment to unfold, a plain message to
 19 deliver. A tongue that speaks truth, lips

20 that scorn impiety; here all is sound doc-
 21 trine, no shifts, no evasions here. No
 22 discerning heart, no well-stored mind, but
 23 will own it right and just. Here is counsel,
 24 here is instruction, better worth the win-
 25 ning than silver or the finest gold; wisdom
 26 is more to be coveted than any jewel; there
 27 is no beauty that can be matched with hers.

What am I, the wisdom that speaks to
 2 you? To shrewdness I am a near neigh-
 3 bour, and I occupy myself with deep
 4 designs; but, since they must hate evil that
 5 fear the Lord, all pride and boastfulness,
 6 every mischievous design and every trea-
 7 cherous word I shun. Good counsel is
 8 mine, and honourable dealing, discern-
 9 ment and high courage are my gifts;
 10 through me kings learn how to reign, law-
 11 givers how to lay down just decrees;
 12 through me chieftain and magistrate exer-
 13 cise their power aright. Love me, and thou
 14 shalt earn my love; wait early at my doors,
 15 and thou shalt gain access to me. The gifts
 16 I bring with me are riches and honour,
 17 princely state and the divine favour. Mine
 18 is a yield better than gold or jewels, mine
 19 are revenues more precious than the finest
 20 silver. A faithful course I tread, nor exceed
 21 the bounds of just retribution, failing never
 22 to enrich the souls that love me with
 23 abundant store.

The Lord made me his² when first he
 2 went about his work, at the birth of time,
 3 before his creation began. Long, long ago,
 4 before earth was fashioned, I held my
 5 course. Already I lay in the womb, when
 6 the depths were not yet in being, when no
 7 springs of water had yet broken; when I
 8 was born, the mountains had not yet sunk
 9 on their firm foundations, and there were
 10 no hills; not yet had he made the earth, or
 11 the rivers, or the solid framework of the
 12 world.³ I was there when he built the
 13 heavens, when he fenced in the waters with
 14 a vault inviolable, when he fixed the sky
 15 overhead, and levelled the fountain-
 16 springs of the deep. I was there when he
 17 enclosed the sea within its confines, for-
 18 bidding the waters to transgress their as-
 19 signed limits, when he poised the founda-
 20 tions of the world. I was at his side, a

¹ The sense of the Hebrew text here is uncertain.
 2 The sense of the verb used in the Hebrew text. But it is doubtful whether it really has this meaning in the passages cited (e.g. Gen. 14. 19), and all through the book of Proverbs it is regularly used in the sense of 'acquiring' wisdom.

² Some would give 'made me' as the right translation of the verb used in the Hebrew text. But it is doubtful whether it really has this meaning in the passages cited (e.g. Gen. 14. 19), and all through the book of Proverbs it is regularly used in the sense of 'acquiring' wisdom.

³ In the Hebrew text, 'the open spaces, or the beginnings of the world's dust'.

master-workman, my delight increasing with each day, as I made play before him all the while; made play in this world of dust, with the sons of Adam for my play-fellows. Listen to me, then, you that are my sons, that follow, to your happiness, in the paths I shew you; listen to the teaching that will make you wise, instead of turning away from it. Blessed are they who listen to me, keep vigil, day by day, at my threshold, watching till I open my doors. The man who wins me, wins life, drinks deep of the Lord's favour; who fails, fails at his own bitter cost; to be my enemy is to be in love with death.

9 See, where wisdom has built herself a house, carved out for herself those seven pillars of hers! And now, her sacrificial victims slain, her wine mingled, her banquet spread, this way and that her maidens are dispatched, to city keep and city wall, bidding her guests make haste. 4 Simple hearts, she says, draw near me; and to all that lack learning this is her cry, 5 Come and eat at my table, come and drink 6 of the wine I have brewed for you; say farewell to your childishness, and learn to live; follow all of you in the path that leads to discernment. 7 (Rash souls there are, godless souls, that will not be taught or trained; who makes the attempt, gets only injury and abuse for 8 his thanks. With a rash fool never remonstrate; it will make him thy enemy; only the wise are grateful for a remonstrance. 9 Ever the wise profit by the opportunity to become wiser yet; ever the godly are the best learners.¹) 10 True wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord; he best discerns, who has knowledge of holy things. Long life I bring thee, and a full tale of years; wisdom thyself shall profit, and misfortune fall only on the rash fools that earned it. 13 Out upon her silly clamour, the woman that is so crafty, yet knowledge has none! 14 At her door she sits, her chair commanding the city's height, and cries aloud to such as 16 pass by on their lawful errands. Simple

hearts, she says, draw near me, and to all that lack learning this is her cry, Stolen waters are sweetest, and bread is better eating when there is none to see. Who shall warn them that dead men are her company, no guest of hers but is guest of the dark world beneath?

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

10 A father's smile, a mother's tears, tell of a son well schooled or ill.

No good ever came of money ill gotten; honest living is death's avoiding. Still the Lord gives honesty a full belly, and on the knave's scheming shuts his door.

Idle hand, empty purse; riches come of hard work. (Who trusts in false promises, throws his food to the winds; as well may he chase bird in flight.) Wilt thou gather in harvest time, a son well schooled? Or sleep the summer round, to thy father's great shame?

Shines the Lord's favour on the just man's head; the sinner's lips are silenced by his own ill-doing. When blessings are given, the just are remembered still; it is the sinner's name that rusts.

Warning the wise man hears; the fool talks on, and is ruined.

He walks secure, who walks pure; cunning will yet be found out.

It needs no more than a wink of the eye to bring trouble; what wonder if the fool who talks earns a beating? The mouth, for the just man a life-giving well, for the wicked an arsenal of harm.² Hatred is ever ready to pick a quarrel; love passes over all kinds of offence. Never wise man's lips but found the right word, or fool's back but felt the rod. Wise men treasure up their knowledge; a fool's talk is ready to mar all.

As the rich man's wealth is his stronghold, and the poor man's need his peril, so the doings of the just evermore win fresh life, the sinner's increase his guilt. Who lives by the lessons he has learned finds life; the way is lost when warnings go unheeded.

Lying lips that hide malice, foolish lips

¹ *vv.* 7-9. There is some reason to suspect dislocation in the text here. These verses do not fit naturally into the speech of Wisdom, who is making an express appeal (verse 4) to the foolish. ² The second half of this verse is not found in the Hebrew text; the Septuagint Greek gives it immediately after verse 12 of ch. 9. ³ *vv.* 8, 10. The second half of either verse is the same in the original. ⁴ *vv.* 6, 11. In the Hebrew text, both verses end with the same formula, which the Latin interprets in verse 6 'iniquity covers the mouth of the godless' and in verse 11 'the mouth of the godless covers iniquity'.

that spread slander, what a world of sin there is in talking! Where least is said, most prudence is. Silver refined is the just man's every word, and trash the sinner's every thought. The just man's talk plays the shepherd to many, while the fool dies of his own starved heart.

Of the Lord's gift comes wealth without drudgery.

For the fool, it is but a pastime to make mischief; to act prudently needs all a man's wisdom.

Not in vain the sinner fears, the just man hopes; vanished, like the storm of yesterday, or secure eternally.

What irks a man more than vinegar on the tooth, or smoke in the eyes? A lingering messenger.

If fear of the Lord brings life, few years shall the wicked have; die their hopes must while honest folk wait on contentedly. The Lord's judgements, what comfort they bring to the innocent, what terrors to the evil-doer! An abiding home never the just lacked yet, or the guilty found. A just man's talk breeds wisdom, while the sinner's tongue dies barren; welcome ever the one, cross-grained the other.

11 A false balance the Lord hates; nothing but full weight will content him.

Pride is neighbour to disesteem; humility to wisdom.

The innocence of the upright guides them safely; the treacherous by their own plots are destroyed. When the time for reckoning comes, little shall wealth avail; right living is death's avoiding. An honest purpose clears a man's path; the wicked are entangled by their own scheming. For his honesty, the upright man shall go free; not so the wrong-doer, caught in the meshes of his own net. No hope follows the godless to the grave; nothing left, now, of all their anxious longing. Honesty shall yet go free, and a knave be heir to its troubles. False speech the hypocrite will use to ruin his neighbour; true knowledge is the saving of the just. Thrive honest men, come ruin on knaves, there is huz-

za'ing all through the city; how should a city stand or fall, but by good words from the one, ill counsel from the other?

He mocks loud, who lacks wit; discernment holds her tongue. Who bears ill tales, keeps no secrets; trust none with thy confidence but a loyal friend.

Ill fares the people, that guidance has none; safety reigns where counsel abounds.

He who goes bail for a stranger has great harm of it; that snare avoid, and sleep sound.

Gracious ways may win a woman renown; man never grew rich but by hardiness.¹

A kindly man is the friend of his own well-being; cruelty will not spare its own flesh and blood.

Precarious livelihood the godless man wins; wouldst thou be sure of thy revenue, let honest doings be thy crop; mercy breeds life, evil ambitions death. A false heart the Lord cannot endure; nothing but honest dealing will content him. Depend upon it, the sinner shall never be held guiltless; the race of the just shall find acquittal.

A woman fair and fond, a sow ringed with gold.

In the desires of the just only good dwells; the hopes of the wicked only lead to ruin. One spends what he has, and yet has more to spare; another sets his heart on what is none of his, and is a poor man still; give and thou shalt thrive; he shall have abundance, that bestows abundantly. Corn hoarded shall win thee a curse, corn sold freely a blessing, from the lips of a whole people. Plan thou good, thou canst not be afoot too early; plan thou evil, on thy own head it shall recoil. Fall he must, that relies on riches; never shall the just fade or fail. He shall feed on air, that misrules his own household; the fool will be slave and the wise man master in the end. Where right living bears its fruit, a tree of life grows up; the wise man's reward is living souls.² Even honest men cannot go through the world unpunished; what, then, of the godless, what, then, of the sinner?

¹ The word used in the Hebrew text means 'ruthlessness', but is perhaps a false reading for the very similar word meaning 'diligence' (cf. 10. 4).

² In the second half of the verse, the text is possibly corrupt; as it stands, it should mean either that the wise man takes other people's lives, or that he receives the persons of others as his captives (Gen. 14. 14, 21). The exact sense is not clear.

12 Ever the friend of admonition is the friend of knowledge; only fools are impatient of warning.

2 A kindly man wins the Lord's favour,
3 a schemer is his enemy. Wickedness shall never thrive; the just have roots immovable.

4 Crowned is his brow, who wins a vigorous wife; sooner let thy bones rot than marry one who shames thee.

5 Honourable thoughts the just conceive,
6 the wicked are all double-dealing; yet, when the accusations of the wicked lay a fatal snare, the just shall find words to deliver them. A turn in their fortunes, and no more is heard of the wicked; only the just have abiding prosperity.

8 Good sense is the measure of a man's repute; fond fancies are ever despised.

9 Better be poor, and toil to support thyself, than play the great lord with an empty belly.

10 A just man cares for the safety of the beasts he owns; the wicked are heartless through and through.

11 Till field and fill belly; idle pursuits are but foolishness. (Sit long enjoying thy wine, and there is no strong fortress will win thee renown.)¹

12 In unholy ambitions the wicked put their trust, but it is honesty that strikes deep root. Ruin comes upon the sinner for a word spoken amiss, while honest men find acquittal. When a man is blessed, it is his own words that bear fruit; never son of Adam but had the lot his deeds deserved.

15 A fool is ever right to his own thinking;
16 the wise listen to advice. Fools betray anger on the instant, when prudence would pass the insult by.

17 Nothing but his honest thought a lover of truth declares, a false witness nothing but lies. Rash promises can stab the heart with remorse;² wise words bring healing.
19 Lips that speak the truth shall fade never; a lie serves but the haste of the moment.

20 The schemer's thoughts dwell ever on treachery; for peace be all thy plotting, if thou wouldst have a contented heart. Nothing can befall the just man to do him

hurt; the wicked shall have their fill of mischief.

Lying lips the Lord cannot abide; keep thy faith if thou wouldst content him.

Prudence says less than it knows; the fool's heart cannot contain its folly.

Busy hands, hands that shall bear the sceptre; idle hands, hands that shall bring tribute.

A heart bowed down with anxiety, how a kind word can refresh it!

It is well done to put up with loss for a neighbour's need; the calculations of the sinner do but lead him astray. Never yet did cunning achieve the gains it hoped for; a contented heart is precious as fine gold. Wouldst thou attain life, honesty is the high road; by-way there is none but leads to death.

13 By his father's teaching a son grows wise; only the headstrong will not listen to a warning.

Fair words yield a crop to content a man's heart; but not for the treacherous; they have no stomach but for wrong-doing. Guard thy tongue, guard thy soul; thoughtless speech may bring ruin.

Idleness will and will not, both at once; it is hard work that gives a full belly.

Honesty shuns the false word; the sinner disappointment gives and gets.⁴ The upright heart is protected by its own innocence; guilt trips the heel of the wrong-doer.

Some are rich that nothing have; some with a well-lined purse are yet poor. A man's wealth may be his own life's ransom; yet will not the poor man be chidden for his poverty.⁵

Welcome the shining beams of a life well lived; the rush-light of the wicked glimmers and is gone.

Ever there is wrangling among the proud; wisdom's part is to be guided by other men's counsel.

Riches soon won are soon spent; the patient hoard breeds best.

Hope deferred, how it crushes a man's spirits! The granted wish, a tree of life-giving fruit!

¹ The second half of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

² The meaning of the Hebrew text is perhaps rather, 'he who speaks rashly can wound like a sword'.

³ The Latin version here disagrees with the Hebrew text, which is obscure and perhaps corrupt.

⁴ 'Disappointment gives and gets'; according to the Hebrew text, 'behaves vilely and shamefully'.

⁵ The second half of this verse is difficult, and perhaps corrupt.

13 Neglect thy errand,¹ whatever it be, and thou art in default; carry out thy orders, and be at peace.

Faithless hearts wander far in their transgressions, but the just are ever pitying, ever merciful.

14 The teaching of the wise is a fountain where men may drink life far removed from all mortal perils. Good instruction breeds gracious thoughts; the headstrong are for the morass. For the prudent, skill guides every action; ignorance betrays the fool.

17 Who runs a sinner's errand, falls into mischief by the way; a faithful envoy mends all.

18 Comes want, comes shame from warnings unheeded; he achieves great things who will accept reproof.

19 Each man loves his own way best, and to a fool, there is no shame like sin's avoiding. Wise company brings wisdom; fool he ends that fool befriends.

21 Calamity is hard on the heels of wickedness, and honest men shall yet be rewarded. Son and grandson shall be the good man's heirs; the sinner lays up wealth for nobler men; the rich harvest of those ancestral families, lack he honest worth, shall be reaped for strangers.²

24 Spare the rod, and thou art no friend to thy son; ever a kind father is quick to punish.

25 The just man eats his fill; the godless craves and never has enough.

14 It is by woman's wisdom a home thrives; a foolish wife pulls it down about her ears.

2 Does a man fear the Lord? He holds an even course; the knave has little regard for him.³

3 Pride burgeons from the lips of fools; in modesty of speech the wise find safety.

4 No need for a full crib, where oxen are none; yet ever rich harvest tells of the ox at work.

It is a faithful witness that never lies; the perjurer breathes out lies continually.

Vainly the rash aspire to wisdom; the discerning come by their knowledge with little pains. Go thy way, and let the fool go his; good sense is a strange language to him. Prudence picks its way wisely; the fool blunders and is lost. Fools make light of the guilt that needs atonement, and leave honest men to enjoy the Lord's favour.⁴

Heart's bitterness none may know but the heart that feels it; no prying stranger can tell when it finds relief.

Fall it must, the house of the wicked; where the upright dwell, all is increase.

The right road in a man's thinking may be one whose goal is death. Joy blends with grief, and laughter marches with tears. The incorrigible shall have a taste of his own ill-doings, and honest men shall have the better of him.

The simpleton takes all on trust; wisdom considers each step. (A treacherous son no part shall have; better shall a wise servant thrive and prosper.)⁵ Caution teaches the wise to shun danger; the fool is carried away by rash confidence. The impatient man blunders, as surely as the schemer makes enemies. Folly is the simpleton's heirloom; skill crowns the wise.

Vice lies prostrate before virtue, the sinner at the gates of the just.

Of the beggar, his own neighbours grow weary; wealth never lacks friends. Shame on the man who holds his neighbour in contempt; mercy to the poor brings a blessing. (Mercy he loves, who puts his trust in the Lord.)⁶ They follow a false path, that plot mischief; mercy and faithfulness mercy and faith shall find.

Hard work is sure wealth; of chattering comes only poverty.

Made rich, the wise are crowned, the folly of the thoughtless will be folly yet.

Men owe their lives to truthful witnesses; the very breath of the perjurer is treason.

¹ 'Neglect the command' according to the Hebrew text; it omits the second half of the verse.

² The Latin appears to connect this verse with the preceding one; the Hebrew text has 'There is much food in the fallow-lands of the poor, but there are some who are swept away, not by just judgment'.

³ The sense of the Hebrew text is plain; the God-fearing are the right-living, the despisers of God are revealed by their treacherous conduct. The Latin version makes the whole verse into a single sentence, which says that the God-fearing and right-living man is despised by, or (possibly) despises, the treacherous.

⁴ The first half of this verse is obscure in the Hebrew text. 'The Lord's favour'; literally, 'favour'; if the two halves of the verse are to be parallel, divine favour must be meant.

⁵ The words enclosed in brackets do not appear in the Hebrew text; they occur in the Septuagint Greek after verse 13 of the foregoing chapter.

⁶ The words printed in brackets are peculiar to the Latin.

26 The fear of the Lord gives strong confidence, bequeaths hope from the father to the children. The fear of the Lord is a fountain where men may drink life, far removed from all mortal peril.¹

28 Great people, great king; it is for want of men crowns are lost.

29 Patience comes of sovereign prudence, impatience of unchecked folly. Peace of mind is health of body; more than all else, envy wastes the frame.

31 He who oppresses the poor, insults man's Maker; him if thou wouldst honour, take pity on human need.

32 When the wicked is paid in his own coin, there is an end of him; at death's door, the just still hope.

33 In the discerning heart, wisdom finds a resting-place; even among fools it can impart learning.²

34 Duty well done, a whole nation becomes great; suffer whole peoples for guilt incurred.

35 A king shews favour to a wise servant; disappoint him, and thou shalt feel his anger.

15 A gentle answer is a quarrel averted; a word that gives pain does but fan the flame of resentment. The speech of the wise is learning's ornament; the fool babbles on. Go where thou wilt, the Lord's eye is watching; good nor evil escapes his scrutiny. Tongue that speaks peaceably is a tree whose fruit gives life; tongue undisciplined can break hearts.

5 He is a fool that makes light of his father's warnings; would he but listen to reproof, he should be prudent yet.

(Might is most where right is most; root and branch the sinner shall be plucked up.³) The just man's home guards its treasure well; the hopes of the wicked are all confusion.

7 The talk of the wise is a seed-ground of learning; the thoughts of fools are ill matched with it.

8 From the wicked man's sacrifice the Lord turns away with loathing; only the just with their vows win his favour. The

whole course of the sinner's life he cannot brook; pursue the right, if thou wouldst win his love. Forsake the right path, and correction shall seem hard to thee; grow weary of reproof, and thy life shall pay for it. Shall the Lord read the secrets of the devouring grave, and not men's hearts?

Warn the headstrong, and thou wilt get no thanks for it; not for him the company of the wise.

Gay heart, gay looks; sad thoughts crush the spirit.

Truth is the quest of discerning minds, trifling the pasture-ground of the foolish.

To the friendless, every day brings trouble, but every day is a feast-day to a contented heart. Better a humble lot, and the fear of the Lord present, than great riches that leave a man unsatisfied. Better sit down to a dish of herbs seasoned with charity, than feast on a fattened ox in ill-will.

Any brawler can provoke a quarrel; it needs a patient man to lay it by.

Idleness finds ever a hedge of thorns in its path; the man of duty walks unhampered.

A father well content, a mother slighted, tell of a son's wisdom or mortal folly.

A man of little sense is in love with his follies; prudence keeps to its chosen path. Counsel lacking, all designs go amiss; with the advice of many, they should have thriven. There are times when a counsellor has good cause to be proud; nothing better than the right word spoken.

A mind well schooled sees the way of life stretching upwards, leading away from the pit beneath.

A house where pride reigns the Lord will pull down at last; will have no encroaching on the lands of the friendless widow. The schemes of wickedness he abhors; the dreams of innocence he loves, and brings true.⁴ Let avarice lead thee away, thy home shall be ruined; long life is his, who scorns the bribe. (Kindness and honour are sin's purging; ever it is the fear of the Lord turns men away from harm.)⁵

¹ Cf. 13. 14 above.

² In the second half of the verse, the Hebrew text appears to mean, 'and in the inmost being of fools it makes itself known'; it is perhaps corrupt. The Latin version runs 'and it will instruct all fools', probably a copyist's error for 'And it will instruct even fools'.

³ The words enclosed in brackets occur in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

⁴ The second half of this verse reads, in the Hebrew text, 'but pleasant words are pure'; it is not certain in what sense.

⁵ The Latin version gives the second maxim twice over (see 16. 6 below).

28 Attentive and docile is the upright
heart; from the lips of the wicked comes
29 mischief in full flood. From the wicked,
the Lord withholds his presence, listens
only to the prayer of the just.

30 The eye that smiles, how it cheers the
heart! Good news, how it lends vigour to
a man's frame!

31 A man's ear once attentive to the disci-
pline that brings life, no company shall be
32 welcome thenceforward, but the wise. He
holds his life cheap, that will not listen to
a warning; heed reproof, and be master of
33 thy soul. It is the fear of the Lord teaches
the lessons of wisdom; humility goes first,
and honour comes in her train.

16 Man's heart is ever full of de-
vising; from the Lord comes the
2 ordering of right speech.¹ His own path
man scans, and nothing sees amiss, but the
3 divine balance weighs our thoughts; share
with the Lord the burden of all thy doings,
if thou wouldst be sincere in thy intent.

4 God, who made all, made all for his own
purposes, even the godless man, with
doom awaiting him.

5 A proud man the Lord holds in abhor-
rence; depend upon it, no acquittal shall
he find. (To do right, that is the first step
on the way of blessedness, a more welcome
thing in God's sight than any sacrifice a
6 man can offer.²) Kindness and honour are
sin's purging; ever it is the fear of the Lord
7 turns men away from harm. Live as the
Lord would have thee live, and he will
make even thy enemies into well-wishers.
8 Better a penny honestly come by than
great revenues ill gotten.

9 Heart of man must plan his course, but
his steps will fall as the Lord guides them.

10 Speaks king, speaks oracle; never a word
amiss. Scale and balance are emblems of
the Lord's own justice; no weight in the
merchant's wallet but is of divine fashion-
12 ing. Wrong-doing the king will not abide;
on right his own throne rests. Kings are
13 for honest talk; free-spoken is well loved.
14 The king's frown is death at thy door;
wisdom will appease it; his smile is life;
15 not more welcome the spring rains, than
royal favour.

¹ The bearing of this maxim is uncertain.
giant Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

² The second half of this verse is found in the Septua-
gint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. ³ In the first half of this verse, the Hebrew text is usually
understood to mean 'He plots treachery with a wink of the eye'.

Not of gold or silver be thy hoard; make 16
wisdom thine, discernment thine, more
precious than these.

The just man travels by the high road, 17
safe from harm, watching his path anx-
iously, as he values his life.

Presumption comes first, and ruin close 18
behind it; pride ever goes before a fall.
Better a humble lot among peaceful folk, 19
than all the spoil a tyrant's friendship can
bring thee.

Well versed in doctrine, happiness thou 20
shalt win; trust in the Lord, and find a
blessing. Good judgement a wise heart 21
can claim; winning words bring greater
prizes yet. The prudent man drinks from 22
a living fountain; fools only learn the les-
sons of their folly. Wisdom distils from 23
heart to mouth, and lends the lips per-
suasion. Honey itself cannot vie with 24
well-framed words, for heart's comfort and
body's refreshment. The right road in a 25
man's thinking may be one whose goal is
death.

No better friend drudgery has than ap- 26
petite; hunger drives a man to his task.

Ever the godless man digs a well of mis- 27
chief, ever his lips are aflame. His the 28
scheming that breeds quarrels, the whis-
pering that divides his clan, the love of 29
wrong that misleads his neighbours and
carries them off into evil ways; spell- 30
bound with dreams of treachery, he shuts
his lips tight and goes about his false
errand.³

No prize so honourable as old age, and 31
it is won by innocence of life.

Patience is worth more than valour; 32
better a disciplined heart than a stormed
city.

Into the lap's fold the lot falls hap- 33
hazard, but the Lord rules the issue.

17 Better dry crust and gay heart, than
a house where all is feasting and all
is quarrelling.

Where sons are fools, slaves will be 2
masters, and share the inheritance like
heirs born.

For silver and gold, furnace and cru- 3
cible; men's hearts are for the Lord's
assaying.

- 4 Ever ill-will gives heed to injurious talk,
false faith listens to the slander.
- 5 He who shews contempt to the poor,
insults man's Maker; at thy own peril thou
wilt take delight in another's ruin.
- 6 Crown of old age, when a man sees his
children's children; pride of youth, when a
man can boast of the fathers that begot him.
- 7 Solemn talk matches ill with folly, lying
speech with royalty.
- 8 When a man has hope in view, like a
jewel it shines before him; look where he
will, his way lies clear.¹
- 9 If good will be thy quest, hide the wrong
done; gossip unknits the bond of friend-
ship.
- 10 One word of warning in a prudent man's
ear does more than a hundred lashes given
to a fool. Still the godless man will be for
stirring up strife, till at last an angel visits
him with no kindly message. Better meet
the she-bear reft of her cubs, than a fool
in his blind confidence.
- 13 Evil shall still haunt his dwelling, that
repays kindness with injury.
- 14 Who began the quarrel? He who let
loose the flood-gates of it; and before he
can suffer injury, he stands aside from the
debate.²
- 15 Misjudgement the Lord will never
abide, whether the guilty go free, or the
innocent are condemned.
- 16 Little the fool's wealth avails; he may
not buy wisdom if he would. (Build high,
and court thy ruin; despise learning, and
thou shalt come to mischief.)³
- 17 He is thy friend, who is thy friend at all
times; of a brother's love there is no test
like adversity.
- 18 He is a fool, that lightly goes bail for his
friend.
- 19 He loves a feud, that loves contention;
build high, and court thy ruin. False heart
never found happiness, nor lying tongue
escaped mischief.
- 21 A fool's birthday is a day of shame;
never father had joy of a reckless son.
- 22 A cheerful heart makes a quick re-
covery, it is crushed spirits that waste a
man's frame.

Out comes bribe from bosom, and the
godless man turns justice aside from its
course.

Wisdom is a beacon-light to the dis-
cerning; the fool's eyes roam this way and
that, as wide as earth. Poor fool, his
father's bane, sorrow of the mother that
bore him!

Foul shame it is to make the innocent
suffer, to strike a blow against the chieftain
that gives redress.

Skilful is he who has skill to check his
tongue, learned he is that knows how to
spare his breath. Let him keep his own
counsel, a fool may pass for a wise man;
shut lips can claim discernment.

18 None so quick to find pretexts,⁴ as
he that would break with a friend;
he is in fault continually.

For prudent warnings a fool has no
stomach; nothing will serve but to echo his
own thought.

Little the godless man reckons of it, when
he falls into sin's mire, but shame and
reproach go with him.

Man's utterance has currents like the
waters that run deep; from wisdom's well
flows a stream in full flood.⁵

Foul shame it is to court favour with the
wrong-doer by turning justice aside from
its course.

A fool's talk is for ever embroiling him;
let him but open his mouth, blows will
follow. From his own words his undoing
comes, from his own lips the snare. Inno-
cent enough seem the words of the back-
biter, yet their poison sinks deep into a
man's belly.

(Slow natures every fear disarms;
womanish souls shall go hungry.⁶) Dainty
and listless go to work, thou art own
brother to that work's undoer.

No stronghold like the Lord's name;
there the just take refuge, high above
reach. What citadel has the rich man? His
own possessions; he seems shut in by a
wall impregnable; yet hearts are proudest
when ruin is nearest; humility is the ante-
chamber of renown.

¹ The sense of the Hebrew text seems to be, 'A bribe is a talisman for him who owns it; wherever he turns, he prospers'.

² The Hebrew text is commonly interpreted as meaning, 'The beginning of a quarrel is as when a man opens a sluice; let it alone, before trouble breaks out'.

³ The beginning of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

⁴ Quick to find pre-
texts'; in the Hebrew text, 'selfish'.

⁵ The sense and the bearing of this maxim are open to dispute.

⁶ The words printed in brackets are found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

13 Let a man hear the tale out before he answer, or he is a fool manifest, marked out for shame.

14 All mortal ills the spirit of man can bear; if the spirit itself be impatient, there is no lightening his lot.

15 Prize of the discerning heart, quest of the wise man's ear, is to learn truth.

16 The gift made, how it opens a man's path for him, wins him access to the great!

17 An innocent man is the first to lay bare the truth;¹ let his neighbour come and search him as he will.

18 The lot brings feuds to an end; greatness itself must bow to the lot's decision.

19 When brother helps brother, theirs is the strength of a fortress; their cause is like a city gate barred, unassailable.²

20 As mouth speaks, belly shall find its fare; a man's own words bear the fruit that must needs content him. Of life and death, tongue holds the keys; use it lovingly,³ and it will requite thee.

22 A good wife found is treasure found; the Lord is filling thy cup with happiness. (A good wife cast away is treasure cast away; leave to fools, and godless fools, the adulterous embrace.⁴)

23 Poor men must cringe, for the rich to rate them.

24 A man endeared to thee by fellowship will prove a better friend to thee than thy own kin.⁵

19 Better the poverty which keeps to honest ways, than the lot of a rich man who never learned to speak truth.⁶

2 Lack learning, all is not well within; ever the hasty stumble. Tripped by his own folly, a man eats his heart out, finding fault with the Lord.

4 Riches will make thee new friends a many, poverty rob thee of the old.

5 Perjury will bring its own punishment; never was liar yet that escaped his doom.

Suitors a many the princely heart shall have; give, and thou shalt find friends. The beggar wearies out his kinsmen; his friends, too, will shun him.

Who hunts idle talk, comes home empty-handed; as thou lovest thy life get wisdom; discernment at thy side, thou shalt speed well.

Perjury will bring its own punishment; never was liar but met his doom.

Ill days, when fools live in comfort; worse yet, when servants sway their own masters.

Patience is wisdom's livery; there is no such boast as a wrong overlooked.

Of the king's frown beware, as of lion roaring; welcome as dew on the grass his smile.

Great hurt it is to be a fool's father; he has a roof that drips unendingly, who is husband to a scold. House and hoard a man may inherit; it is the Lord's gift only, if he have a wife that minds her ways.

Sloth brings the sleep that has no awaking; idle hands, empty belly.

Law observed is life preserved; the careless step leads the way to death.

Befriend the poor, and lend to the Lord; he will repay faithfully.

Chasten thy son still, nor despair of his amendment; still let the death of him be far from thy thoughts.

He injures himself, that is ungovernable in rage; every advantage he seizes does but injure him the more.⁷ Give heed to counsel, accept correction, and thou shalt be wise at last. Thought jostles thought in man's heart; the Lord's will stands firm.

Poverty is the school of piety; better need than knavery. Fear of the Lord leads on to life, life where all is contentment, and no ill may come.

With folded hands the sluggard sits by, and never puts hand to mouth.⁸

The lash for the reckless, if thou wouldst

¹ Literally, 'A just man is the first to accuse himself'; but this can hardly mean that he confesses his guilt, since there would be no need, in that case, for investigation by his neighbours. The sense will be rather that he makes admissions which at first sight tell against his innocence. The Hebrew text is obscure; with some difficulty, it is interpreted as meaning, 'He who speaks first is always (apparently) in the right'.

² The Hebrew text here is usually rendered, 'A brother trespassed (against) is (harder to win over) than a strong city; (such) contentions are like the bars of a fortress'.

³ 'Lovingly' is usually interpreted as meaning 'lavishly', but 'with due reverence' may be meant.

⁴ The second part of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

⁵ This verse is very obscure, and perhaps corrupt; some infer from the Hebrew text a contrast between fair-weather and genuine friends.

⁶ The word 'rich' does not occur in the Hebrew text.

⁷ This verse, in the Hebrew text, is of very disputable interpretation. The same is true of verse 22.

⁸ According to the Latin version, the sluggard hides his hands under his arm-pits; according to the Hebrew text, he buries them in the dish that lies in front of him.

turn a fool into a wise man; only cool heads will profit by a rebuke.

26 Shame on the wretch that brings ruin on his own father, drives his own mother out of doors.

27 Never weary, my son, of giving heed to warnings; never let the counsels of experience pass thee by.¹

28 Out on the faithless witness that scorns right; the sinful souls that are ever greedy for wrong-doing! There is a doom awaits the reckless; there are thick cudgels ready for the fool's back.

20 A reckless counsellor is wine, strong drink a riotous friend; the man who is swayed by these, call not wise.

2 Beware of the king's power, as of lion roaring; challenge it, and thy life is forfeit.

3 Well may he boast, that keeps clear of strife; every fool will be quarrelling.

4 Too cold to plough, says Sloth; vainly, when harvest comes, he will go a-begging.

5 Prudent counsel is a well buried deep in man's heart; but the wise know how to

6 draw from it. Many there are that pass for kindly souls, but a faithful friend is hard

7 to come by. An upright man that goes armed with honest intent, leaves a blessing

8 to his children. Let a king rule justly, wrong-doing shall be winnowed away under his scrutiny.

9 Who dares to boast, My heart is unscathed now, I have cleansed myself of every fault?

10 One balance for getting and one for giving, one yard-wand for selling and one for buying, the Lord will not endure.

11 Watch a boy even at his play, thou canst tell whether his heart is pure and true. The ear that listens, the watchful eye, are both of the Lord's fashioning.

13 Love not thy sleep, or poverty will overtake thee unawares; the open eye means a full belly.

14 A poor thing, says the buyer, a poor thing! Then off he goes, and boasts of it.

15 Gold thou mayst have in abundance, and jewels a many, but the finest ware of all is wise speech.

16 Does a man go bail for a stranger?

Without more ado, take his garment from him; who trusts without knowledge, forfeits the pledge.

Ill-gotten wealth is bread most appetizing, that will yet turn to grit in the mouth.

Counsel is the sure buttress of determination; wars must ever be won by statecraft.

With the whisperer, that goes about open-mouthed on his errand of gossip, never throw in thy lot.

In deepest night the lamp of his hopes shall be quenched, that turns upon father or mother with a curse. The inheritance too soon come by, too late thou shalt find unblesed. Never promise thyself vengeance; await the Lord's hour, and redress shall be thine. One weight for getting and one for giving, the Lord cannot endure; a false balance is great wrong. Every step man takes is of the Lord's choosing; and thou, poor mortal, wouldst thou plot out thy path?

He is trapped, that consecrates his gift in haste;² the vow made, repentance comes too late.

Fan and flail a wise king has for the ill-doer.

Man's spirit is a lamp the Lord gives, to search out the hidden corners of his being.

What is a king's best body-guard? Mercy and faithfulness; on mercy his throne rests.

Youth has strong arms to boast of, old age white hairs for a crown.

Hurts that bruise cruelly, chastisement felt deep within, are sin's best remedy.

21 The thoughts of a king are in the Lord's hand, streams he can sluice which way he wills. His own path man scans, and nothing sees amiss, but the divine balance weighs our thoughts. Mercy shewn and justice done win the Lord's favour beyond any sacrifice. Lordly looks, proud heart; the hopes of the wicked are all at fault.

Ever diligence plans for plenty; sloth must be content to starve.

¹ The Hebrew text here lacks the negative, and yields no good sense as it stands. ² This is the meaning of the verse as given in the Septuagint Greek, and perhaps as it stands in the Hebrew. The Latin has 'It is ruin to a man to devour the holy ones'. ³ Literally, 'the lamp', or (according to the Hebrew text) 'the untilled ground'. The sense is doubtful; nor is it clear whether 'at fault' refers to sinful actions or has its literal sense of missing a mark.

- 6 Illusion it is and madness, wealth to win
by perjury; death has caught thee in his
7 snare. Wicked men, that refuse the right,
by their own violence come to ruin.
8 Crooked is man's course, and belies his
own nature, but pure souls there are whose
life runs true.
9 Better lodge in a garret than share thy
house with a scold.
10 A godless man has set his heart on ill-
11 doing; no ruth has he for his fellows. The
lash for the reckless, if thou wouldst turn
a fool into a wise man; a wise master, and
12 he shall learn yet. Good heed the just man
gives to the sinner's household, in hope of
diverting sinners from harm.¹
13 Who shuts his ear to the poor man's
plea, himself one day shall plead in vain.
14 Carry a secret gift in thy bosom for thy
enemy's appeasing; the open hand no
grudge will ever resist.
15 Right done, honest folk rejoice, and
knaves tremble.
16 Stray from the path thou wast taught,
and thou shalt lodge with the dead.
17 Of greed comes want; he grows not rich
that loves wine and oil.
18 The wicked is still the price of the just
man's ransom; for honest folk, treachery
pays the score.²
19 Better dwell in a wilderness than with a
scold who rails at thee.
20 Precious store there is and good cheer
where justice dwells;³ the fool devours all
at once.
21 Honest living be thy quest and kindly
deeds, life shall be thine, and blessing, and
22 honour. Wisdom can scale the fortress
great warriors hold, and bring low its
boasted strength. Guard lips and tongue,
23 as thou wouldst guard thy life from peril.
24 I know one, Sir Reckless is the name of
him, that is all proud airs, and does no-
thing but in over-bearing scorn.
25 Day-dreams are the sluggard's down-
26 fall; work his hands will not; all day long
dreaming and scheming, while honest

men never spare themselves, nor take their
ease.

Tainted is the sinner's sacrifice; the
hand that offers it is stained with guilt. The
false witness shall meet his doom; obey the
commandment, and thy pleadings shall
triumph. The ill-doer has eyes for nothing
but his wanton designs; the upright scans
well his path.

Wisdom is none, prudence is none,
counsel is none that can be matched against
the Lord's will; well armed thy horse may
be on the eve of battle, but the Lord sends
victory.

22 Precious beyond all treasure is
good repute; not gold or silver is
so worth the winning, as to be loved. Rich
and poor dwell ever side by side, God's
creatures both of them.

When ill times come, prudence is on its
guard, and takes refuge; the unwary
march on, and pay the penalty.

Humility brings fear of the Lord, and
therewith riches, honour and long life.

Stake and caltrop beset the path of the
wicked; as thou lovest life, keep thy dis-
tance.

There is a proverb; a boy will keep the
course he has begun; even when he grows
old, he will not leave it.⁴

Rich rules poor, debtor must wait on
creditor.

Who sows mischief, reaps a sorry crop;
ere long, the flail of his malice will have
done its work.⁵ For every loaf of bread
given to the hungry, blessing shall be the
reward of kindly hearts. (A renowned
victory he wins, that is a bestower of
gifts, and living men are the spoils of
it.⁶)

Banish the reckless spirit, and strife goes
out with him; thou art rid of quarrelling
and of disgrace.

Love purity of heart, and thou shalt find
such gracious words as shall win thee a
king's friendship. True knowledge has the

¹ There is no agreement as to the meaning of this verse; the Hebrew text has 'drag down to' instead of 'divert from', and some think that 'the Just' refers not to a just man but to Almighty God.

² Some think this means that in periods of general calamity the wicked suffer, while the just go free; but even so the phrasing of the verse would be obscure.

³ The Hebrew text has 'wisdom' instead of 'justice', and the reference is presumably to material (not spiritual) blessings, which the fool squanders and the wise man saves up.

⁴ In the Hebrew text, the verse begins 'Train a boy according to the measure of his way'; but, even when this correction is made, the sense of the maxim remains uncertain.

⁵ In the second half of this verse, the Latin (not the Hebrew) would allow us to translate, 'he will be brought to an end by the flail of his own malice'.

⁶ The sentence in brackets is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. The sense of its second half is uncertain, but cf. Gen. 14. 21.

Lord's smile for its protection; the schemer's cause he will overthrow.

13 Out? says Sloth; why, there is a lion without; wouldst thou have me slain in the open street?

14 Like a deep pit is the flattery of wanton wife; they only are ensnared, whom the Lord loves little.

15 Boyhood's mind is loaded with a pack of folly, that needs the rod of correction to shift it.

16 Oppress the poor for thy enrichment, and ere long a richer man's claim shall impoverish thee.¹

17 Wouldst thou but give heed, and listen to wise counsels, take these my warnings

18 to heart! Digest them well, and they shall bring back a sweet taste to thy lips; to fill

19 thy own heart too with confidence in the Lord, is the sum of my present teaching.

20 Not once nor twice have I warned thee and instructed thee, so as to ground thee in true doctrine, and send thee home supplied with ready answers concerning it.

21 Never oppress the poor; his poverty protects him; never bear hard on the friendless at law; be sure the Lord will grant them redress, and claim life for life.

22 Never let a quarreller, a man of angry moods, be thy friend; go thy way, and let

23 him go his; ill habits are soon learned, to the sudden peril of thy life. Leave it to

24 others to engage themselves, and go bail for their neighbour's debts; for thyself,

25 thou hast no means of payment; wouldst thou see the clothes stripped from thy bed?

26 Pass not beyond the ancient bounds which thy fathers have set. Mark me the man

27 whose task is deftly done; he is for the court, no common service shall be his.

23 When thou art sitting at table with a prince, mark well what is set

2 before thee, and, have thou thy appetite under control, guard as with a drawn knife

3 thy gullet. Hanker thou never after those good things of his; they are bait to lure thee.²

4 Do not be at pains to amass riches; let thy scheming³ have its bounds. Never let thy

eyes soar to the wealth that is beyond thy reach, eagle-winged against thy pursuit.

Shun the niggard's table; not for thee his dainties. Abstracted he sits, like soothsayer brooding over false dreams; Eat and drink, he tells thee, but his mind is far away. For that grudging food thou wilt have no stomach; all gracious speech will die away on thy tongue.⁴

Speak not with fools for thy hearers; of thy warning utterance they will reckon nothing.

Leave undisturbed the landmarks of friendless folk, nor encroach on the orphan's patrimony; a strong Champion they have, to grant them redress.

Still let thy heart be attentive to warnings, open be thy ear to words of instruction.

Nor ever from child of thine withhold chastisement; he will not die under the rod; rather, the rod thou wisdest shall

baulk the grave of its prey. Wise heart of thine, my son, is glad heart of mine; speak

10 thou aright, all my being thrills. Do not envy sinners their good fortune, but abide

11 in the fear of the Lord continually; the future holds blessings for thee, never shall

12 that hold play thee false.

Listen, then, my son, and shew thyself wise, keeping still an ever course. Be not

2 of their company, that drink deep and pile the dishes high at their revels; ruined they

3 shall be, sot and trencherman, and wake from their drunken sleep to find them-

4 selves dressed in rags. Thine to obey the father who begot thee, nor leave thy

5 mother without reverence in her grey hairs; truth to covet, hold wisdom, and

6 self-command, and discernment for treasured heirlooms. Joy there is and pride in

7 an upright man's begetting for the glad father of a wise son; such joy let thy father

8 have, such pride be hers, the mother who bore thee!

My son, give me the gift of thy heart, scan closely the path I shew thee. What pit

so deep as the harlot's greed, what snare holds so close as wanton wife? Like a foot-

pad she lurks beside the troth, a deadly peril to all that forget their way.

¹ The Latin version here gives the most intelligible account of a *maxim* whose meaning has been much disputed. ² At first sight, this passage suggests the danger of poisoning; but since no such occurrences are mentioned in the Old Testament, we should perhaps understand that the prince is trying

to extort some advantage out of his guest by taking him off his guard. ³ Literally, 'prudence'.

⁴ *vv.* 6-8. The language of this passage is strained throughout, and it is hard to feel certain that we have found the right clue to its meaning.

29 Unhappy son of an unhappy father, who
is this, ever brawling, ever falling, scarred
but not from battle, blood-shot of eye?
30 Who but the tospott that sits long over his
31 wine? Look not at the wine's tawny glow,
sparkling there in the glass beside thee;
32 how insinuating its address! Yet at last
adder bites not so fatally, poison it distils
33 like the basilisk's own. Eyes that stray
to forbidden charms, a mind uttering
34 thoughts that are none of thine, shall make
thee helpless as mariner asleep in mid
ocean, when the tiller drops from the
35 helmsman's drowsy grasp. What! thou
wilt say, blows all unfelt, wounds that left
no sting! Could I but come to myself, and
be back, even now, at my wine!

24 Not for thee to emulate wrong-
doers, and aspire to be of their
2 company; what minds are theirs, who
think only of men's undoing, what talk,
whose every word is treachery!

3 No foundation for a house like wisdom,
4 no buttress like discernment; no furnish-
ing may be found for the rooms of it so
rare and so pleasant, as true knowledge.

5 Only the wise are strong; well taught is
6 firm of sinew. War must be planned first,
before thou wage it, and he will prosper
7 best who most takes counsel; wisdom
hangs high beyond the fool's reach;
tongue-tied he stands when there are
consultations at the gate.¹

8 Consecrate close thought to evil ends,
and thou wilt earn no better name than
9 mischief-maker. Craft of his own the fool
has, but all used amiss; the insidious
rogue² no man can stomach.

10 What, hang thy hands down in time of
11 peril? Little shalt thou avail. Thine to
rescue the doomed, to cheat the gallows of
12 its prey; not plead thy lack of strength,
when he, the Searcher of all hearts, the
Saviour of thy life, knows all, sees all, and
requites the actions of men.

13 Sweet to thy palate, my son, is honey
14 from the comb; why then, eat; but wise
teaching is no less thy soul's food, to-
morrow's resource, and a resource un-
failing.

Lie not in wait, treacherously, to despoil
15 the homes where honest men take their
ease; seven times the just may stumble,
16 and rise to their feet again, it is the wicked
fall headlong into ruin. Not thine to
17 triumph over a fallen foe; that thrill of
rejoicing in thy heart over his calamity the
18 Lord will see, and little love; his vengeance
may yet change its course. Do not be
19 impatient when the wicked thrive, do not
envy the lot of evil-doers; villainy has no
20 hope in store, its light flickers and is gone.

Fear God, my son, and fear the king;
21 have nothing to do with malcontents.
How sudden their ruin, how swift falls,
22 from either hand, the blow!

More maxims of the wise. It is ill done,
23 to let partiality sway thy judgement; if
24 thou acquit the guilty, what race will have
a good word for thee, what people will love
thee? Condemn him, and thou shalt have
25 renown, blessings shall fall on thy head.

The right word spoken seals all like a
26 kiss on the lips.³

Be thy first care what lies without; till
27 thy lands first with all diligence; then
build up thy home.

Do not come forward as a witness
28 against thy neighbour; wouldst thou
spread lying tales? Nor be content to say,
29 I am but serving him as he served me;
I pay off old scores.

Passing by field or vineyard where idle-
30 ness reigned and providence, what
sights I have seen! Nettles were every-
31 where, briars had covered the ground, the
stone wall was ruinous. That sight I took
32 to heart, found a warning in that ill
example. Sleep on (thought I) a little
33 longer, yawn a little longer, a little longer
pillow head on hand; ay, but poverty will
34 not wait, the day of distress will not wait;
like an armed vagabond it will fall upon
thee!⁴

25 Here are more of Solomon's pro-
verbs, copied out by Ezechias'
men, that was king of Juda.

For mysteries unfathomable, praise
2 God; for mysteries revealed, the king.
High as heaven thou must look, deep as
3

¹ The meaning of the Hebrew text here is doubtful.

² 'The insidious rogue'; literally, the
'calumniator'. The word used in the Hebrew text commonly implies rash folly, and is here inappropriate.

³ The phrase, in the original, runs simply 'Who returns right words kisses lips'; the exact bearing of it
can only be conjectured.

⁴ *ev.* 33, 34. See 6. 10, 11 above.

earth, ere the mind of kings shall be made
 4 known to thee. Rid silver of dross, and the
 5 cup shines bright; rid the court of knaves,
 6 and the throne stands firm. Never play the
 great lord at court, and mingle with men
 7 of rank; who would not rather be beckoned
 to a higher place, than be put to the blush,
 and in the king's presence?¹

8 When men go to law, do not disclose
 hastily what thy eyes have witnessed;² it
 may be thou hast tainted a friend's name,
 9 and there is no undoing the mischief. To
 thy friend's private ear open thy wrongs;
 10 vent the secret abroad, and he, hearing it,
 will turn on thee with reproaches, nor wilt
 thou lightly recover thy good name.
 (Favour and friendship are thy protection;
 to lose them is a foul blot.)³

11 Like a boss of gold amid silver tracery
 it shines out, the right word spoken.
 12 Golden ear-ring nor pearl drop fits so well,
 as wise reproof given to a wise listener.
 13 Find a trusty messenger; not snow in
 harvest-time will bring thee more relief.
 14 Storm-wrack and cloud and no rain to
 follow; such thanks he wins that boasts
 much, and nothing accomplishes.

15 A prince, in his forbearance,⁴ may yet be
 won over to thy cause; hard heart gives
 place to soft tongue.

16 Honey if thou find, eat thy fill and no
 more; nothing comes of surfeit but vomit-
 17 ing. Rare be thy visits to a neighbour; he
 will soon have enough, and weary of thee.

18 What is worse than javelin, sword, and
 arrow all at once? One that bears false
 19 witness against his neighbour. What is
 more frail than rotting tooth, or sprained
 foot? A false friend trusted in the hour of
 need; as well lose thy cloak in mid winter.

20 Vinegar goes ill with natron, and song with
 a discontented heart. (Moth cannot fret
 garment, or worm wood, as care the heart.)

21 Hungers thy enemy? Here is thy
 22 chance; feed him. Thirsts he? Of thy well
 let him drink. So doing, thou wilt heap

burning coals upon his head, and for thy-
 self, the Lord will recompense thee.⁵

The north wind stops rain, and a frown
 the backbiter.

Better lodge in a garret than share thy
 house with a scold.⁶

Good news from a far land, refreshing
 as cold water to parched lips.

Fouled the spring, poisoned the well,
 when honest men bow down before
 knaves.

A surfeit harms, though it be of honey;
 search too high, and the brightness shall
 dazzle thee.⁷ Like a city unwall'd he lies
 defenceless, that cannot master himself,
 but ever speaks his mind.

26 As well snow in summer or rain in
 harvest, as honour paid to a fool.

Light as a bird of passage, light as spar-
 row on the wing, the curse that is un-
 deserved shall reach thee.

Whip for horse, bridle for ass, and never
 a rod for the fool's back?

Leave the fool's challenge unanswered,
 and prove thyself wise; or answer it, if
 thou wilt, and prove him fool.

Send a fool on thy errand, thou hast a
 lame journey, and mischief brewing for
 thee. Give a fool leave to speak, it is all
 fair legs and no walking. Pay a fool re-
 verence, thou hast wasted one more stone
 on Mercury's cairn. Speech fits as well in
 a fool's mouth as branch of bramble in the
 hand of a drunkard. The law settles quar-
 27rels at last, yet silence the fool, and feud
 there shall be none.⁸ Like a dog at his
 vomit, the fool goes back ever to his own
 folly.⁹ Who is in more perilous case than
 the fool himself? The man who lays claim
 to wisdom.

What, go abroad? says Sloth; there is a
 lion there; trust me, a lion's dam loose in
 the street. Sloth turns about, but keeps
 his bed, true as the door to its hinge. With
 folded hands the sluggish sits by, too idle

¹ Lk. 14. 8-10. ² What thy eyes have witnessed; some interpreters of the Hebrew text would connect the words so rendered with the preceding sentence. ³ The words enclosed in brackets are found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

⁴ Some would render 'through thy forbearance', but we should hardly expect a subject's attitude towards his prince to be so described. ⁵ *iv.* 21, 22. See Rom. 12. 20 and note there. ⁶ Repeated from 21. 9 above. ⁷ The second half of this verse has given rise to much conjecture. It runs, literally, in the Hebrew, 'and the searching out of their glory, glory'. The rendering given above is that presumably intended by the Latin, but it is difficult to derive this or any meaning from the Hebrew text as it stands.

⁸ *iv.* 6-10. The meaning of all these verses is obscure, and the Hebrew text, perhaps, not above suspicion. In verse 8, the Latin follows a rather far-fetched interpretation given by the Talmud; there is no reference to heathen worship in the original. Verse 10 is very variously interpreted; the sense offered by the Latin is perhaps simpler than any other available, but it is not easy to guess what reading it represents in the Hebrew. ⁹ See 11 Pct. 2. 22.

16 to put hand to mouth.¹ Wiser than seven
sages is the sluggard in his own thought.
17 Better pull a dog by the ears than
meddle in another's quarrels; pass on in
quiet.
18 No excuse he finds, that deadly brand
and arrow casts about him; nor he either,
19 that hurts a friend by treachery and pleads
that it was done in jest.
20 No fuel, no fire; no tell-tale, no quarrel.
21 Coal needs ember, and fire tinder, and
strife a quarreller, for their kindling. In-
nocent enough seem the words of the
backbiter, yet their poison sinks deep into
23 a man's belly.² When the heart is wicked,
fine talk is but lustre ware. The enemy that
24 has treacherous thoughts is betrayed by
his friendly talk;³ trust him not when he
25 speaks thee fair; here are seven depths of
wickedness in a single heart. Vain the pre-
26 tendencies that cloak his malice; before the
whole assembly it shall be made known;
27 dig pit, and thou shalt fall into it, shift
rock, and it shall roll back on thee. Fie on
28 the glib tongues that hate all honesty, the
treacherous lips that plot men's downfall!

27 Do not flatter thyself with hopes
of to-morrow; what lies in the
womb of the future thou canst not tell.

- 2 Seek praise, but not of thy own bestow-
ing; another's lips, not thine, must
sound it.
3 What is more crushing than stone, more
burdensome than sand? A fool's ill
4 humour. Fierce, fierce is rage, and in-
dignation mounts like a flood, but the
pangs of jealousy, these there is no
resisting.
5 Better open reproof than the love that
6 gives no sign. Better the love that scourges,
than hate's false kiss.
7 Full-fed spurns the honeycomb; to
Hunger's lips, bitter is sweet.
8 When bird leaves nest, let a man leave
his home.
9 Sweeter than ointment, sweeter than

any perfume, when man's heart talks to
heart of friend. Friend of thine, and friend
10 that was thy father's, never forsake; so, in
thy sore need, no kinsman's door thou
shalt need to enter.

Neighbour over the way is better than
kinsman at a distance.

My son, wouldst thou be thy father's
11 pride? Court wisdom, and silence thy
detractors.

When ill times come, prudence is on its
12 guard, and takes refuge; the unwary march
on, and pay the penalty.⁴

Does a man go bail for a stranger?⁵
13 Without more ado, take his garment from
him; who trusts without knowledge, for-
feits the pledge.⁵

So early abroad, so loudly wishing thy
14 neighbour well? This is curse, not bless-
ing.⁶

Between a scold and a roof that drips in
15 winter there is nothing to choose. As well
store up the wind in thy house, though thou
16 call her the marrow of thy right hand.⁷

Iron whets iron, friend shapes friend.
17 If figs thou wouldst eat, tend thy fig-tree
18 well; if honour thou wouldst have, wait
well on thy master.

Clear as a face mirrored in water, the
19 wise see men's hearts.⁸

Death and the grave were never yet
20 content, nor man's eyes with gazing.

Silver and gold are judged by furnace
21 and crucible, man by his repute.⁹ (Heart
of knave is ever set on mischief, heart of
true man on wisdom.)

Bray a fool like corn, with pestle and
22 mortar, he will be a fool still.

Spent be thy care, thy eyes watchful,
23 over flock and herd of thine; riches will
24 slip from thy grasp, and crowns, will they
last for ever?¹⁰ See, where the meadows
25 are laid bare, and the aftermath is spring-
ing, the hay all carried, now, from the
26 hill-slopes! Pasture for the lambs that
shall clothe thee, for the goats that shall be
the price of more fields yet; goat's milk,
27

¹ *vv.* 13, 15. See 22. 13 and 19. 24 above.

² See 18. 8. ³ In the Hebrew text, 'dissembles in his talk'.

⁴ See 22. 3. ⁵ See 20. 16.

⁶ The precise bearing of this proverb remains in doubt.

⁷ The whole of this verse is obscure, and the second half of it probably corrupt.

⁸ The Hebrew text reads simply, 'As water face to face, so heart of man to man', it is not clear in what sense.

⁹ That common repute should be regarded as a test of what a man really is, seems unlikely (cp. especially 17. 3 above). Some think the Hebrew text means a man should be judged by what he holds in repute, and this would fit in well with the second part of the verse (which is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text itself). Others would read, instead of 'repute', 'adversity', and this would lead on well to verse 22.

¹⁰ The Latin version here ignores the question, and runs 'but a crown shall be granted for ever'; a rendering which yields no good sense in the context.

too, shall suffice to feed thee, give life and strength to thy men and thy serving-maids.

28 Bad conscience takes to its heels, with none in pursuit; fearless as a lion the unreprieved heart.

2 Short reigns and many, where a land is plagued for its guilt; by wise counsel, and men's talk overheard, long lives the king.

3 Tempest threatens and famine when poor men oppress the poor.

4 Sound teaching is forgotten, where the wrong-doer is well spoken of; honest folk

5 will still be up in arms. No skill the knave has to discern the right; quest of the Lord's

6 will makes that craft perfect. Better a poor life lived honestly than crooked ways that

7 bring riches. A son's wisdom is to obey his father's teaching, not to shame him by

8 keeping riotous company. Wealth that the usurer by extortion amassed, a more generous than he shall have the spending

9 of. Turn a deaf ear to thy teachers, and thy prayer shall be all sacrilege. Ruin he

10 brings on himself, that leads the innocent into ill ways, and honest men shall be the

11 heirs of him. Wisdom he claims, that wealth has; yet there is many a poor man

12 will put him down.

13 A fair sight it is, to see honest folk rejoicing; knaves' rule is the people's ruin.

14 Never shalt thou thrive by keeping sin hidden; confess it and leave it, if thou

15 wouldst find pardon. Blessed evermore is the timorous conscience; it is hardened

16 hearts that fall to their ruin.

17 Nation without bread and prince without scruple, here is ravening lion and hungry

18 bear all at once. Let prince lack prudence, everywhere is wrongful oppression; less

19 covetous, he should have lived longer.

20 Compass thou a man's death, thou mayst flee to the depths of earth, none will shield thee.

21 Keep the path of innocence, and thou shalt be safe; at one blow the double-dealer shall fall.

22 Till field and fill belly; idleness shall have a bellyful of nothing but want.¹ Of

23 honesty comes much honour, and how

Of Docility, Integrity, and other Matters

shall wealth reach thee suddenly, yet leave thy hands clean? Great wrong it is to sell judgement; wouldst thou barter truth away for a mouthful of bread? Eye on his rivals in the race for wealth, a man sees nothing, when want is hard at his heels.

More thanks thou wilt have, in the end, for honest reproof than for designing flattery.

Shall he who robs father or mother make light of it? He is next door to a murderer.

Jostling pride it is that stirs up enmity; trust in the Lord, and thou shalt prosper.

He is a fool that trusts his own wit; follow the rule of wise men, if thou wouldst reach safety.

Give to the poor, and nothing lack; turn away from their plea, and blessing thou shalt have none.

When knaves flourish, all the world takes to hiding; come they by their end, thou shalt see honest folk abroad.

29 Who spurns the yoke of correction shall meet sudden doom, and past all remedy.

When right thrives, the city is all rejoicing; when there be knaves that rule it, all lament.

Glad the father's heart, when the son takes wisdom for his mistress, nor spends on wantons his patrimony.

Kings by justice or exaction make the fortunes of a state or mar them.

By empty flattery thou mayst lay a snare for thy friend's feet.

By his own false steps the sinner is entangled; innocence goes singing and rejoicing on its way. An eye the upright man has for the friendless cause; the sinner is all darkness.

Rashness in a city ruins all; that madness, wisdom must turn aside.

Alas for the wise man that goes to law with a fool! Between bluster and mockery, there is no end to it.²

He makes murderous enemies, that lives innocently... and honest men demand his life.³

Folly blurts out its whole mind; wise men reserve utterance till by and by.

¹ See 12. 11. ² The Latin version (strangely misunderstood by modern editors) gives no indication whether it is the wise man or the fool who blusters and laughs; the latter is evidently meant. ³ 'Demand his life', according to Hebrew usage, can only mean 'demand that he should be put to death'. It seems clear, therefore, that our present text is either faulty or defective.

2 King that listens to false rumour has a
3 worthless court. Poor men and their
masters dwell side by side, sharing the
4 Lord's sunlight. King that gives due re-
dress to the poor has a throne unshake-
able.

5 Wisdom comes of reproof, comes of the
rod; leave a child to go its own way, and
a mother's care is wasted.

6 Thrive the goddess, there will be wrongs
a many; but the just will yet see them put
down.

7 A son well schooled is rest well earned;
great joy thou shalt have of him.

8 What revel among the host,¹ the power
of prophecy once withdrawn! Happy is he
that keeps the law unbroken.

9 Word was never yet that would check a
slave; he listens only to defy it.

5 Who is in more perilous case than the
fool himself? The man who speaks too
soon.²

1 Pamper thy slave young, and breed a
pert manservant.

2 Ever the quarreller breeds strife; quick
temper is ever at fault.

3 Pride will come low; honour awaits the
humble.

1 As thou lovest thy life, aid thieves never;
wouldst thou hear appeal made, and keep
thy own counsel?³

5 Fear of man's judgements will bring
thee quickly to ruin; in the Lord put thy
trust, and rise high above them. Suitors
a many an earthly prince has for his favour;
but it is God that judges all.

7 Eyesores alike, the rogue to honest men
the plain-dealer to villains. (Let the son
heed a father's warnings, he shall fear no
ruin.⁴)

30 Here are the words of Agur, son of
Jacé.⁵ Here is revelation made
known by one that had God with him,
God's near presence to comfort him, as he
sp. ðc.

2 What though I be ignorant, beyond
3 human worth? What though the know-

ledge of man has passed me by, wisdom's
dull pupil, without skill in holy lore? Who
4 may he be that has scaled heaven, and
come back to tell its secrets; held the winds
in the hollow of his hand, wrapped away
the storm-clouds under his mantle, fixed
the bounds of earth? Tell me his name;
tell me, if thou canst, where son of his may
be found?

All God's promises are like metal tested
5 in the fire; he is the sure defence of all
who trust in him.⁶ Add to his word no word
6 of thine; speedily thy practices shall come
to light.

Two requests I would make of thee; be
7 they mine while life lasts. Keep my
8 thoughts ever far from treachery and
lying; and for my state of life, be neither
poverty mine nor riches. Grant me only
the livelihood I need; so shall not abun-
9 dance tempt me to disown thee, and doubt
if Lord there be, nor want bid me steal,
and dishonour my God's name with per-
jury.

Never accuse a slave to his master; curse
10 thee he may, and to thy undoing.

A bad breed it is, that curse thy fathers
11 and for their mothers have no good word.
A bad breed, that owns no blot, yet is all
12 unpurged from its defilement. A bad
13 breed, all haughty looks and scornful brow.

A bad breed, that has teeth sharp as
14 swords, jaws that grind slowly on, till poor
folk none are left, their friendless neigh-
bours.

Two sisters there are, men say, brood of
15 the leech, that still cry, Give us more, give
us more! But stay, there is a third In-
satiabile; nay, a fourth I can name that
never says, Enough! The grave, and the
16 barren womb, and earth that soaks up the
rain, and fire; did fire ever say, Enough?

Proud looks, that tell of a father mocked,
17 a mother's pangs despised! That eye the
ravens shall pick out on the hill-side, the
vulture's brood shall prey on it.

Three mysteries there are too high for
18 me, and a fourth is beyond my ken; eagle
19

¹ The uncommon Hebrew verb here rendered by 'revel' occurs in Ex. 32. 25; which makes it probable that the absence of Moses on Mount Sinai is here referred to. Otherwise, it is hard to establish any connexion between the two halves of the verse.

² The form of this verse is exactly the same as that of 26. 12 above; but here (perhaps through an error) our present Latin text gives 'folly' instead of 'fool', and obscures the evident meaning of the sentence.

³ See Lev. 5. 1. ⁴ The bracketed words occur neither in the Hebrew text nor in the Septuagint Greek.

⁵ The Latin version here translates the two proper names, Agur and Jacé, as 'He who gathers' and 'He who vomits'. The latter part of the verse is wholly obscure, and is generally thought to include more proper names, Ithiel and Ucal. It is not clear whether Agur's prophecy forms a part or the whole of this chapter.

⁶ See Ps. 17. 31.

that flies in air, viper that crawls on rock,
ship that sails the sea, and man that goes
courting maid.¹ Nor less I marvel at wan-
ton wife that licks her greedy lips, and
will have it that she did no harm.

21 Three sights there are set earth trem-
bling, and a fourth it cannot endure; slave
turned king, churl full fed, a scold married,
and a maid that supplants² her mistress.

24 Of four little things in nature, wise men
cannot match the skill. How puny a race
the ants, that hoard their food in harvest
time; how defenceless the rock-rabbits,
that hide their burrows in the clefts! No
prince have the locusts, yet ever they
march in rank; the lizard climbs high, and
makes its home in the palaces of kings.

29 Three creatures there are that walk
majestically, and a fourth goes proudly on
his way; bravest of beasts, the lion, that
fears no encounter, the cock (Loins-girt
they call him),³ and the ram; and the king,
too, for who can say him nay?

32 Fool that thrusts himself forward will
prove a fool;⁴ he had been better advised
to hold his tongue. First milk, then butter
thou mayst have for the wringing; blow
thy nose lustily, and blood shall flow at
last; how then canst thou press thy quarrel
home, and no strife come of it?

31 Here are words of king Lamuel;
here is revelation his mother made
known to him for his instruction.

What word have I for my son, the child
of my own womb, the fulfilment of my
prayers? Wouldst thou give thyself up to
the love of women, spend thy all on a king's
undoing? Wine was never made for kings,
Lamuel, never for kings; carouse befits ill
thy council-chamber. Not for them to
drink deep, and forget the claims of right,
and misjudge the plea of the friendless.
Strong drink for the mourner, wine for the
afflicted heart; deep let them drink, and
forget their need, and think of their misery
no more. Do thou, meanwhile, give thy
voice for dumb pleader and for doomed
prisoner; ever let that voice of thine pro-

nounce true sentence, giving redress to the
friendless and the poor.

A man who has found a vigorous wife
has found a rare treasure, brought from
distant shores. Bound to her in loving
confidence, he will have no need of spoil.
Content, not sorrow, she will bring him as
long as life lasts. Does she not busy herself
with wool and thread, plying her hands
with ready skill? Ever she steers her course
like some merchant ship, bringing pro-
vision from far away. From early dawn
she is up, assigning food to the household,
so that each waiting-woman has her share.
Ground must be examined, and bought,
and planted out as a vineyard, with the
earnings of her toil. How briskly she girds
herself to the task, how tireless are her
arms! Industry, she knows, is well re-
warded, and all night long her lamp does
not go out. Jealously she sets her hands to
work, her fingers clutch the spindle.
Kindly is her welcome to the poor, her
purse ever open to those in need. Let the
snow lie cold if it will, she has no fears for
her household; no servant of hers but is
warmly clad. Made by her own hands was
the coverlet on her bed, the clothes of lawn
and purple that she wears. None so
honoured at the city gate as that husband
of hers, when he sits in council with the
elders of the land. Often she will sell linen
of her own weaving, or make a girdle for
the travelling merchant to buy. Protected
by her own industry and good repute, she
g greets the morrow with a smile. Ripe
wisdom governs her speech, but it is kindly
instruction she gives. She keeps watch
over all that goes on in her house, not con-
tent to go through life eating and sleeping.
That is why her children are the first to call
her blessed, her husband is loud in her
praise: Unrivalled art thou among all the
women that have enriched their homes.
Vain are the winning ways, beauty is a
snare; it is the woman who fears the Lord
that will achieve renown. Work such as
hers claims its reward; let her life be
spoken of with praise at the city gates.

¹ The fourth mystery is given in the Hebrew text as 'the way of a man with a maid': the Latin version, evidently in the same sense, has 'the way of a man in his manhood'. ² Literally, according to the Latin, 'inherits from', but the other sense of the Hebrew verb is clearly more appropriate.

³ The second majestic beast is given in the Hebrew text simply as 'the girt of loins', and cannot be certainly identified. The greyhound, or some other creature with a thin waist, seems more likely than the cock.

⁴ 'Thrusts himself forward' appears to be the sense of the Hebrew verb here, which is rendered in the Latin 'meets with advancement'.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

WORDS of the Spokesman,¹ king David's son, that reigned once at Jerusalem.

A shadow's shadow, he tells us, a shadow's shadow; a world of shadows! How is man the better for all this toiling of his, here under the sun? Age succeeds age, and the world goes on unaltered. Sun may rise and sun may set, but ever it goes back and is reborn. Round to the south it moves, round to the north it turns; the wind, too, though it makes the round of the world, goes back to the beginning of its round at last. All the rivers flow into the sea, yet never the sea grows full; back to their springs they find their way, and must be flowing still. Weariness, all weariness; who shall tell the tale? Eye looks on unsatisfied; ear listens, ill content. Ever that shall be that ever has been, that which has happened once shall happen again; there can be nothing new, here under the sun. Never man calls a thing new, but it is something already known to the ages that went before us; only we have no record of older days. So, believe me, the fame of to-morrow's doings will be forgotten by the men of a later time.

I was a king in my day, I, the Spokesman; Israel my realm, Jerusalem my capital. And it was my resolve to search deep and find out the meaning of all that men do, here under the sun; all that curse of busy toil which God has given to the sons of Adam for their task. All that men do beneath the sun I marked, and found it was but frustration and lost labour, all of it; there was no curing men's cross-grained nature, no reckoning up their follies.

I at least (so I flattered myself) have risen above the rest; a king so wise never

reigned at Jerusalem;² here is a mind has reflected much, and much learned. And therewith I applied my mind to a new study; what meant wisdom and learning, what meant ignorance and folly? And I found that this too was labour lost; much wisdom, much woe; who adds to learning, adds to the load we bear.

2 Next, I thought to give the rein to my desires, and enjoy pleasure, until I found that this, too, was labour lost. Wouldst thou know how I learned to find laughter an empty thing, and all joy a vain illusion; how I resolved at last to deny myself the comfort of wine, wisdom now all my quest, folly disowned? For I could not rest until I knew where man's true good lay, what was his life's true task, here under the sun.³ Great plans I set on foot; I would build palaces, I would plant vineyards, I would have park and orchard, planted with every kind of tree; and to water all this greenery there must be pools of water besides. Men-slaves I bought and women-slaves, till I had a great retinue of them; herds, too, and abundance of flocks, such as Jerusalem never saw till then. Gold and silver I amassed, revenues of subject king and subject province; men-singers I had and women-singers, and all that man delights in; beakers a many, and jars of wine to fill them.⁴ Never had Jerusalem known such wealth; yet in the midst of it, wisdom never left my side. Eyes denied nothing that eyes could covet, a heart stinted of no enjoyment, free of all the pleasures I had devised for myself, this was to be my reward, thus the fruit of all my labours. And now, when I looked round at all I had done, all that ungrateful

¹ The word Ecclesiastes, like the Hebrew word it renders, should mean one who convokes an assembly, or addresses it, or both. ² The Hebrew text here seems to imply that king Solomon was wiser than anyone who had reigned *before* him at Jerusalem, whereas David was in fact his only (Israelite) predecessor. But we need not attach too much importance to a conventional turn of phrase; cf. III Kg. 14. 9.

³ In the Hebrew text, the first part of this verse refers not to the second thoughts which recalled the author to a simpler way of living, but to those first thoughts of which he afterwards repented: 'I considered how best to pamper my body with wine, how best to cling to my follies, yet retaining wisdom all the while'. ⁴ The last ten words of this verse represent, in the Hebrew text, a passage of uncertain significance.

drudgery, nothing I found there but frustration and labour lost, so fugitive is all we cherish, here under the sun.

- 12 Then my mind went back to the thought of wisdom, of ignorance, too, and folly. What (thought I), should mortal king strive to imitate the sovereign power that made him?¹ I saw, indeed, that wisdom differed from folly as light from darkness;
- 14 the wise man had eyes in his head, while the fool went his way benighted; but the ending of them? In their ending both were alike. Why then (I said to myself), if fool and I must come to the same end at last, was not I the fool, that toiled to achieve wisdom more than he? So my thoughts ran, and I found labour lost, here too. Endlessly forgotten, wise man and fool alike, since to-morrow's memory will be no longer than yesterday's; wise man and fool alike doomed to death.

- 17 Thus I became weary of life itself; so worthless it seemed to me, all that man does beneath the sun, frustration all of it, and labour lost. And I, beneath that same sun, what fond labours I had spent!
- 18 I hated the thought of them now; should I heir of mine succeed to them? An heir, would he be wise man or fool? None could tell; but his would be the possession of all I had toiled for so hard, schemed for so anxiously; could there be frustration worse than this? I would hold my hand; no more should yonder sun see labours of mine.
- 21 What, should one man go on toiling, his the craft, his the skill, his the anxious care, leaving all to another, and an idler? That were frustration surely, and great mischief done.

- 22 Tell me, how is a man the richer for all that toil of his, all that lost labour of his, here under the sun? His days all painfulness and care, his very nights restless; what is here but frustration? Were it not better to eat and drink, and toil only at his own pleasures? These, too, come from God's hand; and who has better right to food

tasted and pleasure enjoyed than I? Who wins God's favour, has wisdom and skill for his reward, and pleasure too; it is the sinner that is doomed to hardship and to thankless care, hoarding and scraping, and all to enrich some heir God loves better! For him frustration, for him the labour lost.

3 Everything must be done by turns; no activity, here beneath the heavens, but has its allotted time for beginning and coming to an end. Men are born only to die, plant trees only to displant them. Now we take life, now we save it; now we are destroying, now building. Weep first, then laugh, mourn we and dance; the stones we have scattered we must bring together anew; court we first and then shun the embrace. To-day's gain, to-morrow's loss; what once we treasured, soon thrown away; the garment rent, the garment mended; silence kept, and silence ended; love alternating with hatred, war with peace. For all this toiling of his, how is man the richer?² Pitiable indeed I found it, this task God has given to mankind; and he, meanwhile, has made the world, in all its seasonable beauty, and given us the contemplation³ of it, yet of his own dealings with us, first and last, never should man gain comprehension. To enjoy his life, to make the best of it, beyond doubt this is man's highest employment; that gift at least God has granted him, to eat and drink and see his toil rewarded. But be sure all God has made will remain for ever as he made it; there is no adding to it, no taking away from it; so he will command our reverence. Nothing that has been, but lasts on still; nothing that will be, but has been already; he is ever repeating the history of the past.

I marked, too, how wrong was done instead of right, injustice instead of justice, there under the sun's eye; and I told myself that God would give judgement on

¹ The Hebrew text, in the latter half of this verse, runs: 'For what (shall) the man (do) that comes after the king? Why, what they have already done', perhaps a footnote recalling the follies of king Roboam (see verse 19 below). The literal sense of the Latin is: 'What (said I) is man, that he should be able to follow the King, his Maker?' ² *vv.* 1-9: These verses are ordinarily understood as implying that man's varied activities have to be carried on at a time of God's, not of his own, choosing. But, if so, the instances are strangely chosen, nor is it even clear why a series of contrasts should have been instituted at all. The context suggests (cf. especially verse 9) that we are meant to think of life as a monotonous alternation of opposite activities; in that case, the passage has the same note of frustration as 1. 4-7 above.

³ Literally, 'the discussion'. The Hebrew text gives a more mysterious phrase: 'He has set eternity (or perhaps, the world) in their hearts'.

day between the just and the sinners, and all things would reach their appointed end then.¹ I told myself that God's purpose with the sons of men was to test them. . .

. . . And that they might see they were only like the beasts. . .² After all, man comes to the same ending as the beasts; there is nothing to choose between his lot and theirs; both alike are doomed to die. They have but one principle of life; what has man that the beasts have not? Frustration everywhere; we are all making for the same goal; of earth we were made, and to earth we must return. Who has a right to tell us that the spirit of man mounts upwards, and the spirit of a beast sinks down to the depth? So I became aware that it is best for man to busy himself here to his own content; this and nothing else is his allotted portion; who can show him what the future will bring?

4 And then my thoughts would turn back to all the wrongs that are done under the sun's eye. Innocent folk in tears, and who is to comfort them? Who is to comfort them, powerless against their oppressors? The dead, it seemed, were more to be envied than the living; better yet to be still unborn, never to have known the shameful deeds that are done, out here in the sunlight.

I thought, too, of human toil and striving; how much it owed to man's rivalry with his fellows! All was frustration and lost labour here. What wonder if the fool sits idle, and starves to death? Better a handful (says he) quietly come by, than a whole armful that is all striving and labour lost.³

And there was another kind of frustration I marked, here under the sun. Here is one that works alone, partner nor son nor brother to aid him, yet still works on,

never content with his bright hoard, never asking, as he toils and stints himself, who shall gain by it. Frustration and lost labour, here too.

Better to be in partnership with another, than alone; partnership brings advantage to both. If one falls, the other will give support; with the lonely it goes hard; when he falls, there is none to raise him. Sleep two in one bed, each shall warm the other; for the lonely, there is no warmth. Two may withstand assault, where one is no match for it; a triple cord is not lightly broken.

There is more hope for a wise servant⁴ that is in hard straits, than for a dotard king that foresight has none. Men have risen to a throne that till now were bound in prison; men born to rule a kingdom have died of want. I have seen the whole world, from east to west, take part with the young man, the usurper that rises in the old king's stead. The old king, that had an immemorial line of ancestors;⁵ and now posterity shall take no pride in him! All is frustration, and labour lost.

Look well what thou art doing when thou goest into God's house; present thyself there in a spirit of obedience. Obedience is far better than the sacrifice made by fools, that are guilty of unwitting sacrilege.⁶

5 When thou standest in God's presence, do not pour out with rash haste all that is in thy heart. God sees as heaven sees, thou as earth; few words are best. Sure as dreams come from an overwrought brain, from glib utterance comes ill-considered speech. Vow to God if thou utterest, without delay perform it, he will have no light and rash promises; vow made must be vow paid. Far better undertake nothing than undertake what thou dost not

¹ The Hebrew text has 'For there is a time for every purpose and for every deed there', it is not clear in what sense.

² The end of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is commonly suspected of corruption. But it seems doubtful whether there has not been some wider dislocation; the want of logical connexion between the two halves of this verse is unmistakable. Those editors who would strike out verse 18 as an insertion do not mend matters; it leaves a hopeless gap between the thought of verse 17 and that of verse 19.

³ *iv.* 5, 6: It is the Latin version, not the Hebrew text, that puts verse 6 into the mouth of the fool. Some think that verse 5 is misplaced here, and belongs to another context.

⁴ Or perhaps 'boy'.
⁵ The old king, that had an immemorial line of ancestors; literally, 'The number of the people of those who were before him is infinite'. The Hebrew text has, 'The number of the people who followed his leadership was infinite', referring evidently to the usurper; the Latin gives a better sense. The language of the whole passage is strained, and perhaps in part corrupt; there is no reason to think that any particular historical situation is referred to.

⁶ The allusion is perhaps in the first instance to ceremonial defilement, such as might disqualify the worshipper from bringing his offering until he had been purified. But evidently it may be interpreted of moral disqualification; cf. *Mt.* 5, 23.

5 fulfil. Wouldst thou defile thy whole nature through the tongue's fault? Wouldst thou find thyself saying, with God's angel to hear thee, No thought I gave to it?¹ Little wonder if God disappoints every ambition of the man who speaks so. Dreams, empty dreams, led to those glib promises of thine; content thyself rather with the fear of God.²

7 Thou seest, it may be, in this province or that, oppression of the poor, false award given, and wrong unredressed? Let not such things bewilder thee; trust me, authority is watched by higher authority, subject in turn to higher authority yet; and, above them all, the King of the whole earth rules it as his dominion.³ What is his decree? Why, that covetousness should never fill its own maw; never did he that loved money taste the enjoyment of his money;⁴ here is frustration once again.

10 Richer if thou grow, riches will give thee more mouths to feed; profit he has none that owns them, save the feasting of his eyes on them if he will. Full belly or empty, sound is the cottar's sleep; sleep, to the pampered body of the rich still denied.

12 Another evil I have found past remedy, here under the sun; riches that a man hoards to his own undoing. By cruel misadventure they are lost to him, and to the son he has begotten nothing he leaves but poverty. Naked he came, when he left his mother's womb, and naked still death finds him; nothing to show for all his long endeavour. Alas, what ailed him, that he should go away no richer than he came? Nothing left of all those wasted labours of his; all his life long the cheerless board, the multitudinous cares, the concern, the melancholy! Better far, by my way of it, that a man should eat and drink and enjoy the revenues of his own labour, here under the sun, as long as God gives him life; what

more can he claim? God's gift it is, if a man has wealth and goods and freedom to enjoy them, taking what comes to him and profiting by what he has earned. Few be his days or many, he regards little, so long as God gives his heart content.

6 With another hardship I have seen men visited here beneath the sun, and commonly. God gives a man wealth, and goods, and state, till there is nothing more left for his appetites to desire; and then God denies him the enjoyment of all this, throws the coveted morsel to a stranger instead; here is frustration, here is cold comfort indeed. Ay, let a man have a hundred children to his name, years let him have a many, and be near his end; yet, if he is not to enjoy the revenues of his land still, and lay his bones in it,⁵ I say it were better for him never to have come to the birth. Well made, the empty passage from light to darkness, well lost, the chance of earthly renown, if only a man never sees the sun, never learns the meaning of good fortune and ill! Though he should have lived two thousand years, he were none the better for it, if he might not continue in the enjoyment of his goods. Do we not all reach the same goal at last?⁶

What is all our striving, but a full mouth and an empty belly? Is wise man more to be envied than fool? Where should a man go when he is poor, save where he can find a livelihood?⁷

Better aim at what lies in view than hanker after dreams. But indeed all is frustration, and labour lost.

He is known already by name, that is still unborn; and this at least is known of him, that he is but man, and cannot plead his cause, matched against too strong an adversary.

¹ v. 5: 'No thought I gave to it'; literally, 'There is no foresight'. A comparison with the Hebrew text makes clear that there is no question of denying God's Providence.

² vv. 1-6: It is perhaps best to understand the whole of this passage as referring to rash vows. In that case, the words in verse 1, literally, 'God is in heaven, and thou art on earth', will not be a mere assertion of the divine dignity, but a reminder that God knows, better than we ourselves, what is best for us. ³ There can be little doubt that the old Douay translators were right in interpreting the Latin as a reference to divine, not to earthly kingship. The meaning of the Hebrew text is quite uncertain. ⁴ In the original, this verse begins simply, 'The covetous man will never have his fill of money'; the rendering given above assumes that there is a tacit connexion between this verse and what went before. ⁵ Literally, 'and lack burial', but it is difficult to believe that the author of these chapters would regard the lack of funeral rites as a significant misfortune. ⁶ v. 1-6: It is not clear how this situation differs from that described in 5. 12-16; unless perhaps the difference is between confiscation of a man's riches, and their accidental loss.

⁷ The second half of this verse, in the Latin, is literally: 'And what (advantage has) the poor man, save to go where there is life?' The true reading has perhaps been lost; the Hebrew text, 'What (has) the poor man who has knowledge to walk in the presence of the living?' yields no satisfactory sense.

11 Words, they be spun endlessly; yet what should lie at the heart of our reasoning, but frustration?

7 What need for man to ask questions that are beyond his scope? There is no knowing how best his life should be spent, this brief pilgrimage that passes like a shadow, and is gone. And what will befall after his death, in this world beneath the sun, who can tell?

2 There is no embalming like a good name left behind; man's true birthday is the day of his death.

3 Better a visit paid where men mourn, than where they feast; it will put thee in mind of the end that awaits us all, admonish the living with the foreknowledge of death. Frown ere thou smile; the downcast look betokens a chastened heart. Sadness, a home for the wise man's thoughts, mirth for the fool's.

6 Better receive a wise man's rebuke, than hear thy praises sung by fools. Loud but not long the thorns crackle under the pot, and fools make merry; for them, too, frustration.

8 Oppression bewilders even a wise man's wits, and undermines his courage.

9 Speech may end fair, that foul began; patience is better than a proud heart.¹ Never be quick to take offence; it is a fool's heart that harbours grudges.

11 Never ask why the old times were better than ours; a fool's question.

12 Great worth has wisdom matched with good endowment; more advantage it shall bring thee than all the rest, here under the sun. Wealth befriends whom wisdom befriends; better still, who learns wisdom wins life.

14 Mark well God's doings; where he looks askance, none may set the crooked straight.

15 Come good times, accept the good they bring; come evil, let them never take thee unawares; bethink thee, that God has balanced these against those, and will have no man repine over his lot.

16 In my days of baffled enquiry, I have seen pious men ruined for all their piety, and evil-doers live long in all their wicked-

ness. Why then, do not set too much store by piety, nor play the wise man to excess, if thou wouldest not be bewildered over thy lot. Yet plunge not deep in evil-doing; 18 folly eschew; else thou shalt perish before thy time. To piety thou must needs cling, 19 yet live by that other caution too; fear God, and thou hast left no duty unfulfilled.²

Wisdom is a surer ally than ten city magistrates; there is no man on earth so exact over his duties that he does ever the right, never commits a fault.

The chance words men utter, heed but little; how if thou shouldst hear thy own servant speaking ill of thee? Thy own conscience will tell thee how often thou too hast spoken ill of other men.

Thus, by the touchstone of my wisdom, I would test all things; Wisdom, cried I, I must have; yet all the while she withdrew from me, further away than ever. Deep, 25 deep is her secret; who shall read it?

Here is a mind that has passed the whole world of things in review, examining everything, weighing everything, so as to have a wise estimation of them, eager to understand the fool's rebelliousness, the false calculations of rash souls. And this I have ascertained; death itself is not so cruel as woman's heart that wheedles and beguiles, as woman's clutches that release their captive never. God's friends escape her; of sinners she makes an easy prey. I weighed this against that (he, the Spokesman, tells us), and the sum of my enquiry was this. One thing I ever longed to find, and found never, a true woman. One true man I might find among a thousand, but a woman never.

Of this, beyond all else, I have satisfied myself; man's nature was simple enough when God made him, and these endless questions are of his own devising.

The wise man, there is none like him. O for one who should read the riddle!

8 When a man is given wisdom, it shines out in his face; Omnipotence will set a new stamp on his brow.

Mine to do a king's bidding, to hold fast

¹ The first half of this verse reads, literally, 'Better is the end of a speech (or, of a thing) than the beginning'. The sense of the maxim is uncertain. ² *cf.* 16-19: The author here appears to recommend taking a middle course between excessive piety and excessive ill-doing. Some think this was part of his immature speculations (verse 16); others, that the 'justice' which can be excessive is censoriousness about our fellow men, or scrupulous observance of ceremonial detail.

3 by an oath taken in the name of God. Do not hasten away from his presence, or rebelliously withstand him; he can do all he will, with such authority his word runs; none may call his acts in question. Do as thou art bidden, and fear no harm. A time will come, the wise man knows, when he shall win a hearing; time brings every man his chance, be his business what it may, only this curse lies upon man, that he cannot learn from the past, cannot get word of the future.¹

8 The breath of life man must resign at last; the day of his death he cannot determine; nor ever does war give release from service, nor sin discharge to the sinner.

9 This, too, I have marked, as I gave heed to all that befalls us, here beneath the sun. There are times when man rules over man to his undoing.² I have seen godless men go peacefully to the grave, that had lived their lives out in haunts of holiness, and won the name of good men from their fellow citizens; here, too, is frustration.³

11 Because sentence is not pronounced upon the evil-doers without more ado, men are emboldened to live sinfully. And yet, though the sinner presume on the divine patience that has borne with a hundred misdeeds, I know well enough that blessings are for those who fear God, who fear his frown. Never a blessing for sinners; never be it said they lived out their full span of days! Reckless of God's frown, see, they pass like a shadow, and are gone!

14 Another kind of frustration, too, earth sees; there are upright men that are plagued as though they lived the life sinners live, just as there are sinners who take no more harm than if they could plead innocence; I say this is frustration indeed.

15 For me, then, mirth! No higher blessing could man attain, here under the sun, than to eat and drink and make merry; nothing else had he to show for all those labours of his, for all that life-time God has given him, here under the sun.

16 Should I cudgel my wits to grow wise, and know the meaning of all earth's tasks; be like the men that allow their eyes no

sleep, day or night? Nay, I understood too well that God's dealings with man, here under the sun, are past all accounting for; the more a man labours to read that riddle, the less he finds out, and he least of all, that boasts himself wise in the reading of it.

9 All this, too, I pondered in my heart, and would spare no pains to find out the meaning of it. Here are upright men and wise; and every task of theirs is in God's keeping, nor can any tell whether they have earned his love, or his displeasure! This remains as yet uncertain, and meanwhile all have the same lot, upright and godless, good and wicked, clean and unclean alike. Brought they offerings or brought they none, well did they or ill, true swore they or false, it is all one. Of all that goes amiss, here under the sun, nothing does more hurt than this equality of fortunes; what wonder if men's hearts, while yet they live, are full of malice and defiance? And so they journey on to the grave. Were but immortality the prize! But no, hope of that is none; living dog is better off than dead lion. They live under sentence of death; and when death comes, of nothing will they be aware any longer; no reward can they receive, now that every trace of them has vanished away; no love, no hatred, no envy can they feel; they have said good-bye to this world, and to all its busy doings, here under the sun.

Go thy ways, then, eat thy bread with a stout heart, and drink wine to thy contenting; that done, God asks no more of thee. Ever be thy garments of white, ever let thy brow glisten with oil; live at ease with the wife that is thy heart's love, long as this uncertain life is granted thee; fugitive days, here beneath the sun. Live thou and labour thou under the sun as thou wilt, this thy portion shall be, and nothing more. Whatever lies in thy power, do while it thou canst; there will be no doing, no scheming, no wisdom or skill left to thee in the grave, that soon shall be thy home.

Then my thought took a fresh turn; man's art does not avail, here beneath the

¹ *vv.* 2-7: It is not clear whether we are concerned, in this passage, with an earthly king or a heavenly.
² 'His undoing'; according to the Latin, the ruler's own; more probably, in the original, the reference was to that of the subject. ³ The Hebrew text here is obscure, and the Latin differs from it in some points.

sun, to win the race for the swift, or the battle for the strong, a livelihood for wisdom, riches for great learning, or for the craftsman thanks; chance and the moment rule all. Nor does man see his end coming; hooked fish or snared bird is not overtaken so suddenly as man is, when the day of doom falls on him unawares.

And here, too, is wise warning, most wise, as I judge it. There was a small city once, with few men to hold it; and there was a great king that marched out against it, raised a mound and ringed it with siege-works, till it was beleaguered on every side.

To such a city, how came relief? By the wise counsel of one poor man that had his wits about him. And was there anyone, think you, that remembered the poor man afterwards? Not one. Sure enough, said I, wisdom has the better of valour; but see how the poor man's wisdom goes for nothing, and no one listens to him now!

A wise man's whisper carries further than great outcry from a king of fools. Arms cannot match wisdom; by one slip, what great advantage is lost!

10 No ointment can perfumer brew so sweet, but it grows foul when dead flies are lodged in it. And wouldst thou barter away wisdom and honour both, for a moment's folly?

The fool's wits are astray; the wise man's right is to him left.² By his way of it, every passer-by on the road is a fool, save he.

Though a prince's anger should mount against thee, do not desert thy post; great harm by thy healing touch may yet be assuaged.

This is a source of trouble I have marked, here under the sun; the causeless whim of tyrants.

Fools come to the top, down go rank and riches; slaves you will see riding on horseback, and princes going afoot at their bridle-rein.

Fall into pit thou shalt not, if thou dig none; breach no walls, if thou wouldst avoid the adder's sting. Stone crushes his foot that stone carries, and wood scratches him that wood cuts.

Blunt tool that has grown dull from long disuse shall cost thee pains a many;³ if thou hadst been wise sooner, thou shouldst have toiled less.⁴ Bite snake ere the spell begins, he is no better off that has the master-word.⁵

Wise utterance wins favour; the fool that opens his mouth does but ruin himself, his preface idle talk, his conclusion madness. Of words a fool has no stint. . .

. . . What went before, is lost to man's view, and what shall befall when he is gone, none can tell him.⁶

He is on a fool's errand, that does not even know his way to town.⁷

Woe to the land that has young blood on the throne, whose court sits feasting till daybreak! And happy the land whose king is of true princely breed, whose courtiers feast when feast should be, to comfort their hearts, not all in revelry.

Roof sags where idleness dwells; a leaking gutter means nerveless hands within.

Food will cheer thee, wine bring thee gladness, but money, it answers every need.

Of the king, no treasonable thought; of the nobles, no ill word even in thy bed-chamber; the very birds in heaven will catch the echoes of it, and fly off to betray thy secret.

11 Here, on the stream's bosom, venture thy livelihood; wait long thou mayst, but be sure thou shalt recover it at last. Seven claims thou hast satisfied, do not refuse the eighth. Not thine to foresee what general calamities the future holds in store; there the rain comes, where the clouds gather; north or south as the tree falls, north or south the trunk will lie. Still waiting for a wind? Never shall thy seed

¹ The rendering 'one sin' is here less appropriate; the verb used, in the Latin as in the Hebrew, has the root meaning of 'making a mistake'. ² Literally, 'The wise man's heart is towards the right, the fool's towards the left'. ³ The Latin version obscures the sense of the proverb by adding 'in sharpening it'—the sense is rather 'in using it'. ⁴ Literally, 'thy wisdom follows thy striving'. The Hebrew text, which is perhaps corrupt, gives the lame ending, 'wisdom is a useful guide'. ⁵ This seems the best interpretation of the Hebrew text, which runs, literally, 'The owner of the tongue has no advantage'. Cf. Ps. 57. 6. The Latin rendering here, 'No worse off is he who backbites in secret', yields no appropriate sense. ⁶ It seems probable that there has been some dislocation of the text here. The latter part of the verse is practically a repetition of 8. 7. ⁷ The exact bearing of this proverb can no longer be identified.

- be sown. Still watching the clouds? Never shall thy harvest be carried. Breath that comes and goes, the fashioning of man's frame in the womb, of all this thou knowest nothing; and thinkest thou to understand God's doings, that is Maker of all? Early abroad, to sow thy seed, and let evening find thee still at work; which sowing shall speed better, none knows, or whether both shall thrive to thy profit.¹
- Ay, it is good to look upon, the light of day; never was eye yet but loved to see the sun. Only be thy years never so many, never so happy, do not forget the dark days that are coming, the long days, when frustration will be the end of it all. While thou art young, take thy fill of manhood's pride, let thy heart beat high with youth, follow where thought leads and inclination beckons, but remember that for all this God will call thee to account. Rid thy heart, then, of resentment, thy nature of ill humours; youth and pleasures, they are so quickly gone!

- 12** Do not forget thy Maker, now, while youth lasts; now, while the evil days are still far off, the years that pass unwelcomed. Not yet the obscuration of sun and moon and starlight; and the clouds that still gather when the rainy season is done. One day, palsy will shake those door-keepers, those stalwart guards will be bowed with age; rarer, now, the busy maidens at the mill, dimmer, now, those bright glances from the windows. The

street-doors shut, muffled the hum of the mill, bird-song for waking-time, and all the echoes² of music faint! Fear upon every height, terrors on the road; almond-blossom matched for whiteness; the grasshopper's weight a burden now; the spiced food untasted!³ Man is for his everlasting home, and already the mourners are astrid in the streets. That, or else yonder cord of silver will be loosed, yonder golden skein unravelled; pitcher broken beside the fountain, wheel lost in the well;⁴ with that, back goes dust to its parent earth, and the spirit⁵ returns to God who gave it.

A shadow's shadow, he, the Spokesman, tells us, a world of shadows!

Abundant wisdom the Spokesman had, to be the oracle of his people; the story of his life he made known to them, laid secrets bare, and proverbs framed a many. Sayings of much import he devised, and nothing his pen set down but was truth unalloyed. Sharp goads they are to sting us, sharp nails driven deep home, these wise words left to us by many masters, but all echoing one shepherd's voice. Let these, my son, be all the wisdom thou cravest; this writing of books is an endless matter, and from overmuch study nature rebels.

Conclude we then thus in general; Fear God, and keep his commandments; this is the whole meaning of man. No act of thine but God will bring it under his scrutiny, deep beyond all thy knowing, and pronounce it good or evil.

¹ *vv.* 1-6: These verses evidently teach that action is worth while, in spite of all the pessimistic considerations hitherto adduced. But commentators are not agreed whether they refer expressly to charitable actions (cf. Lk. 16. 9), or (at least in the first instance) to commercial ventures, or to action in general.

² Literally, 'daughters'. ³ Literally, 'Also they shall fear what is high, and be afraid on the road. The almond-tree will flourish, the locust will grow fat, and the caper-berry will be scattered to the winds, because man is . . .'

⁴ *vv.* 2-6: The allegory of these verses has been the subject of much dispute among commentators; but it is probable that they describe, first the loss of physical and nervous strength which accompanies old age, and then (in verse 6) the sudden accidents which may cause death. The rendering above tries to indicate the lines of the interpretation commonly given, without insisting on its details. ⁵ Or perhaps, 'the breath'.

THE SONG OF SONGS

THAT OF SOLOMON

A KISS from those lips!¹ Wine cannot ravish the senses like that embrace, nor the fragrance of rare perfumes match it for delight. Thy very name spoken soothes the heart like flow of oil; what wonder the maids should love thee? Draw me after thee where thou wilt; see, we hasten after thee, by the very fragrance of those perfumes allured! To his own bower the king has brought me; he is our pride and boast, on his embrace, more ravishing than wine, our thoughts shall linger. They love truly that know thy love.

Dark of skin, and yet I have beauty, daughters of Jerusalem.² Black are the tents they have in Cedar; black are Solomon's own curtains; then why not I? Take no note of this Ethiop colour; it was the sun tanned me, when my own brothers, that had a grudge against me, set me a-watching in the vineyards. I have a vineyard of my own that I have watched but ill. Tell me, my true love, where is now thy pasture-ground, where now is thy resting-place under the noon's heat? Thou wouldst not have me wander to and fro where the flocks graze that are none of thine?

Still bewildered, fairest of woman-kind?³ Nay, if thou wilt, wander abroad, and follow with the shepherds' flocks; feed, if thou wilt, those goats of thine beside the shepherds' encampment. My heart's love, prized above all my horsemen, with Pharaoh's wealth of chariots behind them! Soft as doves are thy cheeks, thy

neck smooth as coral. Chains of gold that neck must have, inlaid with silver.

Now, while the king sits at his wine, breathes out the spikenard of my thoughts!⁴ Close my love is to my heart as the cluster of myrrh that lodges in my bosom all the night through. Close he clings as a tuft of cypress in the vine-clad rocks of Engedi.

See how fair is the maid I love! Soft eyes thou hast, like a dove's eyes.

And see how fair is the man I love, how stately! Green grows that bower, thine and mine, with its roof of cedars, with a covert of cypress for its walls.

2 Count me no more than wild rose on the lowland plain, wild lily on the mountain slopes.⁵

A lily, matched with these other maidens, a lily among the brambles, she whom I love!

An apple-tree in the wild woodland, shade cool to rest under, fruit sweet to the taste, such is he my heart longs for, matched with his fellows.

Into his own banquetting-hall the king has brought me, shewn me the blazon of his love. Cushioned on flowers, apples heaped high about me, and love-sick all the while! His left hand pillows my head; his right hand, even now, ready to embrace me.

An oath, maidens of Jerusalem! By the gazelles and the wild fawns I charge you, wake never from her sleep my heart's love, till wake she will!⁶

¹ It is not certain, here or throughout the book, whether we are dealing with a series of disconnected love-songs, or with a continuous drama. The present rendering has been divided up into paragraphs on the assumption that a kind of dramatic unity is present, though we cannot always be certain who is the speaker. The first three verses are perhaps flattery addressed to king Solomon by the women of his court.

² *vv.* 4-6. The speaker seems to be a village girl, newly brought to the palace, and still thinking of her absent lover. 'A vineyard', i.e. a sweetheart, cf. 8. 12 below.

³ *vv.* 7-10: Spoken to her by king Solomon. ⁴ *vv.* 11-16: 'The spikenard of my thoughts'; in the original, simply 'my spikenard'. But it has been suggested that the words are meant to introduce a new access of reverie. The interruption in verse 14 may be either spoken words from Solomon, or an imagined address by the absent lover.

⁵ *vv.* 1-6: The village girl appears to be speaking, except in verse 2, which may be attributed to Solomon. 'He' is the country lover in verse 3, Solomon in verse 6.

⁶ The end of this verse is sometimes taken literally in the Hebrew text, as meaning 'do not arouse or excite (the sentiment of) love (in me) until it pleases to awake of its own accord'. But the Latin rendering, which interprets 'love' as 'the loved one' seems far simpler. If it is right, Solomon is the speaker; the village girl has fallen asleep over the banquet.

8 The voice I love! See where he comes,
 how he speeds over the mountains, how he
 9 spurns the hills!¹ Gazelle nor fawn was
 ever so fleet of foot as my heart's love. And
 now he is standing on the other side of this
 very wall; now he is looking in through
 each window in turn, peering through
 10 every chink. I can hear my true love calling
 to me: Rise up, rise up quickly, dear heart,
 so gentle, so beautiful, rise up and come
 11 with me. Winter is over now, the rain has
 12 passed by. At home, the flowers have
 begun to blossom; pruning-time has
 come; we can hear the turtle-dove cooing
 13 already, there at home. There is green
 fruit on the fig-trees; the vines in flower
 are all fragrance. Rouse thee, and come, so
 14 beautiful, so well beloved, still hiding thy-
 self as a dove hides in cleft rock or crannied
 wall. Shew me but thy face, let me but hear
 thy voice, that voice sweet as thy face is fair.

15 How was it they sang? Catch me the
 fox, the little fox there, thieving among the
 vineyards; vineyards of ours, all a-blos-
 soming!²

16 All mine, my true love, and I all his; see
 where he goes out to pasture among the
 17 lilies, till the day grows cool, and the sha-
 dows long. Come back, my heart's love,
 swift as gazelle or fawn out on the hills of
 Bethel.

3 In the night watches, as I lay abed,
 I searched for my heart's love, and
 2 searched in vain. Now to stir abroad, and
 traverse the city, searching every alley-way
 and street for him I love so tenderly! But
 for all my search I could not find him.
 3 I met the watchmen who go the city
 rounds, and asked them whether they had
 4 seen my love; then, when I had scarce left
 them, I found him, so tenderly loved; and
 now that he is mine I will never leave him,
 never let him go, till I have brought him
 into my own mother's house, into the room
 that saw my birth.

¹ v. 8-u. 4 of the next chapter. Since this passage begins and ends with a warning that the sleeper must not be awoken, the pictures recorded in it are evidently those of a dream. In verse 9, the dreamer seems to echo the half-heard utterance of verse 7.

² This is usually thought to be the text of some country song; the words 'How was it they sang?' have been inserted above, so as to prepare the reader for this.

³ It is difficult to see how this verse fits into its surroundings. Some would translate 'What is it that makes its way up...' and treat verse 7 as the answer; but the analogy of 8. 5 suggests that the reference is somehow to the heroine of the poem.

⁴ *ex.* 7-11: These verses are plainly an interlude, in the form of a song (perhaps chanted by the women of Jerusalem) in honour of king Solomon's state litter.

⁵ Literally, 'Within, it was inlaid with love, on account of (in the Hebrew text, from) the daughters of Jerusalem'.

⁶ This chapter forms a love-song which has no special reference to any particular situation; they may be understood as words addressed to the village girl by her lover, and heard either literally or in the imagination.

An oath, maidens of Jerusalem! By the gazelles and the wild fawns I charge you, wake never from her sleep my heart's love, till wake she will!

Who is this that makes her way up by the desert road, erect as a column of smoke, all myrrh and incense, and those sweet scents the perfumer knows?³

See now the bed whereon king Solomon lies, with sixty warriors to guard him, none braver in Israel;⁴ swordsmen all, well trained for battle, and each with his sword girt about him, against the perils of the night! A litter king Solomon will have, of Lebanon wood; a golden frame it must have, on silver props, with cushions of purple; within are pictured tales of love, for your pleasure, maidens of Jerusalem. Come out, maidens of Sion, and see king Solomon wearing the crown that was his mother's gift to him on his day of triumph, the day of his betrothal.

4 How fair thou art, my true love, how fair!⁵ Eyes soft as dove's eyes, half-seen behind thy veil; hair that clusters thick as the flocks of goats, when they come home from the Galaad hills; teeth white as ewes fresh from the washing, well matched as the twin lambs that follow them; barren is none. Thy lips a line of scarlet, guardians of that sweet utterance; thy cheeks shew through their veil rosy as a halved pomegranate. Thy neck rising proudly, nobly adorned, like David's embattled tower, hung about with a thousand shields, panoply of the brave; graceful thy breasts as two fawns that feed among the lilies.

Till the day grows cool, and the shadows long, myrrh-scented mountain and incense-breathing hill shall be my home.

Fair in every part, my true love, no fault in all thy fashioning! Venture forth from Lebanon, and come to me, my bride, my queen that shall be! Leave Amana behind thee, Sanir and Hermon heights, where the

lairs of lions are, where the leopards roam the hills.¹

9 What a wound thou hast made, my bride, my true love, what a wound thou hast made in this heart of mine! And all with one glance of an eye, all with one ringlet straying on thy neck! Sweet, sweet are thy caresses, my bride, my true love; wine cannot ravish the senses like that embrace, nor any spices match the perfume that breathes from thee. Sweet are thy lips, my bride, as honey dripping from its comb; honey-sweet thy tongue, and soft as milk; the perfume of thy garments is very incense. My bride, my true love, a close garden; hedged all about, a spring shut in and sealed! What wealth of grace is here! Well-ordered rows of pomegranates, tree of cypress and tuft of nard; no lack there whether of spikenard or saffron, of calamus, cinnamon, or incense-tree,² of myrrh, aloes or any rarest perfume. A stream bordered with garden; water so fresh never came tumbling down from Lebanon.

10 North wind, awake; wind of the south, awake and come; blow through this garden of mine, and set its fragrance all astir.

5 Into his garden, then, let my true love come, and taste his fruit.³ The garden gained, my bride, my heart's love; myrrh and spices of mine all reaped; the honey eaten in its comb, the wine drunk and the milk, that were kept for me! Eat your fill, lovers; drink, sweethearts, and drink deep!

I lie asleep; but oh, my heart is wakeful! A knock on the door, and then my true love's voice: Let me in, my true love, so gentle, my bride, so pure! See, how bedewed is this head of mine, how the night rains have drenched my hair! Ah, but my shift, I have laid it by: how can I put it on again? My feet I washed but now; shall I soil them with the dust? Then my true love thrust his hand through the lattice,

and I trembled inwardly at his touch. I rose up to let him in; but my hands dripped ever with myrrh; still with the choicest myrrh my fingers were slippery, as I caught the latch. When I opened, my true love was gone; he had passed me by. How my heart had melted at the sound of his voice! And now I searched for him in vain; there was no answer when I called out to him. As they went the city rounds, the watchmen fell in with me, that guard the walls; beat me, and left me wounded, and took away my cloak. I charge you, maidens of Jerusalem, fall you in with the man I long for, give him this news of me, that I pine away with love.⁴

Nay, but tell us, fairest of women, how shall we know this sweetheart of thine from another's? Why is he loved beyond all else, that thou art so urgent with us?

My sweetheart? Among ten thousand you shall know him; so white is the colour of his fashioning, and so red. His head dazzles like the purest gold; the hair on it lies close as the high palm-branches, raven hair. His eyes are gentle as doves by the brook-side, only these are bathed in milk, eyes full of repose.⁵ Cheeks trim as a spice-bed of the perfumer's own tending; drench lilies in the finest myrrh, and you shall know the fragrance of his lips. Hands well rounded; gold set with jacinth is not workmanship so delicate; body of ivory, and veins of sapphire blue; legs straight as marble columns, that stand in sockets of gold. Erect his stature as Lebanon itself, noble as Lebanon cedar. Oh, that sweet utterance! Nothing of him but awakes desire. Such is my true love, maidens of Jerusalem; such is the companion I have lost.

But where went he, fairest of women, this true love of thine? Tell us what haunts he loves, and we will come with thee to search for him.

¹ 'My queen that shall be'; literally, 'thou shalt be crowned'. The Hebrew text has simply 'Look down', or perhaps, 'Make thy way down'. It is difficult to see why the various heights of the Lebanon range should be mentioned here; unless, indeed, we may suppose that the house called 'the Forest of Lebanon' (III Kg. 7. 2 and elsewhere) had its different parts or rooms named after these peaks.

² 'Incense-tree'; the Latin version here transliterates, 'trees of Lebanon', instead of translating the second noun.

³ *vs.* 1-7: The first of these verses may describe a reunion which presents itself to the imagination of the village girl as she falls asleep; the remainder are evidently a dream, which repeats, with variations, the dream of 3. 1-3.

⁴ *vs.* 8-17: These verses, with the first two of the following chapter, form a dialogue in which the village girl, now awake, satisfies the curiosity of her companions about her lover's appearance, but puts them off with vague guesses as to his whereabouts.

⁵ 'Eyes full of repose'; we can only make guesses at the meaning of the Hebrew phrase, 'reposing upon fullness', which the Latin version renders 'residing by the floods'.

- 6 Where should he be, my true love, but among the spices; where but in his garden, gathering the lilies? All mine, my true love, and I all his; ever he would choose the lilies for his pasture-ground.¹
- 3 Fair thou art and graceful, my heart's love; for beauty, Jerusalem itself is not thy match; yet no embattled array so awes men's hearts.² Turn thy eyes away, that so unman me! Hair dazzling as the goats have, when they come flocking home from the Galaad hills; teeth white as ewes fresh from the washing, well matched as the twin lambs that follow them; barren is none; thy cheeks shew through their veil rosy as skin of pomegranate! What are three score of queens, and eighty concubines, and maids about them past all counting? One there is beyond compare; for me, none so gentle, none so pure! Only once her mother travailed; she would have no darling but this. Maid was none that saw her but called her blessed; queen was none, nor concubine, but spoke in her praise. Who is this, whose coming shews like the dawn of day? No moon so fair, no sun so majestic, no embattled array so awes men's hearts.
- 10 But when I betook me to the fruit garden, to find apples in the hollows, to see if vine had flowered there, and pomegranate had budded, all unawares, my heart misgave me. . . beside the chariots of Aminadab.³
- 12 Come back, maid of Sulam, come back; let us feast our eyes on thee. Maid of Sulam, come back, come back!⁴

7 What can the woman of Sulam give you to feast your eyes on, if it be not the dance of the Two Camps?⁵

Ah, princely maid, how dainty are the steps of thy sandalled feet! Thighs well shaped as the beads of a necklace, some master-craftsman's work; navel delicately carved as a goblet, that has ever its meed of liquor, belly rounded like a heap of corn amid the lilies. Graceful thy breasts are as two fawns of the gazelle. Thy neck rising proudly like a tower, but all of ivory; deep, deep thy eyes, like those pools at Hesebon, under Beth-rabbim Gate; thy nose imperious as the keep that frowns on Damascus from the hill-side. Thy head erect as Carmel, bright as royal purple the braided ripples of thy hair. How graceful thou art, dear maiden, how fair, how dainty! Thy stature challenges the palm tree, thy breasts the clustering vine. What thought should I have but to reach the tree's top, and gather its fruit? Breasts, generous as the grape, breath sweet as apples, mouth soft to my love's caress⁶ as good wine is soft to the palate, as food to lips and teeth.

My true love, I am all his; and who but I the longing of his heart?⁷ Come with me, my true love; for us the country ways, the cottage roof for shelter. Dawn shall find us in the vineyard, looking to see what flowers the vine has, and whether they are growing into fruit; whether pomegranates are in blossom. And there thou shalt be master of my love. The mandrakes, what scent they give! Over the door at home there are fruits of every sort a-drying; I put them by, new and old, for my true love to eat.

8 Would that thou wert my brother. Nursed at my own mother's breast! Then I could meet thee in the open street

¹ Verses 1, 2 evidently continue the thought of the preceding chapter. ² *cf.* 3-9: The allusions in verses 4-6 (*cf.* 4, 1-3 above) suggest that the village girl is being addressed; but this time, it would seem, by king Solomon (*cf.* *vv.* 7, 8). That he should hit upon the same terms of comparison is perhaps a stroke of deliberate art. ³ *cf.* 10, 11: There is no clue to the speaker; naturally we assume that it is still king Solomon. A comparison of the words used with verse 1 above and 7, 8 below suggests that it was his intention to make the village girl his bride. At this point, the text seems to play us false; the statement (both in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint Greek), 'My soul made me into the chariots of Aminadab' (or, of my noble people), is one which gives no tolerable sense. It is probably implied that the speaker swooned away, but the exact meaning of the verse is irrecoverable, and it is not even certain that there may not be a serious gap in the text of the poem.

⁴ This verse, in which the word 'Sulamite' occurs for the first time, belongs in its context to the succeeding chapter. ⁵ *cf.* 1-9: The first sentence is presumably spoken by the Sulamite herself, the rest by Solomon. It is commonly assumed that this woman of Sulam (or Sunam, III Kg. 1. 3) is the village girl who was the heroine of the preceding chapters. But this is not stated; and we are free, if we will, to regard her as a new character in the drama; a dancer whose charms, lavishly displayed, distract king Solomon from his former love. At the end of verse 5 the Hebrew text probably means 'a king is held captive by thy ringlets', which confirms the impression that king Solomon is the speaker.

⁶ *v.* 9: 'To my love's caress': In the original, the phrase is 'to him whom I love', but this introduces utter confusion into the passage, and the change of a single vowel-point gives us 'my caresses' as in 1. 1 and elsewhere. ⁷ *cf.* 10-13: The village girl, who has now evidently said good-bye to the court, rejoins her lover.

and kiss thee, and earn no contemptuous looks.¹ To my mother's house I will lead thee, my captive; there thou shalt teach me my lessons, and I will give thee spiced wine to drink, fresh brewed from my pomegranates. His left hand pillows my head; his right hand, even now, ready to embrace me! An oath, maidens of Jerusalem! Never wake from her sleep my heart's love, till wake she will!²

Who is this that makes her way up by the desert road, all gaily clad, leaning upon the arm of her true love?³

When I came and woke thee, it was under the apple-tree, the same where sore distress overtook thy own mother, where she that bore thee had her hour of shame. Hold me close to thy heart, close as locket or bracelet fits; not death itself is so strong as love, not the grave itself cruel as love unrequited; the torch that lights it is a blaze of fire. Yes, love is a fire no waters avail to quench, no floods to drown; for love, a man will give up all that he has in the world, and think nothing of his loss.

A little sister we have, still unripe for the love of man;⁴ but the day will come when a man will claim her; what cheer shall she have from us then? Steadfast as a wall if she be, that wall shall be crowned with silver; yield she as a door yields, we have cedar boards to fasten her. And I, I am a wall; impregnable this breast as a fortress; and the man who claimed me found in me a bringer of content.

Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon; and when he gave the care of it to vine-dressers, each of these must pay a thousand silver pieces for the revenue of it. A vineyard I have of my own, here at my side; keep thy thousand pieces, Solomon, and let each vine-dresser have his two hundred; not mine to grudge them.⁵

Where is thy love of retired garden walks? All the countryside is listening to thee. Give me but the word to come away, thy bridegroom, with thee;⁶ hasten away like gazelle or fawn that spurns the scented hill-side underfoot.

¹ *vv.* 1-14: Although the transitions of thought are not always easy to follow, this chapter can be read without difficulty as lovers' talk, following on the reunion implied in the foregoing chapter. So read, it is curiously graphic, from verse 1, in which the village girl complains of prying eyes, to verse 14, in which her lover complains of being overheard.

² *vv.* 3, 4: The bride, in a drowsy ecstasy, repeats both her own words and Solomon's words from 2, 6, 7. ³ It is not clear whether the first half of this verse is spoken by the bride, or by onlookers; cf. 3, 6. The words 'all gaily clad' are in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. In the second half, the bride speaks, reminding her lover that their trysting-place has been the actual place in which he was born; this is the sense both of the Hebrew text and of the Septuagint Greek, though the Latin version curiously has: 'There thy mother was ravished; there she who bore thee was violated'.

⁴ Verses 8, 9 are evidently a countryside song or proverb, which the bride quotes here so as to emphasise (in verse 10) her own faithfulness. ⁵ *vv.* 11, 12: (Cf. Mt. 21, 34.) The Latin version here has translated the proper names as common nouns, which yields no good sense. ⁶ This is the sense of the Hebrew text; in the Latin, verse 14 is addressed by the girl to her lover.

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

LISTEN, all you who are judges here on earth. Learn to love justice; learn to think high thoughts of what God is, and with sincere hearts aspire to him. Trust him thou must, if find him thou wouldst; he does not reveal himself to one that challenges his power. Man's truant thoughts may keep God at a distance, but when the test of strength comes, folly is shewn in its true colours; never yet did wisdom find her way into the schemer's heart, never yet made her home in a life mortgaged to sin. A holy thing it is, the spirit that brings instruction; how it shrinks away from the touch of falsehood, holds aloof from every rash design! It is a touchstone, to betray the neighbourhood of wrong-doing. A good friend to man is this spirit of wisdom, that convicts the blasphemer of his wild words; God can witness his secret thoughts, can read his heart unerringly, and shall his utterance go unheard? No, the spirit of the Lord fills the whole world; bond that holds all things in being, it takes cognisance of every sound we utter; how should ill speech go unmarked, or the scrutiny of justice pass it by? The hidden counsel of the godless will all come to light; no word of it but reaches the divine hearing, and betrays their wicked design; that jealous ear is still listening, and all their busy murmuring shall stand revealed.

Beware, then, of whispering, and to ill purpose; ever let your tongues refrain from calumny. Think not that the secret word goes for nought; lying lips were ever the soul's destroying. Death for its goal, is not life's aim missed? Labours he well, that labours to bring doom about his ears? Death was never of God's fashioning; not for his pleasure does life cease to be; what meant his creation, but that all created things should have being? No breed has

he created on earth but for its thriving; none carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Think not that mortality bears sway on earth;¹ no end nor term is fixed to a life well lived...² It is the wicked that have brought death on themselves, by word and deed of their own; court death, and melt away in its embrace, keep tryst with it, and lay claim to its partnership.

2 Reason they offer, yet reason all amiss. Their hearts tell them, So brief our time here, so full of discomfort, and death brings no remedy! Never a man yet made good his title to have come back from the grave! Whence came we, none can tell; and it will be all one hereafter whether we lived or no. What is our breath, but a passing vapour; what is our reason, but a spark that sets the brain whirling? Quench that spark, and our body is turned to ashes; like a spent sigh, our breath is wasted on the air; like the cloud-wrack our life passes away, unsubstantial as the mist yonder sun disperses with its ray, bears down with its heat. Time will surely efface our memory, and none will mark the record of our doings. Only a passing shadow, this life of ours, and from its end there is no returning; the doom is sealed, and there is no acquittal.

Come then (they say), let us enjoy pleasure, while pleasure is ours; youth does not last, and creation is at our call; of rich wine and well spiced take we our fill. Spring shall not cheat us of her blossoming; crown we our heads with roses ere they wither; be every meadow the scene of our wanton mirth. Share we the revels all alike, leave traces everywhere of our joyous passing; no part or lot have we but this.

Helpless innocence shall lie at our mercy; not for us to spare the widow, to

¹ What is said here is understood by some as referring only to human life; others take it as implying that mortality in general owes its origin to the fall of Adam. ² This verse seems to be incomplete, the old Sixtine Vulgate adds, on the authority of certain Latin manuscripts, the phrase 'death is earned only by wrong-doing'.

11 respect the venerable head, grown white
with years. Might shall be our right,
weakness count for proof of worthlessness.
12 Where is he, the just man? We must plot
to be rid of him; he will not lend himself
to our purposes. Ever he must be thwart-
ing our plans; transgress we the law, he is
all reproof, depart we from the traditions
13 of our race, he denounces us. What, would
he claim knowledge of divine secrets, give
14 himself out as the son of God? The touch-
stone, he, of our inmost thoughts; we can-
15 not bear the very sight of him, his life so
different from other men's, the path he
takes, so far removed from theirs! No
16 better than false coin he counts us, holds
aloof from our doings as though they
would defile him; envies the just their
future happiness, boasts of a divine parent-
17 age. Put we his claims, then, to the proof;
let experience shew what his lot shall be,
18 what end awaits him. If to be just is to be
God's son indeed, then God will take up
his cause, will save him from the power of
19 his enemies.¹ Outrage and torment, let
these be the tests we use; let us see that
gentleness of his in its true colours, find
20 out what his patience is worth. Sentenced
let him be to a shameful death; by his own
way of it, he shall find deliverance.²

21 So false the calculations that are blinded
22 by human malice! The secret purposes of
God they might not fathom; how should
they foresee that holiness is required, how
should they pass true award on a blameless
23 life? God, to be sure, framed man for an
immortal destiny, the created image of his
24 own endless being; but, since the devil's
25 envy brought death into the world, they
make him their model that take him for
their master.³

3 But the souls of the just are in God's
hands, and no torment, in death itself,
26 has power to reach them. Dead? Fools
27 think so; think their end loss, their leaving
us, annihilation; but all is well with them.
28 The world sees nothing but the pains they

endure; they themselves have eyes only for
what is immortal; so light their suffering,
29 so great the gain they win! God, all the
while, did but test them, and testing them
found them worthy of him. His gold, tried
30 in the crucible, his burnt-sacrifice, gra-
ciously accepted, they do but wait for the
time of their deliverance; then they will
31 shine out, these just souls, unconquerable
as the sparks that break out, now here, now
there, among the stubble.⁴ Theirs to sit in
32 judgement on nations, to subdue whole
peoples, under a Lord whose reign shall
last for ever. Trust him if thou wilt, true
33 thou shalt find him; 'faith waits for him
calmly and lovingly; who claims his gift,
who shall attain peace, if not they, his
chosen servants?'⁵

But dearly shall the wicked pay for their
error,⁶ for the claims of right forgotten, for
the Lord's will defied. Their case is pita-
34 ble indeed, who make light of true wisdom
and of ordered living; vain their hope,
profitless their toil, barren their achieve-
ment. Light women are the wives they
35 wed, worthless is their brood; a curse lies
on their begetting. Blessed, rather, her
lot, that childless is, yet chaste, that never
knew the bed of shame; offspring she will
not lack, when holy souls have their re-
ward. Nay, let there be some eunuch that
36 has kept his hands clear of wrong, has
never harboured treasonable thought
against the Lord; he too with rare gifts
shall be faithfully rewarded, shall have the
portion that most contents him in God's
holy place.⁸ A noble harvest good men
37 reap from their labours; wisdom is a root
which never yet cast its crop. Not so the
adulterers; never look for children of theirs
to thrive; the offspring of the unhallowed
wedlock will vanish away.⁹ Live they long,
38 they shall be held in no regard, in their late
age unhonoured; die they soon, they shall
die without hope, no comfort to sustain
them in the day when all comes to light.
39 Bitterly they shall rue it hereafter, the race
of the evil-doers.

¹ Cf. Mt. 27. 43.

² Some would render, less plausibly, 'he shall be judged by his words'.

³ 'They make him their model'; the Greek text has, 'they experience it', i.e. death.

⁴ Mt. 13. 43.

⁵ 'Trust him if thou wilt, true thou shalt find him'; literally, 'those who trust in him shall understand truth'. The word 'truth' in the Old Testament refers, as a rule, either to human loyalty or to divine fidelity.

⁶ 'His chosen servants'; the Greek text gives, 'His holy ones; who shall find deliverance, if not his chosen servants?'

⁷ Or perhaps, 'The scheming of the wicked shall recoil on them in punishment'.

⁸ Cf. Deut. 27. 1; Is. 56. 3.

⁹ 'He too with rare gifts shall be faithfully rewarded'; literally, 'He too shall be given a rare gift of fidelity'.

⁹ Some think that adultery, here as often in the Old Testament, is used by a metaphor for the worship of false gods.

4 How fair a thing is the unwedded life¹ that is nobly lived! Think not the memory of it can fade; God and man alike
 2 preserve the record; in life how eagerly imitated, in death how long regretted, in eternity how crowned with triumph, the conquest gained in fields of honourable
 3 striving! Let the wicked gender as they will, it shall nothing avail them; what, should those bastard slips ever strike their roots deep, base the tree firm? Burgeon they may for a little, but the wind will shake their frail hold; root and all, the storm will
 4 carry them away. Half-formed, the boughs will be snapped off, and their fruit go to waste, unripe, unprofitable. And indeed, when the day of reckoning comes, needs must they should be cited as witnesses against their own parents, these, the children of their shame, by unlawful dalliance begotten.²
 7 Not so the innocent; though he should die before his time, rest shall be his. A seniority there is that claims reverence, owing nothing to time, not measured by
 9 the lapse of years; count a man grey-haired when he is wise, ripe of age when his life is stainless. Divine favour, divine love banished him from a life he shared with
 11 sinners; caught him away, before wickedness could pervert his thoughts, before wrong-doing could allure his heart; such witchery evil has, to tarnish honour, such alchemy do the roving passions exercise even on minds that are true metal. With him, early achievement counted for long
 14 apprenticeship; so well the Lord loved him, from a corrupt world he would grant him swift release.
 15 The world looks on, uncomprehending; a hard lesson it is to learn, that God does reward, does pity his chosen friends, does grant his faithful servants deliverance. Did they know it, the death of the just man, with its promise early achieved, is a reproach to the wicked that live yet in late
 17 old age. But what see they? Here is a man dead, and all his wisdom could not save him. That the Lord planned all this, and for the saving of him, does not enter their minds. What wonder if the sight fills them

with contempt? And they themselves, all the while, are earning the Lord's contempt; they themselves, doomed to lie there dishonoured among the dead, eternally a laughing-stock! How they will stand aghast, when he pricks the bubble of their pride!³ Ruins they shall be, overthrown from the foundation, land for ever parched dry; bitter torment shall be theirs, and their name shall perish irrecoverably. Alas, the long tally of their sins! Trembling they shall come forward, and the record of their misdeeds shall rise up to confront them.

5 How boldly, then, will the just man appear, to meet his old persecutors, that thwarted all his striving! And they, in what craven fear they will cower at the sight of him, amazed at the sudden reversal of his fortunes! Inward remorse will wring a groan from those hearts: Why, these were the men we made into a laughing-stock and a by-word! We, poor fools, mistook the life they lived for madness, their death for ignominy; and now they are reckoned as God's own children, now it is among his holy ones that their lot is cast.⁴

Far, it seems, did our thoughts wander from the true path; never did the ray of justice enlighten them, never the true sun shone. Weary it proved, the reckless way of ruin, lonely were the wastes we travelled, who missed the path the Lord meant for us. What advantage has it brought us, all our pomp and pride? How are we the better for all our vaunted wealth? Nothing of that but is gone, unsubstantial as a shadow, swift as courier upon his errand. The ship that ploughs angry waves, what trace is left of her passage? How wilt thou track her keel's pathway through the deep? The bird's flight through air what print betrays? So fiercely lashed the still breeze with the beating of her pinions, as she cleaves her noisy way through heaven, wings flapping, and is gone; and afterwards, what sign of her going? Or be it some arrow, shot at a mark, that pierces the air, how quick the wound closes, the journey is forgotten! So

¹ In the Greek text, 'even a childless life'.

literally adultery, but marriage with the heathen.

puffed up as they are'. The sense of the Greek text is probably, 'When he throws them down headlong'.

² *ev.* 3-5: 'These were the men...' in the Greek text, 'This is the man...' the singular being used throughout.

³ Some think that the author is condemning, not

literally, 'when he breaks them asunder, all

the world shall be laughing at them'.

with us it was all one, our coming to birth and our ceasing to be; no trace might we leave behind us of a life well lived; we spent ourselves on ill-doing.

14 (Such is the lament of sinners, there in
15 the world beneath.) Short-lived are all
the hopes of the goddess, thistle-down in
the wind, flying spray before the storm,
smoke that whirls away in the breeze; as
soon forgotten as the guest that comes for
16 a day, and comes no more. It is the just
that will live for ever; the Lord has their
recompense waiting for them, the most
17 high God takes care of them. How glorious
is that kingdom, how beautiful that crown,
which the Lord will bestow on them! His
right hand is there to protect them, his holy
18 arm to be their shield. Indignantly he will
take up arms, mustering all the forces of
creation for vengeance on his enemies. His
own faithfulness is the breastplate he will
put on, unswerving justice the helmet he
19 wears, a right cause his shield unfailling.
20 See, where he whets the sword of strict
retribution, and the whole order of nature
is banded with him against his reckless
21 foes! Well-aimed fly his thunder-bolts,
sped far and wide from yonder cloud-arch,
never missing their mark. Teeming hail-
storms shall whirl about them, the artillery
of his vengeance; fiercely the sea's waves
22 shall roar against them, pitilessly the floods
cut them off; the storm-wind shall rise in
their faces, and scatter them as the gust
scatters chaff. The whole earth ransacked,
and the thrones of the mighty pulled
23 down, by their own disobedience, their
own malignancy!

6 (Wisdom more avails than strength;
2 for a man of prudence, the warrior is
no match.)¹ A word, then, for kings' ears
to hear, kings' hearts to heed; a message
3 for you, rulers, wherever you be! Listen
well, all you that have multitudes at your
command, foreign hordes to do your bid-
4 ding. Power is none but comes to you
from the Lord, nor any royalty but from
One who is above all. He it is that will call
you to account for your doings, with a
scrutiny that reads your inmost thoughts;
5 you that held his commission and were
false to it, justice neglected, the law set

aside, his divine will transgressed. Swift 6
and terrible shall be his coming; strictly
his doom falls where heads rise high. For 7
the meanest, there may be pardon; for
greatness, greater torment is reserved.
What, should he cringe before high rank, 8
stand in awe of a name, he, the Lord of a
universe, that made great and little alike,
that cares alike for all? Who most has 9
power, him the sharpest pains await. Do
you, then, royal sirs (for my warning 10
touches none so nearly), learn wisdom's
lesson, and save yourselves from ruin. He
that would find soul's health, holy must be
and hallowed precepts observe; master 11
these he must, if he would make good his
defence. Cherish these warnings of mine, 12
and greedily devour them for your in-
struction.

The bright beacon of wisdom, that never 13
burns dim, how readily seen by eyes that
long for it, how open to their search! Nay, 14
she is beforehand with these her suitors,
ready to make herself known to them; no 15
toilsome quest is his, that is up betimes to
greet her; she is there, waiting at his doors.
Why, to entertain the very thought of her 16
is maturity of the mind; one night's vigil,
and all thy cares are over. She goes her 17
rounds, to find men worthy of her favours;
in the open street unveils that smiling face
of hers, comes deliberately to meet them.
The very first step towards wisdom is the 18
desire for discipline, and how should a
man care for discipline without loving it, 19
or love it without heeding its laws, or heed
its laws without winning immortality, or
win immortality without drawing near to 20
God? A royal road it is, then, this desire
for wisdom, and you, that have nations 21
under your sway, as you value throne and
sceptre, must hold wisdom in honour;
how else shall your reign be eternal? 22
(A welcome light hers should be to the
world's princes.) 23

What wisdom is, whence came its birth, 24
I will now make known to you. Not for me
to withhold the secret; from first to last I
will tell the story of her origin, bring to
light all that may be known of her, no word
of the truth passed by. Withhold it? Nay, 25
the pale miser that grudges his store was
never friend of mine; no such character

¹ The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the Greek text.

² Verses 1 and 23 are not found in the Greek text.

26 befits the wise. Wide let wisdom be spread,
for the more health of mankind; what
27 better security for a people, than prudence
on the throne? Learn, then, who will, the
lesson of discernment; at my charges, and
to his profit.

7 What of myself? Was not Solomon a
mortal man like the rest of you, come
down from that first man that was a thing
of clay?¹ I, too, was flesh and blood; ten
months I lay a-fashioning in my mother's
2 womb; of woman's body my stuff came,
and of man's procreation; midnight joys
3 went to the making of me. Born was I, and
born drew in the common air; dust amid
the dust I fell, and, baby-fashion, my first
4 utterance was a cry; swaddled I must be,
5 and cared for, like the rest. Tell me, was
ever king had other manner of coming to
6 be? By one gate all enter life, by one gate
all leave it.

7 Whence, then, did the prudence spring
that endowed me? Prayer brought it; to
God I prayed, and the spirit of wisdom
8 came upon me.² This I valued more than
kingdom or throne; I thought nothing of
my riches in comparison. There was no
jewel I could match with it; all my treas-
ures of gold were a handful of dust beside
it, my silver seemed but base clay in pre-
9 sence of it. I treasured wisdom more than
health or beauty, preferred her to the light
of day; hers is a flame which never dies
10 down. Together with her all blessings
came to me; boundless prosperity was her
gift. All this I enjoyed, with wisdom to
11 prepare my way for me, never guessing
that it all sprang from her. The lessons she
taught me are riches honestly won, shared
without stint, openly proclaimed; a treasure
12 men will find incorruptible. Those who en-
joy it are honoured with God's friendship,
so high a value he sets on her instruction.

15 God's gift it is, if speech answers to
thought of mine, and thought of mine to
the message I am entrusted with. Who else
can shew wise men the true path, check
16 them when they stray? We are in his
hands, we and every word of ours; our pru-
dence in act, our skill in craftsmanship.
17 Sure knowledge he has imparted to me of

all that is; how the world is ordered, what
influence have the elements, how the
months³ have their beginning, their mid-
dle, and their ending, how the sun's course
alters and the seasons revolve, how the
years have their cycles, the stars their
places. To every living thing its own breed,
to every beast its own moods; the winds⁴
rage, and men think deep thoughts; the
plants keep their several kinds, and each
root has its own virtue; all the mysteries⁵
and all the surprises of nature were made
known to me; wisdom herself taught me,
that is the designer of them all.

Mind-enlightening is the influence that
dwells in her; set high apart; one in its
source, yet manifold in its operation:
subtle, yet easily understood. An influence
quick in movement, inviolable, persuasive,
gentle, right-thinking, keen-edged, irre-
sistible, beneficent, kindly, gracious, stead-
fast, proof against all error and all solici-
tude. Nothing is beyond its power. A
nothing hidden from its view, and such
capacity has it that it can pervade the
minds of all living men; so pure and subtle
an essence is thought. Nothing so agile
that it can match wisdom for agility; no-
thing can penetrate this way and that,
etherial as she. Steam that ascends from
the fervour of divine activity, pure ef-
fluence of his glory who is God all-
powerful, she feels no passing taint; she,
the glow that radiates from eternal light,
she, the untarnished mirror of God's
majesty, she, the faithful image of his
goodness. Alone, with none to aid her, she
is all-powerful; herself ever unchanged,
she makes all things new; age after age she
finds her way into holy men's hearts,
turning them into friends and spokesmen
of God. Her familiars it is, and none other,
that God loves. Brightness is hers beyond
the brightness of the sun, and all the starry
host; match her with light itself, and she
outvies it; light must still alternate with
darkness, but where is the conspiracy can
pull down wisdom from her throne?

8 Bold is her sweep from world's end
to world's end, and everywhere her
gracious ordering manifests itself.

¹ Solomon's name is not mentioned in the original; but it is certainly he who is represented as speaking in this and the following chapters. ² Cf. III Kg. 3: 9. ³ Literally, 'The times'. ⁴ Or perhaps 'the spirits', either human or diabolic.

2 She, from my youth up has been my heart's true love, my heart's true quest; she was the bride I longed for, enamoured
3 of her beauty. Was I moved by noble birth? No better claim than hers, who dwells in God's palace, marked out by the
4 Ruler of the world as his favourite; the mistress of his craftsmanship, the arbiter
5 of his plans.¹ Or should life's dearest aim be wealth? Why then, who has more wealth at her disposal than wisdom, that
6 turns all to account? Or if sound judgement is man's business, who else on earth
7 goes to work so skilfully as she?² If thy desire be for honest living, man's excellences are the fruit she labours to produce; temperance and prudence she teaches, justice and fortitude, and what in life avails
8 man more? Or if wide knowledge be thy ambition, she can inform thee of what is past, make conjecture of the future; she is versed in the subtleties of debate, in the reading of all riddles; marvels and portents she can foretell, and what events time or season will bring.

9 Her, then, I would take to myself, to share my home; to be my counsellor in prosperity, my solace in anxiety and grief.
10 Through her (said I) I shall win fame in the assembly, find honour, though so young, amidst the elders. If I sit in judgement, quick wit shall be mine, that shall strike awe into the princes when I appear before
11 them, the admiration of the great. Am I silent? They wait my leisure; speak I, they take heed; flows my speech on, they listen, hand on lip. She, too, will bring me immortality; imperishable the name I shall
12 leave to after ages. Mine to rule peoples, and have nations at my call; dread tyrants to daunt by the very name of me, the name of a king so loved by his people, so brave
13 in battle. Then home again, to rest upon her bosom; no shrewish mate, no tedious housewife, joy and contentment all of her.

14 So ran my thoughts, and well in my heart I pondered them. Wisdom, that

brought such kinship with immortality, whose friendship was such dear delight,
18 whose exercise brought me credit unflinching, her daily comradeship a training in sound judgement, the eloquence she inspired an earnest of renown; win her for myself I must, and went about to attain my purpose. I was, indeed, a boy of good
19 parts, and nobility of nature had fallen to my lot; gentle birth above the common had endowed me with a body free from blemish.³ But to be master of myself was a thing I could not hope to come by, except
20 of God's bounty; I was wise enough already to know whence the gift came. So to the Lord I turned, and made my request of him, praying with all my heart in these words following:

9 God of our fathers, Lord of all mercy, thou by thy word hast made all things, and thou in thy wisdom hast contrived man to rule thy creation, to order
2 the world by a law of right living and of just dealing, and give true award in the honest purpose of his heart. Wisdom I ask
3 of thee, the same wisdom that dwells so near thy throne; do not grudge me a place among thy retinue. Am I not thy servant,
4 and to thy service born? Mortal man thou seest me, the puny creature of an hour, a mind unapt for judgement and the making
5 of laws. Grow man to what perfection he will, if he lacks the wisdom that comes from thee, he is nothing; and me thou hast
6 chosen to reign over thy people; from me sons and daughters of thine must seek for redress! More than this, thou hast bidden
7 me raise thee temple and altar, upon this mountain, in the holy city where thou dwellest, model of that holy tabernacle,
8 made long ago, whose pattern was of thy own devising.⁴ Wisdom was with thee
9 then,⁵ privy to all thy designs, she who stood by thee at the world's creation, and knows thy whole will, the whole tenour of thy commandments. From that heavenly
10 sanctuary, that high throne of thine, send

¹ The exact meaning of verses 3 and 4 is uncertain.

² Or perhaps, 'Who but she is the contriver of all that is?' ³ The Greek would naturally be taken to mean, 'Or rather, gentle birth had endowed me...'. But it is difficult to institute the desired contrast between this and the preceding verse, whatever rendering of them is adopted. The translation given above assumes that 'good' means 'nobly born', which is the primary sense of the word in Greek. Literally, 'And being more good I came into an undefiled body.'

⁴ Literally, 'Which thou didst make ready beforehand from the beginning'. The rendering given assumes a reference to the tabernacle in the desert, and the pattern of it shewn to Moses on Mount Sinai. Others would interpret the verse as alluding to God's dwelling-place in heaven.

⁵ Or perhaps, 'Wisdom is ever at thy side'.

her out still on thy errand, to be at my side too, and share my labours! How else should thy will be made clear to me? For her, no secret, no riddle is too dark; her prudent counsel will be my guide, the fame of her my protection. So shall my task be accomplished as thou wouldst have it be; so shall I give this people of thine just awards, no unworthy heir of the throne my father left me.

What God's purpose is, how should man discover, how should his mind master the secret of the divine will? So hesitating our human thoughts, so hazardous our conjectures! Ever the soul is weighed down by a mortal body, earth-bound cell that clogs the manifold activity of its thought. Hard enough to read the riddle of our life here, with laborious search ascertaining what lies so close to hand; and would we trace out heaven's mysteries too? Thy purposes none may know, unless thou dost grant thy gift of wisdom, sending out from high heaven thy own holy spirit. Thus ever were men guided by the right way, here on earth, and learned to know thy will; ever since the world began wisdom was the salve they used, that have won thy favour.¹

10 When man was but newly made, the lonely father of this created world, she it was that watched over him, and set him free from wrong-doing of his own,² and gave him the mastery over all things else. Against her Cain rebelled,³ when he did foul wrong, and by murderous spite against his brother compassed his own ruin. Who but she, when the world was a-drowning for Cain's fault,⁴ gave it a second term of life, steering, on a paltry raft, one innocent man to safety? And when the nations went their several ways,⁵ banded in a single conspiracy of wickedness, of one man's innocence she still took note; Abraham must be kept irreproachable in God's service, and steeled against

pity for his own child. Here was another innocent man, Lot, that owed his preservation to Wisdom, when godless folk were perishing all around him. Escape he should, when fire came down upon the Cities of the Plain; those five cities whose shame is yet unforgett'n, while smoke issues from the barren soil, and never tree bears seasonable fruit, and the pillar of salt stands monument to an unbelieving soul. Fatal neglect of Wisdom's guidance, that could blind their eyes to the claims of honour, and leave the world such a memorial of their folly, as should make the record of their sins unmistakable!

But those who cherish her, Wisdom brings safely out of all their striving. When Jacob, her faithful servant, was in flight from his brother's anger, she guided him straight to his goal, and on the way shewed him the heavenly kingdom, gave him knowledge of holy things. She enriched him by his toil, and gave all his labours a happy issue. Knavery went about to get the better of him, but she stood by him and prospered him; kept him safe from his enemies, protected him from their scheming. She would have him wrestle manfully, and prove that there is no strength like the strength of wisdom. When Joseph, in his innocence, was sold for a slave, Wisdom did not desert him, did not leave him among the guilty, but went down with him into his dungeon. Fast he was bound, but she had not finished with him till she gave him dominion over a whole kingdom, and power to do what he would with his persecutors. So she brought home the lie to those who had traduced him, and won him everlasting fame.

So, too, with that innocent people of Israel, that unoffending race; did she not deliver them from the nations that kept them under? Did she not enter into the heart of God's servant, confronting dread rulers with portent and with miracle? Did

¹ This verse is represented in the Greek text by four words, meaning 'And were saved (or, healed) by wisdom'.

² It is not clear whether the final words of this verse refer to Adam's original innocence, or to his deliverance from the death-penalty after he had sinned.

³ This chapter, in the original, mentions no proper names; a few of them have here been supplied, in accordance with modern usage.

⁴ 'For Cain's fault' is an expression difficult to account for, except on the view that the 'sons of God' mentioned in Gen. 6. 2, are the descendants of Seth, the 'children of men' those of Cain.

⁵ The Latin here obscures the sense of the original, by describing the nations as 'coming together'. According to the Greek text, they 'were confounded', almost certainly a reference to Gen. 11. 7, where the same verb is used. Mankind, for its sin, was split up into a multitude of nations, but Wisdom saw to it that one of these, with Abraham as its founder, should be different from the rest.

she not restore to men ill-used the just reward of their labours? She, too, led them out on their miraculous journey, affording them shelter by day and starry radiance at night. She made a passage for them through the Red Sea, brought them safely through those leagues of water, and churned up the bodies of their drowned enemy from those unfathomed depths. So, enriched by the spoils of the goddess, they extolled, O Lord, thy holy name, proclaimed with one voice thy sovereign power; Wisdom opened the dumb mouths, and made the lips of infants¹ vocal with praise.

11 With Moses set apart for his spokesman,² to what good issue he brought all their enterprises! Through desert solitudes they journeyed on, pitching their camp far from the haunts of men; boldly they confronted their enemy, and overcame his malice. When they were thirsty, on thy name they called, and out of the rock's sheer face water was given to heal their thirst, out of the hard flint. Strange likeness between the punishment that befell their enemies,³ who went thirsty while Israel had drink to their heart's content, and the relief of their want Israel now experienced! Thou who once, into defiling blood, hadst troubled the sources of a living stream, to avenge a murderous edict against new-born children, didst now give thy people abundant water to drink, by means unlooked for. How ill it had gone with their adversaries in Egypt, that thirst of theirs in the desert plainly shewed them; in mercy schooled, yet sorely tried, they learned to know what torments the wicked had undergone, forfeit to thy vengeance. For Israel, only a test of their faith; only a father's correction; for Egypt, as from a king, stern scrutiny and stern doom. Tidings from far away, that racked the Egyptians no less than their own former sufferings; anguish redoubled, as they groaned over the memory of things past! That the same plague of thirst which

had tortured themselves should be the source of Israel's rejoicing! Then indeed they felt the Lord's power, then indeed they wondered at the revenge time had brought; wondered at Moses, whom their insolence had long ago disinherited, when they exposed him with the other children. Thirst, that had been Egypt's enemy, had no terrors for the just.

So lost to piety were these Egyptians, such foolish reasonings led them astray, that they worshipped brute⁴ reptiles, and despicable vermin. And swarms of brute beasts thou didst send to execute thy vengeance, for the more proof that a man's own sins are the instrument of his punishment. Thy power knows no restraint, the power that created an ordered world out of dark chaos. It had been easy to send a plague of bears upon them, or noble lions; or to form new creatures, of a ferocity hitherto unknown, breathing fiery breath, churning out foul fumes, terrible sparks darting from their eyes, so that men would die of fear at their very aspect, without waiting for proof of their power to do harm. Nay, without more ado thou mightest have overthrown them with a single blast; all at once their sins should have found them out, thy fierce breath whirled them away; but no, all thou doest is done in exact measure, all is nicely calculated and weighed.

No moment passes but thou, if thou wilt, canst shew thyself supreme; that arm has power there is no withstanding; the whole world, matched against thee, is but a scruple on the balance, is but a drop of dew, falling to earth at sunrise. Only thou art all-merciful, as befits the Almighty, and dost overlook our human slips, in hope of our repentance. All things thou lovest, nor holdest any of thy creatures in abhorrence; hate and create thou couldst not, nor does aught abide save at thy will, whose summoning word holds them in being. They are thine, and thou sparest them; all things that live thou lovest, thou, the Master of them all.

¹ Unless the word 'infants' is to be understood metaphorically (of the Jews, as a people newly born by their ransoming from Egypt), this verse seems to preserve a tradition not found in Ex. 15. 1, that even little children took part in the song of Moses.

² The word 'Moses', here and in verse 14, like the names of Egyptian and Israelite, has been inserted for the sake of clearness.

³ *vt.* 5-14: The thought of this whole passage is obscurely expressed in the original, and it is still further obscured by the Latin translation in verses 8 and 13, where the Greek has to be used as a guide, if we are to obtain any tolerable sense.

⁴ It seems likely that the author meant rather, 'inconsiderable'; cf. verse 17. The Egyptians, who were credited with worshipping beetles, were punished by plagues of insects.

12 Thy kindly influence, Lord, thy gracious influence is all about us.
 2 Tender, at the first false step, is thy rebuke; thou dost remind and warn us that we have gone astray, to make us leave our sinning and have faith in thee. So it was with the former inhabitants of this thy holy land.
 4 Good reason thou hadst to be their enemy; of what detestable practices were they not guilty, with those sorceries and unhallowed rites of theirs! Murderers that would not spare their own children, that feasted on human flesh, human entrails and blood, they must have no share in thy covenant. Thy will was that our fathers should root them out, these unnatural murderers of their own defenceless children;¹ and this land, dear to thee as no other, should be more worthily peopled by the sons of God. Yet they, too, were men, and thou wouldst deal gently with them; thou wouldst send hornets as the vanguard of thy invading host, to wear them down gradually.² Not that it was beyond thy power to give piety the mastery over godlessness by victory in battle, by some plague of ravening monsters, or by one word of doom. But no, their sentence should be executed by degrees, giving them opportunity to repent; though indeed thou knewest well that theirs was a worthless breed, of a malice so ingrained, that they would turn aside from their ill devices never; from its beginnings, an accursed race.
 Nor, if thou wast patient with the sinner, was it human respect that persuaded thee to it. Thy acts who shall question, thy doom who shall gainsay? Will some champion arise to challenge thee on behalf of these rebels, tax thee with unmaking the peoples thou hast made? God there is none save thou, that hast a whole world for thy province; and shall thy justice abide our question? Punish thou mayst as punish thou wilt; king nor emperor can be bold to outface thee. So high beyond our censure, and therewithal so just in thy

dealings! To condemn the innocent were unworthy of such majesty as thine; of all justice, thy power is the true source, universal lordship the ground of universal love! Only when thy omnipotence is doubted wilt thou assert thy mastery, their rashness making manifest, who will not acknowledge thee;³ elsewhere, with such power at thy disposal, a lenient judge thou provest thyself, riding us with a light rein, and keeping thy terrors in reserve.

Two lessons thy people were to learn from these dealings of thine; ever should justice and mercy go hand in hand, never should thy own children despair of forestalling thy justice by repentance. What, so patient, so unhurrying, in thy vengeance on the doomed enemies of thy chosen race; always delay, always the opportunity given them to repent of their misdeeds; and wouldst thou shew less anxious care in trying the cause of thy own children, bound to thee from of old by a sworn covenant so rich in mercies? It is for our instruction, then, that thou usest such exquisite care in the punishing of our enemies;⁴ judge we, let us imitate thy clemency, abide we judgement, let us ever hope for pardon.

And so it was that thou didst plague the Egyptians,⁵ that were knaves and fools both; their own false gods should be the undoing of them. This was the worst error of all their erring, that they worshipped the meanest of beasts as gods; silly children had been no more credulous. Why then, these silly children should have play-time penalties first; of those play-time penalties if they took no heed, then at last they should feel how a God can punish. Humiliated they well might be at those sufferings of theirs, the very gods they worshipped the instruments of their distress; a sight enough to convince them that he was the true God, whom all this while they had rejected! But no, they must needs bring upon themselves the full rigours of justice.

¹ *vv.* 5, 6: The Greek text is here clearly wrong, and cannot be restored with certainty. In the Latin, 'they must have no share in thy covenant' is literally 'away from the midst of thy sacrament', and the word 'murderers', through an error, has been translated 'authors'.
² See Ex. 23, 28.
³ The Greek text, probably by an error, gives 'who acknowledge thee'.
⁴ The first half of this verse is ordinarily rendered, 'In chastening us, thou dost scourge our enemies ten thousandfold'; but it will be seen that such considerations are out of harmony with the rest of the sentence.
⁵ The word 'Egyptians' does not occur in the original, but the reference of this passage is almost certainly to them; cf. *ll.* 15 above. For 'didst plague' the Latin version has, 'didst inflict the utmost torments upon', but this misses the sense. The plagues of lice, flies, locusts, etc., are here contrasted, as being comparatively light, with the last two plagues, to be mentioned in *chs.* 17 and 18.

13 What folly it argues in man's nature, this ignorance of God! So much good seen, and he, who is existent Good,¹ not known! Should they not learn to recognise the Artificer by the contemplation of his works? Instead, they have pointed us to fire, or wind, or to the nimble air, wheeling stars, or tempestuous waves, or sun and moon, and made gods of them, to rule the world! Perhaps the beauty of such things bewitched them into mistaking it for divinity? Ay, but what of him who is Master of them all; what excellence must be his, the Author of all beauty, that could make them! Or was it power, and power's exercise, that awoke their wonderment? Why then, how many times greater must he be, who contrived it! Such great beauty² even creatures have, reason is well able to contemplate the Source from which these perfections came.

6 Yet, if we find fault with men like these, their fault is little by comparison; err they may, but their desire is to find God, and it is in that search they err. They stop short in their enquiry at the contemplation of his creatures, trusting only in the senses, that find such beauty there. Excuse them, then, we may not; if their thoughts could reach far enough to form a judgement about the world around them, how is it they found, on the way, no trace of him who is Master of it? But there are men more wretched yet, men who repose all their confidence in a world of shadows. They give the name of god to what is made by human art, gold and silver that human workmanship has turned into the likeness of living things, blocks of senseless stone that human hands have carved, long ago.

11 What would you? Here is a craftsman in wood has been to the forest and sawed off a fine straight branch; deftly he strips off the bark, and fashions, with patient skill, some piece of carpentry apt for man's needs. As for the chips in his workshop, they cook his meal for him, to eat and take his fill. But one more piece of refuse wood is left, that is fit for nothing; so crooked is it and so gnarled. See him, in an idle moment, pick it up and spend his leisure carving it! A master craftsman this; ere long it has taken shape, made into a man's likeness; or it may be he gives it the form

of a senseless beast. And now he paints it with ochre; ruddled it must be till all its native colour is lost, all its faults hidden away. That done, he must find a suitable room to house it, and there lets it into the wall, making it fast with iron clamps. No pains does he spare to keep it from falling; fall if it does, it shall find no remedy; please you, this is but an image, and cannot shift for itself!

And so, unashamed, for home and children and wife he utters his prayer, addressing himself all the while to a senseless thing. A weak, foolish thing, and for health he asks it; dead, and he will have life of it; shiftless, and he will have aid of it. How should it set forward his journeyings, that cannot walk? What service should it do, if trade he want, or skill, or good fortune, that is every way unserviceable?

14 Nay, here is one that will go a-voyaging, the wild waves for his pathway, and perishable wood to carry him, yet he makes his prayer to a piece of wood more perishable yet! As for the ship's timbers, it was man's covetousness that made the need for them, and man's skill that fashioned them; but it is thy fatherly Providence that brings her safe to port; thou hast made the sea into a high road men may travel by without harm, as if thou wouldst prove to us how strong is thy protection, though the sailor have little skill. So careful art thou that the gifts thy wisdom affords us should not go unused; man ventures his life on a few planks, and the frail barque gives him safe conduct across the waves. And what marvel? At the beginning of all, when the giants perished in their pride, was not such a barque the refuge of all the world's hopes? Yet thy hand was at the helm, and the seed of life was saved for posterity. A blessing on the wood that can so procure salvation! But yonder idol is accursed, no less than the man who made it; he for his wicked design, and the lifeless thing for the legend of divinity that was attached to it. Sinner and sin, God hates both; pardon is none for deed or doer. Thus it is that a time of reckoning will come for these idols the Gentiles make; part of God's creation though they be, he detests them, so have

¹ Or perhaps simply, 'who is'.

² Some manuscripts of the Greek read, 'such greatness and beauty'.

they entangled men's souls, and laid a trap for fools.

- 12 When idols were first devised, then began unfaithfulness; there was death in the invention of them. For indeed they were no part of man's life from the first, nor shall be at the last; it was but man's folly brought them into the world, and there shall be a short way with them yet.
- 15 Here was some father, bowed with sorrow before his time, his child untimely lost; the likeness of those features once made, to mortal man (that was dead besides) he would pay divine honours, and with that, rites of initiation must become the tradition of his clan. As time went on, impious habit grew into impious custom. A king would have his own likeness adored, and his subjects, living far away, so that they could not do obeisance to him in person, would have his present image set up in their view, eager to pay his absent royalty their adulation. And if any spur were needed yet for their ignorant superstition, the rivalry of craftsmen afforded it; each of these sought to please his master by improving the portrait, with the utmost abuse of his skill, till at last the vulgar, carried away by so much grace of art, would account him a god whom yesterday they revered as mortal man. So, unawares, the world was caught in the ambush; under the stress, now of bereavement, now of royal policy, men imparted to stocks and stones the incommunicable name of God.
- 22 Nor were they content with these false notions of God's nature; living in a world besieged by doubt, they misnamed its innumerable disorders a state of peace.
- 23 Peace, amidst their rites of child-murder, their dark mysteries, their vigils consecrated to frenzy! Peace, while there is no respect for life, or for wedlock undefiled; always the murderous ambush, the jealous pangs of a husband betrayed! All is a welter of bloodshed and murder, theft and fraud, corruption and disloyalty, sedition and perjury; honest men are assailed, kindnesses forgotten, souls defiled, breeds confused, marriages unsettled; adultery reigns and wantonness. Name we all these, name we never the idols whose worship is

the cause, the beginning and end, of all these! Their ecstasies are but raving, their prophecies are but lies; ill live their worshippers, and lightly forswear themselves. And no marvel; what hurt should they take from the oath falsely sworn, since all their faith is in dead gods? But indeed they shall pay both scores, idolaters that thought so ill of God, and perjurers that by their treason slighted all honour; not the power he swore by, but the justice that keeps watch over sinners, walks ever close on the heels of ill-doing.

15 For us, thou art God; thou, beneficent and truthful, thou, always patient and merciful towards the world thou governest. Sin we, still we are thy worshippers; have we not proof of thy power? Sin we not, of this, too, we have proof, that thou wilt count us for thy own. To know thee as thou art, is the soul's full health; to have proof of thy power, is the root whence springs immortality. Not for us to be led astray by foolish tales of man's imagining, by the sculptor's barren art, as he picks out some image with motley colours, to set fools gaping at the sight of a lifeless shadow, all seeming and no breathing. Lovers they are of their own ruin, worthy of the fond hopes they cherish, that make such things, or sigh after them, or do them reverence.

Dispise we not the potter's toil, that works the pliant earth between his fingers, and makes a cup here, a dish there for our use. Serve thy noble ends or base, all alike come from the same clay, and what employment each of them shall find, it is the potter's right to determine. But very ill is that toil bestowed, when he uses the same clay to fashion some god that is no god. Bethink thee, potter, that it is but a little while since thou thyself wast fashioned out of the same earth, and ere long, when the lease of thy soul falls due, to that earth thou shalt return. But no, he never looks forward to the day when he will be past work; how short life is, he reckons not; he must vie with goldsmith and silversmith, he must be even with his neighbour that works in bronze; in puppet-making¹ all his hope lies of winning fame. O heart

¹ Rather, according to the Greek text, 'in passing false coin'. The imputation seems to be that such workmen covered over their clay figures with metal leaf; even as images, they were false; how much more as gods!

of dust, O ambition worthless as the sand,
11 life than his own clay more despicable! No
thought for the God that was his own
fashioner, quickened him with the pulse of
energy, breathed into him a living spirit!
12 Existence, for him, only a toy to be played
with; our life here, only a market-place,
where a man must needs get his living by
13 fair means or foul! Such a man, as no
other, sins with his eyes open; from the
same earthenware he will make you fragile
pot or carved effigy as you will.

14 Fools all, and doomed to misery beyond
the common doom of tyrants,¹ were the
enemies that from time to time have lorded
15 it over thy people. Gods, for them, were
all the idols of the heathen, with their
sightless eyes, their nostrils that never
drew breath, deaf ears, unfeeling hands,
and feet that still would walk, yet still
16 tarry; gods man-made, gods of his fashion-
ing that is a debtor for the very breath he
draws. For indeed, the gods man fashions
17 are less than himself; vain his impiety,
since he is but mortal, they already dead;
better he than they, since he lived once,
18 and they never. And what beasts are these
they worship? Of all beasts, the most
hateful; such models they have foolishly
19 chosen as cannot vie with the others;² as
have no beauty, even beast-fashion, to
make them desirable; the least honourable
of God's creatures and the least blessed.

16 Fittingly, then, were the Egyptians
plagued by such beasts as these,
2 that swarmed to their undoing.³ Thy own
people no plague befell; pined their queasy
stomach for dainties, thou wouldst feed
3 them on quails. Though hunger drove
them to food, the men of Egypt turned
away with loathing from the necessities
they craved, so foul the sight of the frogs
that came to punish them. Thy own people
should go wanting for a little, only so as
to prepare them for the dainties that would
4 follow. Their oppressors must feel the
pinch of poverty; for themselves, the sight
of another's chastisement should be lesson
5 enough. When they themselves encoun-
tered brute malice, and the bites of

writhing serpents threatened them with
destruction, thy vengeance did not go to
6 all lengths; yet enough that they should be
warned by a brief experience of distress;
they should be put in mind of thy law, yet
have the assurance that thou wouldst come
to their rescue. For indeed, he who turned
7 to look did not win safety from the brazen
serpent which met his eyes, but from thee,
who alone canst save.

No better proof could our enemies have,
8 that from all peril thou alone deliverest.
Bite of locust or sting of fly was the un-
9 doing of them; no salve could be found
against the mortal punishment they had
deserved. And here were these sons of
10 thine, unvanquished even by the teeth of
venomous serpents, because thy mercy
came out to meet them and gave relief.
They must feel the prick, to remind them
11 of the commandments they had from thee,
and then quickly be rescued before they
sank into deep lethargy, beyond the reach
of thy succour. Herb nor plaster it was
12 that cured them, but thy word, Lord, that
all healing gives. Lord of life as of death,
13 thou canst bring us down to the grave and
back from the grave; thine is not the fatal
14 stroke man deals in spite, that banishes life
beyond recall, imprisons the soul for ever.

Truly, thine is a power there is no
15 escaping; the uplifted arm that plagued
impious Egypt, where thou wast treated as
16 a stranger. Strange, indeed, to that coun-
try were the rains that hunted them down,
the fierce hail-storms; the fire, too, that
wasted them. Wonder beyond all wont,
17 that in water, the all-quenching, fire should
rage its fiercest; no element but must rally
in the cause of right. Here the flame would
18 burn low, to spare those creatures a scor-
ching, that were thy emissaries against the
goddess; doubt there should be none, for
any who saw it, but divine justice was at
his heels. Here, in the very midst of the
19 water it would burn as never fire burned
yet, to blast all the fruits of that accursed
land. And thy own people, Lord? Them
20 thou didst foster with the food of angels;
bread from heaven thou didst set before
them, which no labour of theirs had made

¹ According to the Greek text (itself probably corrupt), 'of infants'. ² This is probably the sense of the Greek; the Latin version here can hardly be translated. ³ The names 'Egypt' and 'Egyptians' have, as before, been inserted to make the sense of the original plainer. The same is to be said of the following words: 'frogs' in verse 3, 'brazen serpent' in verse 7, and 'manna' in verse 27.

ready, every taste uniting that could bring content, of every appetite the welcome choice. So would thy own nature manifest a father's universal love; this food should humour the eater's whim, turning itself into that which he craved most. In Egypt, snow and ice had resisted the fire, never melting; plain it was that this fire, which shone out amid the hailstones and the rain, was in alliance with them to burn up and destroy the enemy's harvest. Now, once again, fire forgot its own nature, this time, to give faithful souls their nourishment!¹ So well does thy creation obey thee, its author, now exerting all its powers to punish the wicked, now abating its force to do thy loyal followers a service!² Why should nature, seconding that universal bounty of thine, go to all shifts to meet the needs of thy suppliants, but for the instruction of thy own children, Lord, children so well beloved? They were to learn that man lives, not by the ripening of crops, but by thy word, ever protecting the souls that trust in thee. This manna, that never shrank from the fire while it was a-cooking, would melt before the heat of the sun's first feeble ray. What meant this, but that we must be up before the sun to give thee thanks, seeking thy audience with day's earliest light? Thankless if a man be, like the hoar frost of winter his hopes shall dissolve; like water that goes to waste they shall vanish.

17 High above us, Lord, are thy judgements, mysterious thy dealings; no skill had those Egyptian hearts to understand them. They had thought to exercise barbarous tyranny over a nation consecrated to thee. And now they lay, shut close under their own roofs, darkness their dungeon, their sentence a long-drawn night, exiled from the gifts of thy eternal Providence. Did they hope, under that dark veil of oblivion, to find a cloak for secret sinning? Nay, they were scattered

far apart, and in grievous dread of the terrors that came to daunt them. Lie snug in their hidden lairs they might not; noises swept down, echoing about their affrighted ears, and boding visions of sad faces cowed their spirits. Fire itself no light could give them, nor star's clear beam illuminate that hideous night; only now and again a blaze shone out, not of their kindling, terrible to behold; and fear of this unseen radiance lent fresh horror to the sights it shewed.³

A mockery, now, seemed those magic arts of theirs; ignominious the rebuff to their boasted cunning. The very men who had professed to rid ailing minds of all discomposure and disquiet, were now themselves sick with apprehension, to their great discomfiture. Even when no alarms were present to disturb them, the memory of prowling beast and hissing serpent filled them with mortal tremors, till they shut their eyes against the sight of empty air, we must all breathe.⁴ So cowardly a thing is wickedness, it pronounces its own condemnation; hard pressed by conscience, it forecasts ever the worst. What else is timorousness, but a betrayal of the vantage-ground reason gives us? Imagination, already defeated within its own stronghold, fears the unknown more than it fears the true source of its misery. Whether the darkness that held them bound were true night, or that darkness which comes up from the lowest depths of the grave, their bemused senses could not well distinguish; now monstrous apparitions came indeed to scare them, now it was but their own faint hearts made cowards of them; in a moment dismay was all about them, and took them un-awares.

Into this prison, then, that needed no bars to secure it, all fell alike, whatever their condition; tiller of the fields, or shepherd, or workman that plied his task out in the desert, each was caught at his post, each must abide the inevitable lot, by

¹ *vt.* 22, 23: The meaning here is not very clearly expressed; it is, that fire twice failed to produce its natural effect, once when it did not melt the hailstones which fell in Egypt, and again when it did not melt the manna in the cooking-pots of the Israelites (see verse 27 below, and Ex. 16. 21).² The original is here very obscure; it runs, literally, 'Only a self-lighted beacon shone upon them at intervals, full of terror, and being afraid of that vision which escaped their observation, they thought the things seen worse'.³ 'We must all breathe'; literally, according to the Latin version, 'which cannot possibly be avoided'; but the sense of the Greek is probably 'which there is no reason to dread'.⁴ *cc.* 11-14: There is much obscurity here, and perhaps some corruption in the text. Of verse 13, only conjectural interpretation is possible; it runs, literally, 'sleeping the same sleep the really impossible night and (the night) coming upon them from the depths of an impossible lower world'.

darkness, like all his fellows, held in thrall. Did the wind whistle, or bird utter tuneful notes deep amid the boughs; were it the dull roar of some waterfall, or the sudden crash of tumbling rocks, or the padding feet of beasts that gambolled past them unseen, or the howl of wild things ravening, or a booming echo from the mountain hollows, it was all one; it would startle them into a great quaking of fear. All around them the world was bathed in the clear sunlight, and men went about their tasks unhindered; over them alone this heavy curtain of night was spread, image of the darkness that should be their next abode. Yet each man had a burden heavier to bear than darkness itself, the burden of his own companionship.

18 Brightest of all, that light shone on thy chosen people. These neighbours of theirs, heard but not seen, the Egyptians must congratulate on their escape from the common doom, thank them for letting vengeance be, and ask forgiveness for past ill-will.¹ To these thou gavest, not darkness, but a pillar of burning fire, to be the guide of their unfamiliar journey, a sun, all gracious welcome, that brought no harm.²

A fitting punishment it was for the Egyptians, this loss of light; fitting that they should be imprisoned in darkness, who had kept thy own sons in prison; thy own sons, through whom that law, which is light unailing, was to be given to the world. It was their purpose, besides, to slay all the children born of that holy stock; but one child survived exposure and lived to rebuke them; through him thou didst destroy Egypt's own children in their thousands, and drown its assembled host in the rushing waves. Of what should befall that night, our fathers had good warning; confidence in thy sworn protection should keep them unafraid. A welcome gift it was to thy people, rescue for the just, and doom for their persecutors; at one stroke thou didst punish our enemies,

and make us proud men by singling us out for thyself.

In secret they offered their sacrifice, children of a nobler race, all set apart; with one accord they ratified the divine covenant, which bound them to share the same blessings and the same perils; singing for prelude their ancestral hymns of praise. But music was none in the enemy's cry that answered them; here all was dirge for children untimely mourned. Slave and master, prince and peasant, a common doom met them, and a common loss; death levelled all under one title; unnumbered everywhere the slain, nor might the living suffice to bury them; all in one moment, the flower of their race had perished. Against those earlier plagues, sorcery had hardened their hearts; Israel they recognized for God's children only when the first-born died.

There was a hush of silence all around, and night had but finished half her swift journey, when from thy heavenly throne, Lord, down leaped thy word omnipotent. Never lighted sterner warrior on a doomed land; never was sword so sharp, errand so unmistakable; thy word that could spread death everywhere, that trod earth, yet reached up to heaven. All at once came terror in their dreams; phantoms dismayed, and sudden alarms overtook them; and when they lay a-dying, each fallen where fall he must, they confessed what fault it was they expiated; all was foretold by the dreams that so disquieted them; they were not suffered to perish ignorant of their offence.

There was a time, too, when God's own people tasted the bitterness of death; out there in the desert a plague fell upon the common folk; but not for long this vengeance lasted. A peerless champion they found, in Aaron, that quickly took up the shield of his appointed ministry; the power of intercession that was his, and the atoning incense, held thy wrath in check, and brought the calamity to an end; none could doubt now he was the man of thy

¹ *vs.* 1, 2: The Greek text (which is rendered above) has here been misunderstood by the Latin translator, and the version he gives altogether misrepresents the sense of the passage; it runs: 'Brightest of all the light shone on thy chosen people. They heard the voice of these, but did not see their form. And they glorified thee for their escape from the common doom, thanking thee that they were not now, as they had been formerly, the sufferers; and they made a request of thee, that thou wouldst distinguish (between themselves and the Egyptians). The words 'Egypt', 'Egyptians', 'Israel', and 'Aaron', though not in the original, have been supplied in this chapter as before. ² The Greek text probably means, 'which should preserve them from harm during their ambitious travels'.

22 choice! Not by strength of body, not by
prowess in arms, he won the victory;¹ by
persuasion he disarmed resistance, calling
to mind the sworn covenant of our race.
23 Already the corpses were piled thick one
on another; but he kept vengeance at bay,
standing in between to breach the path
24 between dead and living. Such blazonings
he bore; what meant that long robe of his
but the whole world's orbit, the four rows
of gems but the great deeds of our first
fathers, the mitre on his head but thy own
25 greatness? In awe of these shrank the de-
stroying angel away; for thy own people,
some taste of thy vengeance should be
enough.

19 It was not so with their impious
enemies; with them, God decreed
that pitiless justice should run its course,
knowing well what ill-doing of theirs lay
2 yet in store; how the very men who had
allowed the Israelites to depart, nay, set
them eagerly on their way, would soon
3 repent of it and march out in pursuit.² The
business of mourning still in hand, the
grave-sides of the dead still calling for
their tears, they must needs betake them-
selves to a fresh desperate shift; they
would hunt down as fugitives the unwell-
4 come guests of yesterday. Fitting destiny,
that lured them to a fitting doom, made
them forget the past, and led them on to
complete their tale of suffering and of
5 punishment! For thy people, a strange
sea-faring; for those others, an unex-
amplified manner of death!

6 Each form of nature, in its own proper
sphere, was formed anew as from the be-
ginning, obedient to the new laws thou
hadst given it, for the greater safety of
7 thy children. Such was the cloud that
over-shadowed their camp; such the dry
land that appeared where water stood be-
fore; the Red Sea unlaboriously crossed,
a grassy floor spread out amid the surging
8 billows! So, sheltered by thy hand, they
passed on their way, a whole nation of
them, strange marvels seen in their pas-

sage; lighthearted as horse at pasture or
frisking lamb, they chanted praises to thee,
Lord, their rescuer. Such, too, were their
memories of Egypt itself; memories of the
land that bred lice and could breed no
beasts else, the river that could spawn
frogs, yet never a fish lived there. Later
11 on, they were to see how birds could be the
subject of a new creation, when their ap-
petites craved for richer fare, and quails
came up from the sea to content them.

Nor were the Egyptians punished with-
12 out warning; the thunders that terrified
them were but echoes of the past. Did not
their own wickedness deserve the pains
they suffered, a race even more inhospit-
13 able than the men of Sodom before them?
These did but refuse a welcome when
strangers came to their doors; the Egyp-
tians condemned their own guests, their
own benefactors, to slavery. It is one thing
14 to be called to account for unfriendly treat-
ment of alien folk; but these Egyptians had
received the Israelites into their midst with
rejoicing, had admitted them to rights of
citizenship, and then turned on them with
savage ill-treatment. No wonder blindness
15 fell on them, as upon the men of Sodom
at Lot's door! But in Egypt the darkness was
so bewildering that a man could not find
his way through the doors of his own house.

All the elements may be transposed
16 among themselves, keeping up the same
answering rhythm, like the notes of a harp
altering their mood; so much we may infer
with certainty from the sights that have
been witnessed in the past.³ Land-beasts
17 turned to water-beasts, and the firm
ground was trodden by creatures born to
swim. Fire surpassed its own nature,
18 when water forgot to quench it; then fire,
in its turn, could not waste the frail flesh
of living creatures that traversed it, nor
melt that heavenly food that melted easily
as ice. No means wouldst thou neglect,
Lord, to magnify thy people and win them
renown; never wouldst thou leave them
unregarded, but always and everywhere
19 camest to their side.⁴

¹ That is, according to the Latin version, 'he overcame the multitude', but some manuscripts of the Greek text give, 'he overcame the (divine) anger'.

² The word 'Israelites', like the other proper names used in this chapter, has been supplied so as to make the original text less obscure.

³ The meaning of this passage is highly doubtful, and it is possible that the text has been badly transmitted. But the notion seems to be that the history of miracle shows a kind of reciprocity between the elements, earth yielding to water and then water to land, ice to fire and then fire to ice.

⁴ *cc.* 18-20: It is not certain, from the context, whether these verses refer entirely to the period of the Exodus.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS

PREFACE

MANY are the important truths conveyed to us by the law, by the prophets and by those other writers who have followed them. Israel must be given credit for its own philosophical tradition, suited not only to instruct those who talk its language, but to reach, in spoken or written form, the outside world too, and bring it great enlightenment. No wonder if my own grandfather, Jesus, who had devoted himself to the careful study of the law, the prophets, and our other ancestral records, had a mind to put something in writing himself that should bear on this philosophical tradition, to claim the attention of eager students who had already mastered it, and to encourage their observance of the law.

I must beg its readers to come well-disposed to their task, and to follow me closely, making allowances for me wherever I seem to have failed in the right marshalling of words, as I pass on wisdom at second hand. Hebrew words lose their force when they are translated into another language; moreover, when the Hebrews read out the law, the prophets, and the other books among themselves, they read them out in a greatly different form.

It was in my thirty-eighth year,¹ in the reign of Euergetes, that I went to Egypt and spent some time there. When I found writings preserved there which were of high doctrinal value, it seemed to me right and fitting that I, too, should be at some pains; I would set about translating this book. Learning I gave to the task and long labour, and so brought it to an end; and so I offer the book to all who are ready to apply their minds to it, and learn how a

man must frame his conduct if he would live by the divine law.

1 All wisdom has one source; it dwelt with the Lord God before ever time began. Sand thou mayst count, or the rain-drops, or the days of the world's abiding; heaven-height thou mayst measure, or the wide earth, or the depth of the world beneath, ere God's wisdom thou canst trace to her origin, that was before all. First she is of all created things; time never was when the riddle of thought went unread. (What is wisdom's fount? God's word above. What is her course? His eternal commandments.) Buried her roots beyond all search, wise her counsels beyond all knowing; too high her teaching to be plainly revealed, too manifold her movements to be understood. There is but one God, high creator of all things; sitting on his throne to govern us, a great king, worthy of all dread; he it was that created her, through his holy Spirit. His eye took in the whole range of her being; and he has poured her out upon all his creation, upon all living things, upon all the souls that love him, in the measure of his gift to each.

To fear the Lord is man's pride and boast, is joy, is a prize proudly worn; comfort it brings to the heart, happiness and content and a long life bestows; well it is, at his last hour, for the man who fears the Lord; his day of death shall be a day of blessing. Love of God is wisdom worth the having; welcome the sight when it shews itself, when it gives proof of its wondrous power. Wouldst thou be wise, the first step is fear of the Lord; to his chosen servants, a gift connatural from the womb; it goes with holy motherhood, and where his true worshippers are, shews

¹ In the original, 'the thirty-eighth year'; probably the author refers to 132 B.C., the thirty-eighth regnal year of Ptolemy Euergetes II. If the year meant is that of his own age, he may equally well have lived under Ptolemy Euergetes I (247-222 B.C.).

² The words printed in brackets are not found in the Greek. There are many other differences of detail between the Greek and the Latin, too numerous to be mentioned in these notes. The Hebrew original (which has been preserved to us only in small part) must have been current in several different forms at the time when our versions were made; and it seems probable that the Latin has sometimes included two alternatives side by side (cf. verses 26 and 31, 32 of this chapter).

17 manifest. The fear of the Lord lends wis-
 18 dom that piety which is hers; such piety as
 shall keep the heart safe and make it ac-
 19 ceptable, bring it joy and content. Well it
 shall be indeed for the man who fears the
 Lord; at his last end he shall win blessing.
 20 The fear of the Lord is wisdom's fulfil-
 ment; yields the deep draught that satisfac-
 21 ties; never a nook or cranny in thy house
 but shall be filled with the store of its
 22 harvesting. The fear of the Lord is wis-
 dom's crown; with this, peace and health
 23 are thine to enjoy; this fear itself is God's
 gift, no less than the wisdom which is
 24 counted out under his eye. Wisdom it is
 that imparts to us all our knowledge, all
 our powers of discernment; hold her fast,
 and she will set thee on a pinnacle of
 25 renown; root of her is fear of the Lord, and
 long life the fruit of her.

26 True insight wisdom has in her treasure-
 house, and the piety that comes of know-
 ledge; no wonder if sinners hate the name
 27 of her. The fear of the Lord drives out
 sin; soul that feels no fear shall find no
 29 pardon, its own wild mood overbalances
 it. Patience bides her time, and with time,
 30 content comes back to her; praise shall be
 upon every lip for the wise thought that
 31 checked, for a while, her utterance. Hidden
 in wisdom's treasure-house is the secret of
 32 all discernment; and still sinners hate the
 33 name of piety. My son, if on wisdom thy
 heart is set, keep the commandments, and
 34 God will grant thy wish; fear of the Lord
 is true wisdom, true learning, and his will
 35 is to see thee loyal and patient; thou shalt
 have no empty coffers then.

36 Let not thy fear of the Lord be overcast
 with doubt; never come to him with a
 heart that hesitates.

37 Do not play false in thy dealings with
 men, nor suffer thy own words to ensnare
 38 thee. Watch those words well, or they may
 trip thee up; thou wilt have compassed thy
 39 own disgrace, if God should reveal thy
 secret thoughts at last; wouldst thou be
 thrown down, in full sight of all thy neigh-
 40 bours assembled, a heart that came to meet
 the Lord grudgingly, full all the while of
 treachery and deceit?

2 My son, if thy mind is to enter the
 Lord's service, wait there in his pres-
 ence, with honesty of purpose and with

awe, and prepare thyself to be put to the
 test. Submissive be thy heart, and ready
 to bear all; to wise advice lend a ready ear,
 and be never hasty when ill times befall
 thee. Wait for God, cling to God and wait
 for him; at the end of it, thy life shall
 blossom anew. Accept all that comes to
 thee, patient in sorrow, humiliation long
 enduring; for gold and silver the crucible,
 it is in the furnace of humiliation men
 shew themselves worthy of his acceptance.
 Trust in him, and he will lift thee to thy
 feet again; go straight on thy way, and fix
 in him thy hope; hold fast thy fear of him,
 and in that fear to old age come thou.

All you that fear the Lord, wait patiently
 for his mercies; lose sight of him, and you
 shall fall by the way. Fear him? Ay, and
 trust him; you shall not miss your reward.
 Fear him? Ay, and fix your hope in him;
 his mercy you shall find, and have great joy
 of it. Fear him? Ay, and love him; your
 hearts shall be enlightened. My sons, look
 back on the ages that are past; was ever
 man yet that trusted in the Lord, and was
 disappointed? Held fast to his command-
 1 ments, and was forsaken, prayed to him,
 and found the prayer unregarded? A
 gracious God and a merciful; in times
 of affliction, he assails us of our guilt,
 watches over all that with true hearts turn
 to him.

Out upon the false heart, the cheating
 lips, the hands busy with ill-doing; upon
 the sinner that will go two ways at once
 to enter the land of his desire. Out upon
 the unresolved will, that trust in God has
 none, and from him shall have no suc-
 1 cour. Out upon the men who have given
 up hope, forsaking the right path, and
 to false paths betaking them; what shift
 will they make when the Lord calls them
 to account? Fear the Lord, and doubt his
 11 promises? Love him, and not keep true to
 the way he shews us? Fear the Lord, and
 12 not study to know his will? Love him, and
 not find contentment in his law? Fear
 13 God, and not keep the will alert, the heart
 holy in his sight? Men who fear God keep
 14 his commandments, and wait patiently
 until he comes to relieve them. Be this our
 15 thought, they say, that it is God's power
 we have to reckon with, not man's, if there
 is no penance done. And he has mercy ever
 16 at his side, a God merciful as he is great.

3 Wherever choice souls are found,
wisdom is the mother of them; all
submissiveness and love their breed is.
2 Speak ye now of a father's rights; do you,
sons, give good heed, and follow these
3 counsels, if thrive you would. God will
have children honour their fathers; a
mother's rights are his own strict ordi-
4 nance. A lover of God will fall to prayer
over his sins and sin no more; so, all his
life long, his prayer shall find audience.
5 . . . riches he lays up for himself, that gives
6 his mother her due.¹ As thou wouldst have
joy of thy own children, as thou wouldst be
heard when thou faltest to praying, honour
7 thy father still. A father honoured is long
life won; a father well obeyed is a mother's
8 heart comforted. None that fears the Lord
but honours the parents who gave him
life, slave to master owes no greater service.
9 Thy father honour, in deed and in word
10 and in all manner of forbearance; so thou
shalt have his blessing, a blessing that will
11 endure to thy life's end. What is the but-
tress of a man's house? A father's blessing.
What tears up the foundations of it?
12 A mother's curse. Never make a boast of
thy father's ill name; what, should his
13 discredit be thy renown? Nay, for a
father's good repute or ill, a son must go
14 proudly, or hang his head. My son, when
thy father grows old, take him to thyself;
long as he lives, never be thou the cause of
15 his repining. Grow he feeble of wit, make
allowance for him, nor in thy manhood's
vigour despise him. The kindness shewn
16 to thy father will not go forgotten; favour
it shall bring thee in acquittal of thy
17 mother's guilt.² Faithfully it shall be made
good to thee, nor shalt thou be forgotten
when the time of affliction comes; like ice
18 in summer the record of thy sins shall melt
away. Tarnished his name, that leaves his
father forsaken; God's curse rest on him,
that earns a mother's ill-will.
19 My son, do all thou dost in lowly
fashion; love thou shalt win, that is worth
20 more than men's praise. The greater thou
art, the more in all things abase thyself; so

thou shalt win favour with God. . . .³ Sovereignty belongs to God and no other; they honour him most that most keep humility. Seek not to know what is far above thee; search not beyond thy range; let thy mind ever dwell on the duty God has given thee to do, content to be ignorant of all his dealings besides. Need is none thy eyes should see what things lie hidden. Leave off, then, thy much questioning about such things as little concern thee, and be content with thy ignorance; more is granted to thy view than lies within human ken. By such fancies, many have been led astray, and their thoughts chained to folly.⁴

. . . Heart that is obstinate shall thrive ill at the last; danger loved is death won. Heart that will try two ways at once shall prosper little; he falls into the snare that goes a-straying. Heart that will not mend shall be weighed down by its own troubles; the sinner is ever ready for one sin more. For one sort of men there is no remedy, the proud; too deep a root the evil has taken, before they knew it. Heart that is wise will prove itself in wise company; ever greedy of wise talk is the ear that knows how to listen. Heart that is wise and discerning will keep clear of wrong, and by honest dealings prosper yet.

No fire burns so high but water may quench it; almsgiving was ever sin's atoning. God marks the grateful eye, and remembers it; here is sure support won against peril of falling.

4 My son, do not cheat a poor man of the alms he asks, nor pass him by, with averted look, in his need. Wouldst thou despise his hungry glance, and add to the burden of his distress? Wouldst thou disappoint him in his bitter need by bidding him wait for the gift? Nay, spurn thou never the plea of the afflicted; look thy suppliant in the face, and of his poverty take good heed; shall his baffled rage curse thee behind thy back? The curse of an embittered man does not go unheard; his Maker is listening.

¹ *tr.* 4, 5: The Latin version here inserts a sentence which seems out of place (perhaps belonging to the end of the foregoing chapter); it omits the words given in the Greek text: 'He who honours his father will atone for his own sins'.
² In the Greek text, the giver of alms atones not for his mother's sin, but for his own. Cf. however Ps. 50, 7.
³ Some manuscripts and versions add, at the end of this verse, 'Men's esteem and honour is to be had for the asking, but it is to the humble that hidden things are revealed'.
⁴ Some manuscripts and versions add, at the end of this verse, 'Want eyes, want light; boast not that thou hast knowledge, where knowledge is none'.

7 To the common sort of men give friendly
welcome; before an elder abate thy pride;
and to a man of eminence bow meekly thy
8 head. If a poor man would speak to thee,
lend him thy ear without grudging; give
him his due, and let him have patient and
9 friendly answer. If he is wronged by oppres-
sion, redress thou needs must win
him, nor be vexed by his importunity.
10 When thou sittest in judgement, be a
father to the orphans, a husband to the
11 widow that bore them; so the most High an
obedient son shall reckon thee, and shew
thee more than a mother's kindness.
12 New life wisdom breathes into her chil-
dren, befriends all that have recourse to
her, and guides them in the right way.
13 Love her, as thou lovest life; wait early at
her doors, if thou wouldst win her sweet
14 embrace. Life the prize, if thou hold her
fast; come she in at the door, God's bless-
15 ing comes with her; court paid to her,
worship paid to the Holy One; love given
to her, God's love made thine in return for
16 it! A word from her, and the world is at
thy feet, a sight of her face, and thou shalt
17 dwell ever secure; trust her, and she will
be thy inheritance, settled on the heirs of
18 thy body. When first she chooses a man
out, she does but make trial of his com-
19 pany; she puts him to the proof, threaten-
ing him with her frown, teasing him with
her difficult lore, until at last she has
proved whether his thoughts are hers, and
20 can trust him perfectly. Then she gives
him confidence, coming out openly to
meet him; gladdens him with her smile,
21 and tells him all her secrets; makes him
rich with store of true knowledge, and
22 enables him to discern the right. Only if
he strays away from her does she abandon
him, and leave him at the mercy of his foes.
23 My son, study well what the time needs,
ever on thy guard against wrong-doing;
24 though life itself were in peril, never be
ashamed to speak the truth. Deference,
25 that is the grace and glory of a man, may
yet make a sinner of him. Wouldst thou
26 hold another man's honour dearer than thy
own, and swear the lie at thy soul's peril?
27 Nay, speak out without shame, though thy

own neighbour should be threatened with
ruin. Withhold not thy counsel while
safety may yet be won; thy wisdom is not
to be hidden away like a veiled beauty.
Wisdom still needs a tongue to disclose it;
no discernment or knowledge or shrewd
counsel but waits on the apt word; how
else should men be encouraged in well
doing? Speak thou never against the
known truth; and if thy ignorance has
erred, own thy error. Be never ashamed to
confess thy faults, nor, for thy fault, put
thyself in any man's power.

Wouldst thou defy, and openly, a ruler's
authority? Thou hadst better swim against
the stream's force.¹

Do battle for the right, all thy life long,
and with thy last breath do battle for the
right still; God, in thy cause, will overcome
thy enemies.

A glib tongue, and hands that hang
down idle; such be not thine.

Lion if thou must be, let not thy own
house feel the brunt of it, thy own servants
harried, thy own slaves beaten to the earth.

Open hand when the word is Take, shut
when the word is Give; such be not thine.

5 Wilt thou look round at ill-gotten
gains, and tell thyself thou hast
enough for all thy needs? Trust me, when
vengeance finds thee out, all this shall
nothing avail thee. In manhood's vigour,
do not follow the whim of thy heart, boast-
ing of thy strength, and asking who will
call thee to account for thy doings; God
will find a way to punish thee. Nor ever
flatter thyself that thou hast sinned and
come away scot-free; the eternal justice
waits its time. Ill it were that sin's pardon
should embolden thee to sin afresh. Dost
thou tell thyself God's mercies are great,
and he will pardon thy sins for all they are
so many? Bethink thee that his vengeance
rides swift as his mercy; it is a jealous eye
that watches the sinner. Or wouldst thou
make slow work of turning to the Lord,
and put it off from day to day? Swift falls
his anger and perilous, when the time for
vengeance is ripe. And must thy thoughts
still dwell on the ill-gotten gains, that shall

¹ *Ev.* 31, 32. The Greek text here varies considerably from the Latin version. It runs: 'Be never ashamed to confess thy faults; wouldst thou swim against the stream's force? Never put thyself in the power of a fool, and never flatter a ruler's greatness'. Throughout the last fourteen verses of this chapter, the Latin and the Greek have many different twists of meaning, and neither can be interpreted with much certainty.

nothing avail thee when vengeance finds thee out?

11 Turn not with every wind, nor walk in every way that offers; that sinners do, till their hypocrisy is found out. Firm let thy feet be set on the path the Lord has chosen for thee; be true to thy own thought and to the knowledge thou hast, and ever let the counsels of peace and justice guide thee on thy way.

12 True answer and wise answer none can give but he who listens patiently, and learns all.

13 If discernment thou hast, give thy neighbour his answer; if none, tongue held is best, or some ill-advised word will shame thee; speech uttered was ever the wise man's passport to fame, the fool's undoing.

14 Never win the name of back-biter, by thy own tongue entrapped into shame.

15 A thief must blush and do penance, a hypocrite men will mark and avoid; the back-biter earns indignation and enmity and disgrace all at once.

16 To all alike, high and low, give just award.

6 Wouldst thou rather be thy neighbour's enemy than his friend? Wouldst thou earn, by ill nature, an ill name, and be despised for such faults as these, envy and hypocrisy?

7 Wilt thou toss thy head, bull-fashion, and glory in thy own strength? What if that strength should be brought down by thy own folly? Then wilt thou be no better than some dry tree-stump out in the desert, its leaves withered, its hope of fruit all gone. Ill nature brings a man to an ill end, the scorn of his enemies and a prey to iniquity.

8 Gentleness of speech, how it wins friends everywhere, how it disarms its enemies! Never was a good man wanting for a gracious word. Be on good terms with all, but for thy trusted counsellor, choose one in a thousand. Tried friends be the friends thou makest; do not bestow thy confidence lightly; some men are but fair-weather friends, and will not stand the test

of adversity. Some will veer from friend to foe, and lay bare old grudges, old quarrels, to reproach thee; some will be thy boon companions, but desert thee when trouble is afoot. Fast and faithful friend there is, that will be even as thyself, and have thy servants at his beck and call; let him behave modestly, and rid thee of his presence, and there shall be true and tried friendship between you.¹ From enemies thou mayst keep thy distance; against friends be on thy guard. True friendship, sure protection and rare treasure found; true friendship, a thing beyond compare, its tried loyalty outweighing gold and silver; true friendship, elixir of life, and of life eternal! Only those who fear God will come by it; the fear of God gives friendship evenly shared, friend matched with friend.

My son, learn the lessons of youth, and garner wisdom against thy grey hairs; ploughman and sower thou must come to the task, and wait patiently for the harvest; how light the toil wisdom claims, the fruits of her how soon enjoyed! Only to undisciplined minds she seems an over-hard task-mistress; not for long will the fool endure her company; here is a weight (says he) that tries my strength too much, and away he casts it. The enlightenment which comes with wisdom is true to its name; known to so few, yet where men are acquainted with it, it waits to light them into the presence of God.² My son, give good heed to the warnings of experience, do not spurn this counsel of mine. Yield foot of thine to wisdom's fetters, neck of thine to her collar, shoulder of thine to her yoke; do not chafe at her bonds. Make her thy whole heart's quest, follow, as best thou canst, the path she makes known to thee; search, and thou wilt find her, hold fast, and never let her go; in good time, thou shalt repose in her, and find her all delight. In time, those fetters of hers shall prove a strong protection, a sure support, that halter of hers a badge of honour about thy neck; there is life in those trappings, healing virtue in those bonds. Robe is none

¹ 20. 11, 12: The sense of these verses is doubtful. The Greek text has, for verse 12, '(But) if thou art brought low, he will turn against thee, and hide his presence away from thee'. ² The Greek text runs, 'Wisdom is true to her name, she is revealed to few', which seems to imply a play upon words quite foreign to Hebrew vocabulary. The Latin version runs literally, 'The wisdom of doctrine is true to its name; it is revealed to few, but for those to whom it is known, it abides even to the sight of God'. There is an accidental resemblance in Hebrew between the noun 'wisdom' and the verb 'to wait'.

shall do thee more honour, crown is none shall rest more radiant on thy brow.

- 33 My son, mark well and learn, take heed
 34 and be wise; here is true knowledge for the
 listening, here is wisdom if thou wilt lend
 35 an ear. Where older men than thou are
 met, and wiser, take thou thy place, and
 give thy whole heart to their teaching; old
 36 tales of God's wonders thou shalt hear, and
 sayings of much renown. A man of discernment
 if thou find, wait on him at day-break,
 37 and wear out his door-step with thy
 frequent visiting. Think ever upon God's
 commandments, and be constant in the
 following of his will; be sure he will give
 thee perseverance, and all thy desire for
 wisdom shall be granted thee.

7 Harm if thou do none, harm shall
 2 none befall thee; clear of wrong is
 3 clear of mishap. What avails it, my son, to
 sow in the furrow of mischief, and reap
 a sevenfold harvest?

4 Never ask of God high station, or of the
 king preferment.

5 Never try to prove thy innocence before
 God, who knows all, nor thy subtlety
 before the king.

6 Do not sit in judgement, unless thou art
 able to crush the wrong; if thou favour the
 rich, what else is thy award but a snare for
 thy own virtue?

7 Hurt never the public weal; no need to
 embroil thyself with thy own neighbours.

8 Never tack sin to sin; for the first thou
 art in arrears.

9 Do not lose confidence in thy praying,
 or leave almsgiving undone.

11 Do not flatter thyself that God will look
 favourably on thy many offerings, as if he,
 the most High, could not refuse thy gifts.

12 Taunt never the disconsolate; God, who
 sees all, casts men down and lifts them up.

13 Not against thy own brother trump up
 the charge; nor thy neighbour either.

14 Every breath of falsehood avoid in thy
 speech; so ill grows the habit of it.

15 Idle talk becomes thee not, when thou
 sittest with the elders in council, nor, when
 thou prayest, repetition of thy prayer.

16 At toil repine not; the farmer's trade is
 of divine appointment.

17 When sinners abound, be not thou of
 18 their company; bethink thee rather, how
 19 swiftly comes vengeance, and so curb thy

unruly spirits; for sinful flesh, fire and
 worm.

Thou hast a friend who is over-long in
 thy debt; use no cruelty with him; dear to
 thee as a brother, and shall gold count
 more? Thou hast a good wife, a thrifty
 woman that has thrown in her lot, in the
 fear of the Lord, with thine; do not leave
 her; that modesty of hers is a grace gold
 cannot buy. The slave that works for thee
 faithfully, the hireling that is pledged
 to thy service, injure not; a thrifty slave
 thou shouldst love as thy own self, not
 baulking him of liberty or leaving him to
 starve. Cattle thou hast; tend them well,
 nor part with them while they do thee good
 service. Thou hast sons; train them to
 bear the yoke from their youth up. Thou
 hast daughters; keep them chaste, and do
 not spoil them with thy smile; a daughter
 wed is great good done, if a thrifty husband
 thou find her. And thy own wife, if thou
 lovest her, never do thou forsake, nor trust
 thy happiness to one who is little to thy
 mind.

And oh, with thy whole heart honour thy
 father, nor forget thy mother's pangs; be-
 think thee, that without them thou hadst
 had no being, and repay the service they
 have done thee.

With all thy soul fear God, and re-
 verence his priests. He made thee; wilt
 thou not devote all thy powers to his love?
 Wilt thou leave his ministers unbecom-
 mended? Rather, with all thy soul fear
 God, and to his priests give their due; with
 gift of the consecrated shoulder clear thy-
 self of what is owing. The priests must
 have their share, by law prescribed, of
 first-fruits and of offering for trans-
 gression; even if thou hast committed a
 fault in ignorance, a little is claimed for
 thy cleansing. The gift of the consecrated
 shoulder thou must make to the Lord, and
 the offering of all that is dedicated, and
 the holy first-fruits; moreover, thou must
 open thy hand to the poor; so thy atone-
 ment shall be perfect, and perfect thy
 blessing.

No living man but is thankful for the
 gift given; and it is ill done to withhold thy
 favours even from the dead. Fail not to
 comfort the distressed, let the mourner
 have thee for his escort. Never tire of
 visiting the sick; no surer way of winning

thy neighbour's love. Remember at all times what thou must come to at the last, and thou shalt never do amiss.

8 If quarrel thou hast, let it not be with a prince, that may attach thy person; nor with a rich man, that may implead thee, with all the power there is in silver and gold to corrupt men, and sway even the hearts of kings; nor with a glib talker; thou dost but add fuel to his fire.

Be not familiar with a boor; thou wilt hear no good of thy ancestry.

Scorn not the sinner that would amend his ways; reproach comes amiss, where all stand in need of correction. Nor fail in respect for the aged; it is of our stuff grey hairs are made.¹ Rejoice not over thy neighbour's death; we all die, and would not have men rejoice over it. Do not be contemptuous of what older and wiser men have to tell thee; by their lore live thou, if wise thou wouldst be, and have the secret of discernment, and live contentedly in the service of the great. Do not let them pass thee by, these traditions older men have inherited from their fathers; they will turn thee into a man of judgement, that answer can make when answer is needed.

Wouldst thou remonstrate with a sinner? Make sure thou art not fanning the flame of his passions, thyself in peril of a scorching.

Wouldst thou make reply to the railing accuser? Make sure he is not baiting a trap to ensnare thee.

Lend to one who can master thee? Then lent is lost. Pledge not thyself beyond thy means; count ever thy pledge forfeit. Dispute not a judge's award; who judges by right rule if not he? Travel not with a rash companion, if thou wouldst not shoulder all his misfortune; he will go his own way, and thou share the reward of his folly.

Quarrel not with a man of quick moods; on a desert road he is no companion for thee; he cares nothing for bloodshed, and will lay thee in the dust when none is by to aid thee. Take not counsel with a fool; he knows none but his own way of it. Share not thy secret plans with a stranger; thou knowest not what trouble he may breed.

Never open to any man thy whole heart; an ill requital he may make, by bringing shame on thee.

9 Never shew thyself a jealous husband to the wife thou lovest; it may prove thou hast taught her, to thy cost, a ruinous lesson. Never give thy soul into a woman's power, and let her command the fortress of it, to thy shame. Never turn to look at the wanton, that would catch thee in her snare, nor spend thy attentions upon some dancing woman, that has power to be thy undoing; nor let thy eyes linger on a maid unwed, whose very beauty may take thee unawares. And for harlots, let nothing tempt thee to give way to them, as life and patrimony thou holdest dear; look not round thee in the city streets, nor haunt the alley-ways. From a woman bravely decked out turn away; have no eyes for her beauty that is none of thine. Woman's beauty has been the ruin of many ere now, a spark to light the flame of lust. A harlot? Then trample her down like mire in thy path. The love of stolen sweets has been the undoing of many; a word with her, and the spark is lit. Sit down never with a wedded wife, nor lean thy elbow upon table of hers, nor bandy words with her over the wine; steal she thy heart away, thy life is forfeit.

An old friend leave not; the new is not his like. New friendship, new wine; it must ripen ere thou canst love the taste of it.

Envy not the wrong-doer his wealth and state; beyond all expectation of thine it shall come to ruin. Of his ill-gotten gains have neither love nor liking; be sure he will not die unpunished.

From one that has the power of life and death keep thy distance; so thou shalt be free from mortal alarms. If dealings thou hast with him, keep clear of all offence, or thou shalt pay for it with thy life. Death has become thy familiar; pit-falls encompass thy path; thou art making the rounds of a beleaguered city.²

Consider, as best thou mayest, thy company; be wise and prudent men thy counsellors; honest men thy guests.

Be the fear of God all thy boast, the thought of God all thy thinking, the

¹ Literally, 'men grow old out of (people like) us', although the text is perhaps corrupt. The Latin gives no good sense: 'Thou wilt be walking on the weapons of grieving men'.

² This seems to be the meaning of the Greek. The Latin gives no good sense: 'Thou wilt be walking on the weapons of grieving men'.

commandments of the most High all the matter of thy discourse.

- 24 By skilful handiwork the artist is known, the ruler of a people by the prudence of his counsel, the good sense of the aged by their word spoken.
- 25 No such peril to a city as a great talker; for his rash utterance, no man so well hated as he.

10 A wise ruler, a folk well disciplined; firm sits prudence on the throne. Like king, like court; like ruler, like subjects. Royal folly is a people's ruin; where prudence reigns, there cities thrive most. God's will it is, then, that rules a nation; when the time comes, he will give it the prince it needs, granting prosperity where he will; no scribe bears office but has divine authority stamped on his brow.

- 6 Forget the wrong done, nor enrol thyself among the doers of it.
- 7 Before God and man alike pride is hateful, and the wrong the Gentiles do is foully done; wrong and crime and outrage and treacherous shift, that he punishes by passing on the sceptre of empire into new hands; but worse sin is none than avarice.
- 9 See how man, for all his pride, is but dust and ashes! This love of money is of all things the most perverse; what does the miser but sell his own soul? As well be bowelled alive!
- 11 Why be tyrannies short-lived? Why, it is a wearisome thing to the physician, a long illness, so he is fain to cut it short, and the king that reigns to-day will be dead to-morrow. And what is the new kingdom he inherits? Creeping things, and carrion beast, and worm.
- 14 Pride's beginning is man's revolt from God, when the heart forgets its Maker; and of all sin pride is the root. Leave it, or curses thou shalt have in full measure, and be ruined at the last. Such humiliation the Lord has in store; vanished utterly is yonder confederacy; proud thrones cast down, to make room for the oppressed, proud nations withered from the root, and humbler rivals planted instead! Whole

nations of the world the Lord has overthrown, rased them to the ground; shrivelled and vanished away, they have left no trace of their passage. The proud forgotten, the humble kept in memory; such was the Lord's will. Pride was never made for man's estate; never child born of woman had anger's mood for its birthright.

There are two breeds of men; one fears God and wins renown, the other passes his commandments by, and is forgotten. Let clansmen honour a chieftain's rank; it is humble fear wins the divine regard. For riches and renown, as for the lowly born, there is one boast worth having, the fear of God. Honest poverty never despise, nor flatter, for all his wealth, the evil-doer; prince nor ruler nor nobleman can win any higher title than the fear of God.

Of his master's sons a prudent servant shall yet be master. Only the fool, that is ill trained, takes punishment amiss; and a fool will never rise to greatness.

Do not boast of thy fine craftsmanship and then, in time of urgent need, stand idle; better fall to work and have a full belly than keep thy pride and go fasting. Abate thy pride, keep body and soul together; value thy life as it deserves. There is no excusing the man who is his own enemy, no worth in the man who thinks his life worth nothing.

One man, that little wealth has, may boast of his skill and the fear of God, another man of his riches. Grow he rich, the poor man shall boast indeed; that other, grow he poor, has good cause to fear his poverty.

11 A man may be lowly born, and yet rise high through the wisdom that is in him, till at last he takes his seat among men of rank.

Esteem no man for his good looks, nor for his outward show despise him; yonder bee is an inconsiderable creature, and yet there is a world of sweetness in the harvest she wins. Plume not thyself when thou goest bravely clad, nor pride thyself in thy brief hour of greatness. Of wonder and of praise what else is worthy, but the doings

¹ vs. 7-13: A comparison of the Latin with the Greek suggests that the order of these verses differed in different manuscripts of the original, and their sense cannot be certainly established. It seems likely that in verses 11-13 the physician referred to is Providence. ² This seems, in view of the context, the best account to give of a verse which is difficult in the Latin, and in the Greek almost untranslatable.

of the most High? And these, how hedged
 5 about with secrecy! Kings a many have
 lost their thrones,¹ to pretenders they
 6 never dreamed of; great ones a many have
 fallen full low, and their glory has passed
 to others.

7 Blame not, till thou hast heard the excuse;
 more just thy reproof shall be when
 8 thou hast learnt all. Listen first, then
 answer, never breaking in when the tale is
 half told.

9 Quarrel not, where thou thyself art not
 concerned; leave judgement of the of-
 tender to others.

10 Do not be entangled, my son, in too
 many enterprises. The rich man pays for-
 feit, chasing what overtake he may not, or
 fleeing what he may not shun.

11 Some men's lives are all toil and haste
 and anxiety; yet the more they toil, the less
 12 advantage they win, for want of piety. And
 others are backward folk, that cannot hold
 their gains, men of little power and much
 13 poverty; and yet such a man the Lord will
 look upon with favour, rescue him from
 neglect and greatly advance him, to the
 world's amazement, and the greater hon-
 14 our of God. From God all comes, good
 fortune and ill, life and death, poverty and
 15 riches; in God's keeping are wisdom and
 temperance and knowledge of the law,
 charity and the good life.

16 Error and darkness are sinful man's
 birthright; it is by making evil their de-
 light that men grow hardened in evil.

17 No momentary blessing it is, God's
 largesse to his faithful servants; that seed
 18 that bears an eternal crop. No such boast
 has the man of thrift, that by his own effort
 19 wins wealth. Does he tell himself that he
 has found security at last; nothing remains
 but to glut, with his own earnings, his own
 20 greed? He forgets that time flies, and
 death draws near; die he must, and leave
 21 all he has to another. Be true to thy cove-
 nant with God; its words to thy own ears
 repeat; to that, and thy enjoined duty,
 22 inure thyself. Wouldst thou stand there

gaping at the doings of sinners? Nay, trust
 in God, and keep to thy appointed task.
 Dost thou think God finds it hard to enrich
 23 the beggar, and in a moment? Swift, swift
 24 comes the blessing that rewards faithful
 service; in one short hour its fruits ripen.

Never tell thyself, need thou hast none,
 25 there is no more good can befall thee;
 never flatter thyself, thou art master of thy
 26 own lot, no harm can touch thee now.
 Rather, bethink thyself of foul weather in
 27 fair, of fair weather in foul; on the very day
 28 of a man's death God can give him his
 deserts. One hour of misery, how it can
 29 efface in the memory long years of ease!
 Only a man's death-bed brings the full
 history of his fortunes to light.

Never call a man happy until he is dead;
 30 his true epitaph is written in his children.

Do not keep thy house open to every
 31 comer; knives have many shifts. Foul
 32 breath lurks in a diseased body; the par-
 tridge a hidden lure awaits, a hidden snare
 the doe; so there be unquiet hearts, ever
 on the watch for a neighbour's downfall,
 ready to interpret good things amiss,
 33 and cast blame on the innocent. One spark is
 34 enough to spread a fire, and one man's
 treachery may be the cause of bloodshed;
 such villains as these plot against life itself.
 Against such a plague be thou timely on
 35 thy guard, or it may prove thy eternal dis-
 grace. Alien let in is whirlwind let in, that
 36 shall alienate from thee all thou hast.²

12 Favour if thou grantest, look well
 to whom thou grantest it; so shall
 thy favours earn abundant gratitude. A
 2 good turn done to an honest man is well
 rewarded; if not he, then the Lord will
 repay thee. It goes ill with the man who
 3 spends all his time courting the wicked,
 and alms gives none; does not the most
 High himself treat sinners as his enemies,
 never sparing them till they repent?
 4 . . . For rebellious sinners he has nothing
 but punishment, although he may save up
 5 the day of their punishing.³ Keep thy

¹ Literally, in the Greek text, 'have sat on the ground'. The Latin version, perhaps through an error, reads 'have sat on their thrones'. ² *vv.* 31-36: The exact bearing of these verses cannot be determined. In verse 32, 'unquiet hearts' is literally 'proud hearts'; but pride seems irrelevant to the present context, and it is likely that the original Hebrew text had 'hearts of aliens' (as in verse 36). In that case the whole passage may be a warning against undue fraternization with Gentiles. ³ At the beginning of this verse, the Latin inserts the words, 'Keep thy favours for the merciful, and let the sinners go without their entertainment', which appears to be a duplicate of verse 5, included by error. It has been omitted in the rendering given above, as fatally disturbing to the order of the sentence. There was no doubt some dislocation of the text here; the Greek, too, has a duplicate of verse 5 immediately after verse 7.

favours for the kind-hearted, and let the sinners go without their welcome. The friendless man deserves thy alms; to the godless give nothing; nay, prevent food reaching him, or he will have the mastery of thee. All his gain will be doubly thy loss; and so it is that the most High both hates sinners and will bring retribution on their impiety.

Prosperity will not shew thee who are thy friends. In bad times, thy enemies may triumph openly, that till now were grieved at thy good fortune; but it is these bad times will shew thee thy friends too.

Never trust an enemy; deep as verdigris on copper his malice is ingrained. Lout he never so low, look to it well and be on thy guard against him; never let him attend on thee, or sit at thy right hand. His eyes are on thy place; a time will come when he will sit where thou sittest, when thou wilt recognize the truth of my warning, and be stung by the memory. Who shall pity snake-charmer or beast-tamer if he takes hurt? And he deserves no less, who consorts with rogues and is entangled in their sinful ways. This false friend will be thy companion for an hour, then, if thou art for altering thy course, he will not hear of it; all those honeyed words do but mask a plot to lure thee into some ditch. How he weeps for thee, this enemy of thine! Yet, if his chance comes, there will be no glutting him with thy blood; come thou into mischief, he is there already waiting for thee. How he weeps for thee, this enemy of thine! If he makes to aid thee, it is only to trip thy heel; then what mopping and mowing, what clapping of the hands and whispering, what a change of mien!

13 Who handles pitch, with pitch is defiled; who throws in his lot with insolence, of insolence shall have his fill. A heavy burden thou art shouldering, if thou wouldst consort with thy betters; not for thee the company of the rich. Pot and kettle are ill matched; it is the pot breaks when they come together; rich man, that has seized all he can, frets and fumes for more; poor man robbed may not so much as speak. If thou hast favours to bestow, thy rich friend will make use of thee; if

none, he bids thee farewell; thy guest, he will eat up all thou canst give, and have no pity to waste on thee. Has he need of thee? Then, to be sure, he will ply his arts, all smiles and fair speeches, and eagerness to know what thy need is; and encumbers thee, now, with hospitality. So, twice and three times, he will drain thee dry; then he will turn on thee with a laugh, and if he meets thee again, it will be to pass thee by with a toss of the head.

Learn to abase thyself before God, and wait for his hand to beckon thee, instead of courting false hopes, that bring their own abasement. For all thy wisdom, do not hold thyself too cheap, or thou wilt lower thyself to folly. If a great man bids thee come close, keep thy distance; he will but bid thee the more; do not court a rebuff by wearying him, nor yet withdraw altogether, and be forgotten. Affable though he should be, treat him never familiarly; all his friendly talk is but a lure to drag thy secrets out of thee. All that thou sayest his pitiless heart will hold against thee; never a blow, never a chain the less. Have a care of thyself, give good heed to this warning, thou that walkest with ruin ever at thy side; wake from sleep at the hearing of it, and see thy peril. Love God all thy days, and pray that he will send thee good deliverance.

Every beast consorts with its own kind, and shall not man with his fellow? Like to like is nature's rule, and for man like to like is still the best partnership; as well match wolf with lamb as rogue with honest liver. Consecrated person¹ and prowling dog, what have they in common? And what fellowship can there be between rich man and poor? Poor man is to rich as wild ass is to lion out in the desert, his prey; wealth hates poverty, as the proud heart scorns humble rank. Totters the lordly house, it has friends to sustain it; the poor man in his ruin is driven from familiar doors. Trips the rich man, he has many to keep him in countenance; his insolent talk finds acquittal; trips the poor man, he is called to account for it; even for what he said to the purpose, no allowance is made him. Speaks the rich man, all must listen in silence, and afterwards extol his utterance to the skies; speaks the poor man.

¹ Or perhaps 'holy person'. The Greek text has, 'hyena'.

Why, say all, who is this? And if his words offend, it is the undoing of him.

30 Yet, where there is no sin to smite a man's conscience, a full purse is a blessing, and poverty itself is a great evil when it goes with a blasphemer's tongue.¹ Heart of man changes his mien, for good or ill, but where that pleasant mien is, that comes of a generous heart, no short or easy way there is to discover.²

14 Blessed the man whose lips have never betrayed him into a fault, who has never known the sting of remorse, never felt conscience condemning him, and the hope he lived by, his no more!

3 Vain is that store the miser cherishes; wasted on his distrustful nature, the bright gold! See how he wrongs himself to hoard up goods for others; to let his heirs keep high revel when he is gone! Whose friend is he, that is his own enemy, and leaves his own cheer untasted? This is the last villainy of all, that a man should grudge himself his own happiness; fit punishment for his poverty of soul that never did good except by oversight, and to his manifest remorse! Diseased eye of the niggard, that will turn away and let hunger go unsatisfied; and restless eye of the covetous man, that craves ever more than his due, till his very nature dries up from continual pining; an eye jaundiced with its own passions, and never a full meal, but always he must sit hungry and pensive at his own table, and ill content!

My son, if wealth thou hast, regale thyself, and make thy offering to God proportionable. Bethink thee that death waits not; there is no putting off thy tryst with the grave; nothing in this world, but its death-warrant is out already. While life still holds, make thy friends good cheer, and to the poor be open-handed as thy means allow thee; stint not the feast, nor any crumb put by of the blessings granted thee; wouldst thou have thy heirs wrangling over the fruits of thy bitter toil? Much give, much take, set thy soul at ease; while life still holds, do thy duty of alms-

giving; feasting there shall be none in the grave. No living thing but fades as the grass fades; as the leaves fade, that burgeon on a growing tree, some sprouting fresh and some a-dying; so it is with flesh and blood, one generation makes room for the next. All the works of man are fugitive, and must perish soon or late, and he, the workman, goes the same way as the rest. Yet shall their choicest works win favour, and in his work he, the workman, shall live.

Blessed the man that dwells on wise thoughts, musing how to acquit himself well, and remembering the all-seeing eye of God; that can plan out in his heart all wisdom's twists and turns, fathom her secrets! Like a spy he follows her, and lingers in her tracks, peers through her window, listens at her doors, by her house takes up his abode, driving his nail into the walls of it, so as to build his cabin at her very side, cabin that shall remain for ever a home of blessing! Wisdom shall be the shade under which his children find their appointed resting-place; her spreading boughs shall protect them from the noon-day heat; wisdom shall be the monument of his glorious repose.

15 If a man fears the Lord, he will live an upright life. If a man holds fast to innocence, he will find wisdom³ ready to his embrace, welcoming him as a mother welcomes the son who cherishes her, greeting him like a maiden bride. Long life and good discernment are the bread this mother will provide for him, truth the refreshing draught she will give him to drink. She will take firm hold of him, so that he never wavers, restrain him, so that he is never disgraced. She will raise him to high repute among his neighbours; she will move him to speak before the assembled people, filling him with the spirit of wisdom and discernment, clothing him in magnificent array. Joy and triumph she has in store for him, and will enrich him with a name that shall never be forgotten. Not for the fools her embrace, only apt pupils encounter her; how should the fools catch

¹ Literally, 'in the mouth of a sinner'. This would naturally be interpreted as meaning 'in the estimation of a sinner', but such a rendering would give no parallel of thought between the two halves of the verse.

² Or possibly the sense is that it is difficult to find instances of the pleasant mien that results from a generous heart, because they are so rare. If so, the first two verses of ch. 14 should be taken as part of this chapter.

³ Literally, 'will find her'. Grammatically, this might refer to 'innocence', but it is fairly certain we are meant to think of Wisdom, alluded to in 14. 22 above.

sight of her, that is so far removed from
 8 proud and treacherous ways? Nay, she is
 beyond the deceiver's ken; true hearts
 alone are her company, and these shall
 profit by it till they are fit for God's scrutiny.
 9 Praise is but praise deformed when
 10 it is uttered by the lips of a sinner; wisdom
 comes from God only, and on wisdom the
 praise of God needs must wait. Praise on
 the lips of one who trusts God is rich in
 meaning; the Ruler of all inspires it.

11 This wisdom lackest thou?¹ Do not
 blame God for the want of it; learn to shun
 12 the deeds God hates. Do not complain
 that it was he led thee into false paths; what
 need has God, thinkest thou, of rebels?
 13 No foul misdeed there is but God hates it;
 14 there is no loving it and fearing him. When
 men first came to be, it was God made
 them, and, making them, left them to the
 15 arbitrament of their own wills; yet giving
 them commandments to be their rule.
 16 Those commandments if thou wilt observe,
 they in their turn shall preserve thee,
 and give thee warrant of his favour.²
 17 It is as though he offered thee fire and
 water, bidding thee take which thou
 18 wouldst; life and death, blessing and
 curse, man finds set before him, and the
 gift given thee shall be the choice thou
 19 makest; so wise God is, so constraining his
 power, so incessant the watch he keeps
 20 over mankind. The Lord's eye is watching
 over the men who fear him, no act of ours
 21 passes unobserved; upon none does he
 enjoin disobedience, none has leave from
 22 him to commit sin. A brood of disloyal
 sons and worthless, how should this be the
 Lord's desire?

16 A brood of disloyal sons, let not thy
 eye dwell on these with pleasure;
 the fear of God lacking, let not a multitude
 2 of children be thy comfort. Not on such
 lives as these set thy hopes, little regard
 3 have thou for such doings as theirs; better
 one son who fears God than a thousand
 4 who grow up rebellious; better die child-

less than have rebels to succeed thee.
 Through one man that is well-minded a
 whole country may thrive, and sinners,
 a whole race of them, may be extinguished;
 much proof of this my own eyes have seen,
 and stronger proof yet are the tales that
 have come to my hearing, of fire breaking
 out where sinners were met in company,
 fires of vengeance to consume a dis-
 obedient race. Those giants of long ago
 who perished in the pride of their strength,
 did they find pardon of their guilt? Lot's
 neighbours, did God spare them? Did he
 not attest his hatred of their insolence,
 destroying a whole nation without pity, for
 the sinfulness that defied him? And what
 of those six hundred thousand that
 marched out into the desert, men of stub-
 born heart? Stiff-necked if he had been
 like the others, Caleb himself should not
 have had God's pardon.³ His to pity, his
 to punish; intercession avails with him,
 but in full flood comes his vengeance: his
 severity, no less than his clemency, judges
 men by their deeds. Never may sinner
 enjoy his ill-gotten gains in safety, nor the
 hope of the generous be disappointed. No
 generous act but shall win God's con-
 sideration; he weighs each man's merits,
 knows how each passed his time on earth.

Never think to hide thyself away from
 God; never tell thyself, from that great
 height none shall regard thee; that thou
 wilt pass unnoticed amidst the throng of
 humanity, thy soul a mere speck in the vast
 fabric of creation. Why, the very heavens,
 and the heavens that are above the heavens,
 the great deep, and the whole earth with all
 it contains, shrink away at the sight of him;
 mountains and hills and earth's founda-
 tions tremble at his glance; all these have
 a heart, though it be a heart void of reason,⁴
 and there is no heart but its secrets are
 known to him. There is no fathoming his
 ways, no piercing the dark cloud man's
 eyes have never seen; all but a few of his
 doings are hidden away. His acts of retri-
 bution⁵ who can understand, or who can

¹ 'This wisdom lackest thou?'; according to the Greek text, 'Hast thou rebelled against him?'

² The rendering given above is an attempt to combine the Greek and the Latin versions, either of which, taken by itself, is untranslatable. ³ The words 'into the desert' have been inserted to make it clear that the Exodus is alluded to; they are not in the text. Nor is the name 'Caleb', but the grammar of the Latin version necessarily implies that one person was excepted from the general doom, cf. Num. 14. 24 and elsewhere. The Greek text has 'And if there is one stiff-necked person, it is a marvel if he escapes'.

⁴ 'All these have a heart, though it be a heart void of reason'; or perhaps, 'and in all these matters, the (human) heart is powerless to reason', which is the sense of the Greek text. ⁵ The sense of the Greek text is probably rather 'the acts which win his approval'.

bear? Far, far removed is that covenant of his from some men's thoughts; and yet in the end all shall undergo his scrutiny.¹

23 Away with these fancies of shallow minds, these fond dreams of error!

24 Wilt thou but listen to me, my son, thou shalt learn a wiser lesson. Give me thy heart's heeding, and instruction thou shalt have in full measure, wisdom both profound and clear. Give me thy heart's heeding, and thou shalt share with me knowledge of the wonderful endowments God gave his creatures when first he made them; all the lore I have shall be truly told thee. From the first, all God's creatures

26 are at his beck and call; to each, when he first made it, he gave its own turn of service, the principle that determines its own nature. To each, for all time, its own office is assigned, nor lack they, nor tire they, nor cease they from work, nor, for all time, can any of them infringe upon its neighbour's rights; his word there is no gain-saying.² This done, on earth he let fall his regard, and filled earth with his blessings; covered the face of it³ with the living things that breathe there, and into its bosom bade them return.

17 Man, too, God created out of the earth, fashioning him after his own likeness, and gave him, too, earth to be his burying-place, for all the divine power that clothed him; man, too, should have his allotted toll of years, his season of maturity, and should have power over all else on earth; no living thing, beast or bird, that should not live in awe of him and be subject to his rule. To him and to that partner of his, created like himself and out of himself, God gave will and speech and sight and hearing; gave them a heart to reason with, and filled them with power of discernment; spirit itself should be within their ken, their hearts should be all sagacity. What evil was, what good, he made plain to them; gave them his own eyes to

see with, so that they should keep his marvellous acts in view, praise that holy name of his, boast of his wonders, tell the story of his renowned deeds. Warnings, too, he gave them; the law that brings life should be a cherished heirloom; and so he made a covenant with them which should last for ever; claim and award of his he would make known to them. Their eyes should see him in visible majesty, their ears catch the echo of his majestic voice. Keep your hands clear, he told them, of all wrongdoing, and gave each man a duty towards his neighbour.

Ever before his eyes their doings are; nothing is hidden from his scrutiny. To every Gentile people he has given a ruler of its own; Israel alone is exempt, marked down as God's patrimony. Clear as the sun their acts shew under his eye; over their lives, untiring his scrutiny. Sin they as they will, his covenant is still on record; no misdeed of theirs but he is the witness of it.

Alms if thou givest, thou hast the sign-manual of his favour; treasured as the apple of his eye is the record of man's deserving.⁴

... A day will come when he rouses himself and requites them, one by one, for their misdoing, overwhelms them in the depths of earth. Yet, to such as repent, he grants the means of acquittal, and makes their fainting hearts strong to endure; for them, too, he has a share in his promised reward. Turn back to the Lord, and let thy sins be; make thy prayer before him, and rid thyself of the peril in thy path. Come back to the Lord, from wrong-doing turn away, and thy foul deeds hate; in all his decrees and awards own God just, stand in thy appointed place to make intercession to him, the most High, and take thy part with a race of men sanctified, living men that still give thanks to God.⁵ Linger not in the false path of wickedness; give thanks while breath is in thee; the

¹ *vs.* 18-22: In the Latin version, this is apparently regarded as an answer to the notions mentioned in verses 16, 17; in the Greek text, it seems to be a continuation of them, the answer being delayed till verse 24.

² That is, according to the Greek text, the forces of nature are bound to obey it; the Latin version represents it as a warning against human disobedience.

³ This is the meaning of the Greek text. The Latin version has 'denounced before the face of it', which yields no satisfactory sense.

⁴ It seems possible that this verse has been misplaced, since it breaks into the connexion of thought between verse 17 and verse 19.

⁵ *vs.* 24, 25: The Latin here reads very unnaturally, and is perhaps the rendering of a corrupt Hebrew original. In the first half of verse 25, the Greek text has, 'Who will give praise to the most High in the grave?' The word rendered 'give thanks', here and in the following verses, may also, according to Hebrew usage, mean 'confess'. But cf. *Is.* 38. 19.

27 dead breathe no more, give thanks no
more. Thanks while yet thou livest, thanks
while health and strength are still with
thee, to praise God and to take pride in all
28 his mercies! The Lord's mercy, that is so
abundant, the pardon that is ever theirs
who come back to him!

29 Think not man is the centre of all
things; 'no son of Adam is immortal, for
all the delight men take in their sinful
30 follies. Nought brighter than the sun, and
yet its brightness shall fail; nought darker
than the secret designs of flesh and blood,
31 yet all shall be brought to light. God, that
marshals the armies of high heaven, and
man, all dust and ashes!

18 Naught that is, but God made it;
he, the source of all right, the king
2 that reigns for ever unconquerable. And
wouldst thou tell the number of his crea-
3 tures, trace his marvellous doings to their
4 origin, set forth in words the greatness of
his power, or go further yet, and proclaim
5 his mercies? God's wonders thou shalt
learn to understand, when thou hast
learned to increase the number of them,
6 or diminish it. Reach thou the end of thy
reckoning, thou must needs begin again;
7 cease thou from weariness, thou hast no-
thing learnt. Tell me, what is man, what
worth is his, what power has he for good or
8 ill? What is his span of life? Like a drop
in the ocean, like a pebble on the beach,
9 seem those few years of his, a hundred at
the most, matched with eternity. What
wonder if God is patient with his human
10 creatures, lavishes mercy on them? If none
reads, as he, their proud heart, none knows,
11 as he, the cruelty of their doom; and so he
has given his clemency full play, and
12 shewed them an even path to tread. Man's
mercy extends only to his neighbour; God
13 has pity on all living things. He is like a
shepherd who cares for his sheep, guides
14 and controls all alike; welcome thou this

merciful discipline of his, run thou eagerly
to meet his will, and he will shew pity on
thee.

My son, bestow thy favours ungrudg- 1
ingly, nor ever mar with harsh words the
gladness of thy giving. Not more welcome 2
the dew, tempering the sun's heat, than the
giver's word, that counts for more than the
gift. Better the gracious word than the 3
gracious gift; but, wouldst thou acquit
thyself perfectly, let both be thine. The 4
fool, by his scolding, mars all; never yet
did eye brighten over a churl's giving.

First arm thyself with a just cause, then 5
stand thy trial; first learn, then speak.
Study thy health before ever thou fallest 6
sick, and thy own heart examine before
judgement overtakes thee; so in God's 7
sight thou shalt find pardon. While health
serves thee, do penance for thy sins, and 8
then, when sickness comes, shew thyself
the man thou art.² From paying thy vows³
let naught ever hinder thee; shall death 9
find thee still shrinking from acquitting
thyself of the task? God's award stands 10
for ever. And before ever thou makest thy
petition, count well the cost.⁴ Let it not be
said of thee that thou didst invite God's 11
anger. When his vengeance is satisfied,
bethink thee still of his vengeance; of his 12
retribution, when his glance is turned
away.⁵ When all abounds, bethink thee of 13
evil times; of pinching poverty, when thou
hast wealth in store. Between rise and set 14
of sun the face of things alters; swiftly God
changes all; and he is wisest who walks
timorously, shunning carelessness in a
world where sins abound.

They are well advised that master wis-
dom's secret; much cause for thankfulness
she bestows on him who finds her. Wise
man that has the gift of utterance does
more than wisely live; no stranger to truth
and right, he is a fountain of true sayings
and of right awards.

Do not follow the counsel of appetite;

¹ Literally, 'it is not possible that all things should be in man'. ² Literally, 'shew thy conversation', or perhaps, 'shew thy conversion'—the point is the same in either case. The Greek has, 'shew thy conversion at the time of transgressions', it is not clear in what sense. ³ The Latin has simply 'praying', but this misses the emphasis of the context, this paragraph being evidently concerned with getting things done in good time.

⁴ Literally, 'prepare thy mind' (for the fulfilment of the vow with which the petition was accompanied). ⁵ Literally, this verse reads: 'Remember anger in the day of the end, and a time of retribution in the turning of the face'. It is ordinarily interpreted as meaning 'Remember the anger (which God will shew) at the end of the world (or, at the time of thy death), and the time of retribution (which will consist) in the turning away of his face'. But it is surely incredible that verse 24 should have exactly the same grammatical appearance as verse 25, and yet a totally different grammatical construction. Nor is God said to 'turn away his face' when he punishes men, but, on the contrary, when he seems to 'look the other way' and leaves them unpunished; cf. Ps. 9. 32.

turn thy back on thy own liking. Pamper those passions of thine, and joy it will bring, but to thy enemies. Love not the carouse, though it be with poor men; they will be vying still one with another in wastefulness. And wouldst thou grow poor with borrowing to pay thy shot, thou with thy empty coffers? That were to grudge thy own life.

19 Let him toil as he will, the sot's purse is empty; little things despise, and little by little thou shalt come to run. Wine and women, what a trap for the loyalty of the wise, how hard a test of good sense! He will go from bad to worse, that clings to a harlot's love; waste and worm shall have him for their prize; one gibbet the more, one living soul the less.

Rash heart that lightly trusts shall lose all; forfeit thy own right to live, and none will pity thee. A foul blot it is, to take pride in wrong-doing; a courting of death, to despise reproof; a riddance of much mischief, to forswear chattering. Who forfeits his own right to live, will live to rue it; who loves cruelty, blots his own name.

Malicious word if thou hear, or harsh, do not repeat it; never will thou be the loser. Speak not out thy own thought for friend and foe to hear alike, nor ever, if thou hast done wrong, discover the secret. He that hears it will be on his guard, and eye thee askance, as if to avert fresh fault of thine; such will be all his demeanour to thee thenceforward.¹ Hast thou heard a tale to thy neighbour's disadvantage? Take it to the grave with thee. Courage, man! it will not burst thee. A fool with a secret labours as with child, and groans till he is delivered of it; out it must come, like an arrow stuck in a man's thigh, from that reckless heart.

Confront thy friend with his fault; it may be he knows nothing of the matter, and can clear himself; if not, there is hope he will amend. Confront him with the

word spoken amiss; it may be, he never said it, or if say it he did, never again will he repeat it. Be open with thy friend; ¹⁵ tongues will still be clattering; and thou dost well to believe less than is told thee. ¹⁶ Slips there are of the tongue when mind is innocent; what tongue was ever perfectly ¹⁷ guarded? Confront thy neighbour with his fault ere thou quarrellest with him, and let ¹⁸ the fear of the most High God do its work.

What is true wisdom? Nothing but the fear of God. And since the fear of God is contained in all true wisdom, it must be directed by his law; wisdom is none in following the maxims of impiety, prudence is none in scheming as the wicked scheme. Cunning rogues they may be, yet altogether abominable; a fool he must ever be called, that lacks the true wisdom.³ Better ²¹ a simpleton that wit has none, yet knows fear, than a man of great address, that breaks the law of the most High. Exact ²² and adroit even a rogue may be; it is another thing to utter the plain word that tells the whole truth. Here is one that wears the garb of penance for wicked ends, his heart full of guile; here is one that bows and ²⁴ scrapes, and walks with bent head, feigning not to see what is best left unnoticed, and all because he is powerless to do thee ²⁵ a harm; if the chance of villainy comes, he will take it. Yet a man's looks betray him; ²⁶ a man of good sense will make himself known to thee at first meeting; the clothes ²⁷ he wears, the smile on his lips, his gait, will all make thee acquainted with a man's character.

Reproof there is that no good brings, as the event shews; the mistaken reproof that anger prompts in a quarrel. And a man may shew prudence by holding his tongue.

20 Better the complaint made than the grudge secretly nursed. When a man confesses his fault, do not cut him short in mid utterance.

Redress⁴ sought by violence no more ²

¹ *vv.* 8, 9: The sense of the Greek text is: 'Do not tell tales about friend or foe; bring nothing to light, unless it were sin in thee (to keep silent). Friend or foe will hear of it, and will keep thee under his eye, waiting for the opportunity to shew his hatred of thee'. ² Literally, 'for often there is competition', i.e., in the retailing of scandal; the same word is used by the Latin version as in 18. 32 above. The Greek text has, 'often there is slander'. ³ The first half of this verse runs, both in the Greek and in the Latin, 'There is a wickedness (or, worthlessness), and it is an abomination'; a phrase which means little and does not suit the context. Evidently the Hebrew original contained some word which might be interpreted either as 'prudence' or as 'wickedness'; e.g., the word used in the former sense by Prov. 1. 4, and in the latter sense by Jer. 11. 15. ⁴ The Latin version substitutes 'false award' for 'redress', but it is doubtful whether this interpretation improves the sense of a passage already obscure.

content shall bring thee than eunuch's lust for maid.

- 4 Well it is to be reprov'd, and to confess thy fault, and be rid of all such guilt as thou hast incurred knowingly.
- 5 A man may be the wiser for remaining dumb, where the glib talker grows wearisome; the silent man, has he nothing to say? Or is he waiting for the right time to say it? Wisdom keeps its utterance in reserve, where the fool's vanity cannot wait. The babbler cuts his own throat; claim more than thy right, and all men are thy enemies.
- 9 For a mind ill trained, success is failure, winning is losing. Gift given may bring thee nothing in return, or twice its worth.
- 11 Honour achieved may belittle a man, and modesty bring him renown. What use to make a good bargain, if thou must pay for it sevenfold?
- 13 Word of wise man endears him; the fool spends his favours in vain. Little will the fool's gift profit thee; seven times magnified is all he sees.¹ The paltrier the gift, the longer the admonitions that go with it, and every word of his an incitement to anger. Out upon the man who lends to-day, and will have the loan restored to-morrow! The fool has no friends, nor can win love by all his favours; they are but parasites that eat at his table; loud and long they will laugh over him; so injudiciously he bestows gifts worth having, and gifts nothing worth.
- 20 Slip of a liar's tongue is like slip from roof to ground; a villain's end is not long a-coming.
- 21 An ungracious man is no more regarded, than some idle tale that is ever on the lips of the ill-bred.
- 22 No weighty saying but offends in a fool's mouth; sure it is that he will bring it out unseasonably.
- 23 Some avoid wrong only because they lack the means to do it; idle they remain, yet rest they cannot.²
- 24 Some for very shame have courted their own ruin, resolved, though that opinion

were worthless enough, to sacrifice themselves for another's good opinion. Some, too, for shame, make their friends high-sounding promises, and thereby gain nothing, but lose a friend.

A lie is a foul blot upon a man's name; yet nothing so frequent on ill-guarded lips. Worse than a thief is one who is ever lying, and to no better end may he look forward. He lives without honour that lies without scruple, and shame is at his side continually.

The wise word brings a man to honour; prudence will endear thee to the great. Till ground, and fill barn; live uprightly, and attain honour; win prince, and escape harm.

Hospitality here, a gift there, how they blind the eyes of justice! No better gag to silence reproof:

Wisdom hidden is wasted, is treasure that never sees the light of day; silence is rightly used when it masks folly, not when it is the grave of wisdom.

21 Sinned if thou hast, my son, be not emboldened to sin further; to prayer betake thee, and efface the memory of sins past. Sin dread thou not less than the serpent's encounter; its fangs will not miss thee, if once thou come close. Teeth so sharp no lion ever had, to catch human prey, nor ever two-edged sword gave wound so incurable as the law's defiance. Browbeat and oppress the poor, thy own wealth shall dwindle; riches that are grown too great the proud cannot long enjoy. pride shrivels wealth. Swiftly comes their doom, because the poor man's plea reached their ears, but never their hearts.³

Where reproof is unregarded, there goes the sinner; no God-fearing man but will come to a better mind.

To the glib speaker, fame comes from far and wide; only the wise man knows the slips of his own heart.

Wouldst thou build thy fortunes on earnings that are none of thine? As well mightest thou lay in stones for winter fuel.

¹ Literally, 'his eyes are sevenfold', a phrase which is sometimes understood as meaning that he expects a sevenfold return for his gift. But this meaning does not seem to be borne out either by usage or by the context, which emphasizes only the self-importance of the clumsy giver. But it must be admitted that the interpretation of this whole paragraph cannot be reached with certainty. ² Literally, 'he will be conscience-stricken in his repose'. The Greek inserts a negative. ³ Literally, 'The pleas of the poor man will come from the mouth as far as his ears'. Some interpret this as meaning the ears of divine justice, but there is no hint of this in the text.

10 When knaves come together, it is like heaping up tow; the flame burns all the brighter.

11 How smoothly paved is the path of sinners! Yet death lies at the end of it, and darkness, and doom.

12 If thou wouldst be master of thy own thought, first keep the law; no wisdom or discernment but is the fruit of God's fear.

14 Without shrewdness' thou wilt never advance in the school of virtue; yet shrewdness there is that breeds abundance of mischief; where the stream runs foul, 16 there can be no rightness of mind. Where true wisdom is, there discernment flows in full tide, there prudence springs up, an inexhaustible fountain of life.

17 Heart of fool is leaking bucket, that loses all the wisdom it learns. Truths that wisdom will prize and cherish, the profligate hears no less, but hearing despises, and casts them to the winds. Listening to a fool is like journeying with a heavy pack; there is no pleasing the ear, where sense is none. How they hang on the lips of a wise man, the folk assembled, ay, and ponder in their hearts over the word said! A fool takes refuge in wise talk as a man takes shelter in a ruin; learning without sense, that cannot abide scrutiny. To the fool, instruction seems but a fetter to clog him, 23 gyves that cramp his wrist. A fool laughs loud; smiling, the wise compress their lips. Precious as an ornament of gold, close-fitting as a bracelet to the right arm, is instruction to a wise man. Folly sets foot over every threshold, where the experienced mind stands, as in a royal presence, abashed; folly peeps in at windows, where experience waits patiently without; 27 listens thoughtlessly behind open doors, where prudence hangs back for very shame.² Fools break out into rash utterance, where the prudent are at pains to weigh their words; with the one, to think is to speak, with the other, to speak is to think.

30 Let the sinner curse the foul fiend that spites him,³ on his own head the curse shall recoil. The tale-bearer is his own enemy,

shunned by all; court his friendship, and thou wilt court hatred; shut lips and calm judgement shall bring thee a good name.

22 What ill names shall we hurl at the sluggard? Stone from the sewers, that has no man's good word; dung from the midden, for all to wash their hands of him.

Spoilt son thou shalt beget to thy shame, 3 spoilt daughter to thy great loss; bring she to her husband no dower of modesty, her shame shall cost thee dear. Shame the father shall have, shame the husband; fit company for sinners, she will have no good word from either of these.

Speech may be out of season, like music 6 in time of mourning; not so the rod, not so chastisement; there lies ever wisdom.⁴ Teach a fool, and mend a pot with glue; 7 better audience thou shalt have from the sleeper thou wouldst awake from a deep dream; thy wise speech ended, Why, 9 what's to do?⁵ ask fool and dreamer alike.

For the dead that lacks light, for the fool that lacks wit, never cease to mourn; 11 not for the dead overmuch, since rest is his, but the fool's life is empty beyond the emptiness of death; seven days the dead 13 are mourned, but the fool, the godless fool, all his life long.

Linger never with a fool in talk, nor cast 14 in thy lot with his; keep clear of him, as thou wouldst keep clear of mischief, and of sin's pollution; go thy way, and let him 16 go his; thou shalt sleep the sounder, for having no folly of his to cloud thy spirits. Nought like lead for heaviness? Ay, but its name is fool. With sand or salt or iron bars 18 burden thyself, not with rash and godless company, not with a fool.

Underpin the foundations with timber 19 balks, thy house shall withstand all shock; nor less shall he, whose heart stands resolved in the counsels of prudence; 20 no hour of peril can daunt that steadfast heart. Palisade set on high ground, with 21 no better protection against the wind's fury than cheap rubble, is but of short

¹ In the Latin version, 'wisdom', in the Greek text, 'knavery'; cf. note on 19. 20. ² *iv.* 25-27: These verses are usually understood as an instruction in the usages of polite society. It is more probable that the sacred author is denouncing, under a metaphor, the habit of rash enquiry. ³ 'The foul fiend' may, in the Hebrew text, have meant simply 'his enemy'. ⁴ The use of words in this verse is very strained, and it is likely that the Hebrew text was corrupt. ⁵ The Greek text here has, 'What is it?' The Latin version ('Who is it?') would apply to the sleeper, but gives no satisfactory sense as applied to the fool.

- 22 endurance; faint heart that thinks a fool's thoughts will not be proof against sudden terror. Faint heart that thinks a fool's thoughts...
- 23 ... shall never be afraid; no more shall he, that still keeps true to God's commandments.¹
- 24 Chafed eye will weep, chafed heart will shew resentment. One stone flung, and the birds are all on the wing; one taunt uttered, and the friendship is past repair.
- 26 Hast thou drawn sword against thy friend?
- 27 Be comforted; all may be as it was. Hast thou assailed him with angry words? Thou mayst yet be reconciled. But the taunt, the contemptuous reproach, the secret betrayed, the covert attack, all these mean a friend lost.
- 28 Keep faith with a friend when his purse is empty, thou shalt have joy of his good fortune; stand by him when he falls upon evil times, thou shalt be partner in his prosperity.
- 30 Chimney-fumes and smoke rising, of fire forewarn thee; curse uttered, and threat, and insult, of bloodshed.
- 31 Never will I be ashamed to greet friend of mine, never deny myself to him; let harm befall me for his sake, I care not.
- 32 ... All that hear of it will keep their distance from him.²
- 33 Oh for a sentry to guard this mouth of mine, a seal to keep these lips inviolate! From that snare may I be safe, nor ever let my tongue betray me!

23 Lord, that gavest my life and art the ruler of it, never may these lips of mine have me at their mercy, never let them betray me into a fall! Be my thoughts ever under the lash, my heart disciplined by true wisdom; let it never deal gently with their unwitting offences, or gloss over the wrong they do! What if my transgressions should go, all unobserved, from bad to worse, if I should sin ever oftener, and add fault to fault? What humiliation were this, in full view of my enemies; how would my ill-wishers triumph at the sight!

Lord, that gavest my life and art the divine ruler of it, let them not have me at their mercy; never let haughty looks be mine, never the assaults of passion come near me. Let the itch of gluttony pass me by, nor ever carnal lust overtake me; do not leave me, Lord, at the mercy of a shameless, an unprofitable mind!

Here is the lore, my sons, of the tongue's use; hold fast by it, and thy own lips shall never be thy undoing, to ensnare thee in heinous wrong. What is it but his lying that entraps the sinner, what snare but their own speech catches the proud, the slanderers? That mouth of thine do not inure to oath-taking; therein lie many perils; wilt thou take God's name often on thy lips, and of holy titles make thy constant invocation, thy word is forfeit to them. Slave that is evermore under the lash cannot escape without bruises a many; thy often swearing, thy often invoking, shall lead thee into guilt at last. Oaths a many, sins a many; punishment shall be still at thy doors. Forswear thyself, thou shalt be held to account for it; forget the oath, it is at thy double peril; and though it were lightly taken, thou shalt find no excuse in that; plague shall light on all thou hast, in amends for it.

Sin of speech there is, too, that has death for its counterpart; God send it be not found in Jacob's chosen race;³ from men of tender conscience every such thought is far away, not theirs to wallow in evil-doing.

Beware of habituating thy tongue to lewd talk; therein is matter of offence.

Not thine to bring shame on father and mother. There are great ones all around thee; what if thyself God should disregard, when thou art in their company? Then shall this ill custom of thine strike thee dumb⁴ and bring thee to great dishonour; thou wilt wish thou hadst never been, and rue the day of thy birth.

Let a man grow into a habit of railing speech, all his days there is no amending him.

Two sorts of men are sinners above

¹ The Latin text here is evidently confused, and perhaps defective.

² *Eccl.* 31, 32: It is difficult to make these verses into a continuous sentence; to render 'let harm befall me through his agency' is a mis-translation of the Greek. There has perhaps been an omission in the text.

³ There can be little doubt that the reference is to blasphemy (see *Lev.* 24, 16).

⁴ 'What if thyself God should disregard, when thou art in their company? Then shall this ill custom of thine strike thee dumb'; literally, 'Let by chance God should forget thee (in the Greek, thou shouldst forget) in their presence, and be made foolish by thy habit'. It is difficult to be certain either of the exact meaning of the passage, or of its relevance to the context.

measure, and a third I can name that calls
22 down vengeance. There is a hot temper,
all fire and fury, that cannot die down till
23 it has had its fill. A man that is corrupted
by the prompting of his own lust¹ will not
24 be content until it bursts into flame. To the
fornicator, one pasture-ground is as good
as another; there is no wearying him till he
25 has tried all. Out on the man that takes his
life in his hands and comes between an-
other's sheets! There is none to witness it,
26 thinks he; darkness all about, and walls to
shelter me, and none watching; what have
I to fear? Sins like mine the most High
27 will never mark. Of that all-seeing eye no
heed takes he; fear of a man has driven the
fear of God from his thoughts; of human
28 eyes only he shuns the regard.² What, are
not God's eyes a thousand times more
piercing than the sun's rays? Do they not
watch all the doings of men, the depths of
earth, and man's heart, every secret open
29 to their scrutiny? God, that knows all he
means to make, does he not watch over all
he has made?

30 In full view of the open street the adul-
terer shall pay the penalty; loud, as for a
runaway horse, the hue and cry; where he
thought to escape, justice outruns him.
31 All the world shall witness his shame, that
left the fear of the Lord unregarded. Nor
32 less guilty is she who plays her husband
false, giving him for heir a child that is no
son of his. Broken, the law of the most
33 High; her plighted troth forsaken; sons
borne to a paramour, has she not thrice
34 played the wanton? Needs must she con-
front the folk assembled, nor shall those
35 sons of hers be spared; such roots must not
36 burgeon, such boughs never bear fruit; she
leaves but the memory of an accursed
37 name, a name for ever dishonoured. Warn-
ing she gives to after ages that God's fear
is best, nor sweeter lot is any than the
38 divine law well observed. Follow the
Lord, and it shall be thy renown; a long
life is the reward it shall bring thee.

24 Hear now how wisdom speaks in
her own regard, of the honour God
has given her, of the boast she utters

among the nation that is hers. In the court
2 of the most High, in the presence of all his
host, she makes her boast aloud, and here,
3 amid the holy gathering of her own people,
that high renown of hers is echoed; praise
4 is hers from God's chosen, blessing from
blessed lips.

I am that word, she says, that was ut-
5 tered by the mouth of the most High, the
primal birth before ever creation began.
Through me light rose in the heavens,
6 inexhaustible; it was I that covered, as
with a mist, the earth. In high heaven was
7 my dwelling-place, my throne a pillar of
cloud; none but I might span the sky's
8 vault, pierce the depth of the abyss, walk
on the sea's waves; no part of earth but
9 gave a resting-place to my feet.

People was none, nor any race of men,
10 but I had dominion there; high and low,
my power ruled over men's hearts. Yet
11 with all these I sought rest in vain; it is
among the Lord's people that I mean to
dwell. He who fashioned me, he, my own
12 Creator, has found me a dwelling-place;
and his command to me was that I should
13 find my home in Jacob, throw in my lot
with Israel, take root among his chosen
race. From the beginning of time, before
14 the worlds, he had made me, unailing to
all eternity; in his own holy dwelling-place
I had waited on his presence; and now,
15 no less faithfully, I made Sion my stronghold,
the holy city my resting-place, Jerusalem
my throne. My roots spread out among
16 the people that enjoys his favour, my God
has granted me a share in his own domain;
where his faithful servants are gathered I
love to linger.

I grew to my full stature as cedar grows
17 on Lebanon, as cypress on Sion's hill; or
18 a palm tree in Cades, or a rose bush in
Jericho; grew like some fair olive in the
valley, some plane-tree in a well-watered
street. Cinnamon and odorous balve have
19 no scent like mine; the choicest myrrh has
no such fragrance. Perfumed is all my
20 dwelling-place with storax, and galbanum,
and onycha, and stacte, and frankincense
uncrushed; the smell of me is like pure
21 balm. Mastic-tree spread not its branches
22

¹ Literally, 'by the mouth of his flesh'. It would be easiest to understand what are the three sins mentioned in verse 21, if we could suppose that the Hebrew text intended, in verse 23, the sin of gluttony (cf. verse 6 above). But some think that the whole passage, including verse 22, refers to sins against chastity.

² The Latin version, evidently by an error, gives at the end of the verse 'the eyes of men fear him', instead of 'the eyes of men frighten him'.

so wide, as I the hopes I proffer of glory
 23 and of grace. No vine ever yielded fruit so
 fragrant; the enjoyment of honour and
 riches is the fruit I bear.

24 It is I that give birth to all noble loving,
 all reverence, all true knowledge, and the
 25 holy gift of hope. From me comes every
 grace of faithful observance, from me all
 26 promise of life and vigour. Hither turn
 your steps, all you that have learned to long
 for me; take your fill of the increase I yield.
 27 Never was honey so sweet as the influence
 I inspire, never honey-comb as the gift I
 28 bring; mine is a renown that endures, age
 29 after age. Eat of this fruit, and you will yet
 hunger for more; drink of this wine, and
 30 your thirst for it is still unquenched. He
 who listens to me will never be disap-
 pointed; he who lives by me will do no
 31 wrong; he who reads my lesson aright will
 find in it life eternal.

32 What things are these I write of? What
 but the life-giving book that is the cove-
 nant of the most High, and the revelation
 33 of all truth? What but the law Moses
 enjoined, with the duties it prescribes, the
 inheritance it bestows, the promises it
 34 holds out? Solemnly he pledged himself
 to give his servant David an heir most
 valiant, that should hold his royal throne
 35 for ever. Who but he¹ can make wisdom
 flow, deep as the stream Phison sends
 36 down, or Tigris, in the spring; make the
 tide of prudence run, strong as Euphrates'
 own, or Jordan's tide in the month of
 37 harvest; make obedience rise to its full
 height, like Nile² or Gehon when men
 38 gather the vintage? He it was that first
 attained to wisdom's secret, never since
 39 made known to any less than himself; so
 deep are her thoughts, sea-deep, so dark
 her counsels, dark as the great abyss.

40 From me rivers flow, says Wisdom,
 deep rivers.

41 And what am I?³ A conduit that carries
 off the river's overflow, its channel,
 42 the aqueduct that waters a park. I thought to
 refresh my well-set garden, give drink to
 43 the fruits that fringe its border; and all at

once my channel overflowed, this stream
 of mine had nigh turned into a sea! Teach-
 ing is here like the dawn for brightness,
 shedding its rays afar. Nay, I will make
 my way down to the depths of earth, and
 visit those who sleep there, and to such as
 trust in the Lord I will bring light. My
 teaching shall yet flow on, faithful as pro-
 phecy, heirloom to all such as make wis-
 dom their quest, and to their children yet,
 until the holy days come. See how I have
 toiled, not for my own sake merely, but for
 all such as covet wisdom!

25 Three sights warm my heart; God
 and man wish them well: peace in
 the clan, good will among neighbours, man
 and wife well matched. Three sorts of men
 move my spleen, so that I am fain to
 grudge them life itself: poor man that is
 proud, rich man that is a liar, old man that
 is fond and foolish.

The store youth never puts by, shall old
 age enjoy? Good judgement well matches
 grey hairs, for still the elders must be men
 of prudence; wisdom for the old, discern-
 ment for senators, and the gift of counsel!
 No crown have old men like their long ex-
 perience, no ornament like the fear of God.

Nine envious thoughts came suddenly
 into my mind, and a tenth I will add for
 good measure. Happy is he that has joy of
 his children; that lives to see his enemies'
 downfall. Happiness it is to share thy
 home with a faithful wife; to have a tongue
 that never betrays thee; to serve only thy
 betters. Happiness it is to have a true
 friend. . .⁴ and to speak the right word to
 an ear that listens. Happy is he that wis-
 dom gains and skill; yet is he no match for
 one who fears the Lord. The fear of God,
 is a gift beyond all gifts; blessed the man
 that receives it, he has no equal. Fear the
 Lord, and thou shalt learn to love him; cling
 close, and thou shalt learn to trust him.

There is no sadness but what touches
 the heart, no mischief but what comes
 from woman. A man will endure any
 wound but the heart's wound, and any

¹ Some would render, 'What but this . . .', referring to the Law of Moses.

² Both the Latin and the Greek have, 'like the light'; but the context makes it clear that they have overlooked a single vowel in the word which must have stood in the Hebrew original.

³ *rv. 41-46*: Commentators are not agreed whether these words are to be understood as spoken by Wisdom, like verse 40, or by Ecclesiasticus himself, like verse 47 (cf. 33. 18 below).

⁴ It seems possible that one of the nine beatitudes has fallen out through a textual error, unless we reckon wisdom and skill in verse 13 as separate sources of happiness.

malice but a woman's; just so he will
 endure any annoyance but from his ill-
 wishers, any sentence imposed on him but
 by his enemies.¹ No head so venomous as
 the viper's, nor any anger like a woman's.
 Better share thy home with lion and ser-
 pent both, than with an ill woman's com-
 pany. A woman's ill will changes the very
 look of her; grim as a bear's her visage, and
 she goes like one mourning. See where he
 sits among his neighbours, that husband
 of hers, groaning deep and sighing as he
 listens to them! All other mischief is a
 slight thing beside the mischief an ill
 woman does; may she fall to a sinner's lot!
 Better climb sandy cliff with the feet of old
 age, than be a peace-loving man mated
 with a scold. Let not thy eye be caught by
 a woman's beauty; not for her beauty
 desire her; think of woman's rage, her
 shamelessness, the dishonour she can do
 thee, how hard it goes with a man if his
 wife will have the uppermost. Crushed
 spirits, a clouded brow, a heavy heart, all
 this is an ill woman's work; faint hand and
 flagging knee betoken one unblessed in his
 marriage. Through a woman sin first be-
 gan; such fault was hers, we all must die
 for it. Thy cistern thou wouldst not let
 leak, ever so little; and wouldst thou let a
 wanton wife roam at large? Leave she once
 thy side, thou shalt be the laughing-stock
 of thy enemies; best cut away the ill growth
 from thy flesh; she will ever be taking
 advantage of thee.

26 Happy the man that has a faithful
 wife; his span of days is doubled.

A wife industrious is the joy of her hus-
 band, and crowns all his years with peace.
 He best thrives that best wives; where men
 fear God, this is the reward of their service,
 good cheer given to rich and poor alike;
 day in, day out, never a mournful look.

Three things daunt me somewhat, a
 fourth I dare not face. Gossip of the
 streets, the judgement of the rabble, and
 the false charge preferred, all these make
 death itself seem a light thing. But there
 is no affliction wrings the heart like a

woman's jealousy; once a woman grows
 jealous, her tongue is a scourge to all alike.
 Easier to guide an unsteady team of oxen
 than an ill woman; easier to hold a snake
 than to manage her. Woman that is a sot,
 vexation shall bring thee, and great dis-
 honour; there is no hiding her shame.
 Haughty gaze and lowered eye-lid, there
 goes a wanton. Headstrong daughter must
 be held with a tight rein, or she will find
 opportunity to bestow her favours; beware
 of that shameless eye, nor think it strange
 if she defies thee. Reckless thou wilt find
 her as thirsty traveller that puts his mouth
 to the spring and drinks what water he can
 get; no stake but she will make fast by it,
 no arrow comes amiss to her archery, till
 of dalliance she has had enough.

Great content an industrious wife brings
 to her husband; health to every bone of his
 body is that good sense of hers. No better
 gift of God to man than a prudent woman
 that can hold her tongue; a soul well dis-
 ciplined is beyond all price. Grace so gra-
 cious is none as woman's faithfulness and
 woman's modesty; woman's continence
 there is no valuing. Sun dawning in heaven
 cannot match the lustre a good wife sheds
 on her home, and that beauty lasts into
 ripe age, like the glow of lights on the holy
 lamp-stand. Firm as golden pillar in silver
 socket rest the feet of steadfast woman on
 the ground she treads; and firm as founda-
 tions built for all time on solid rock is holy
 woman's loyalty to God's command-
 ments.²

Two sad sights my heart knows, and one
 more that fills it with indignation; warrior
 left to starve, and wise counsellor un-
 regarded, and a man that leaves right
 living for ill-doing, ripe for God's ven-
 geance.

Two dangers I see that are hard to
 overcome. How shall a merchant be cured
 of careless dealing, or a huckster for his
 lying talk find pardon?

27 Sin comes often of an empty
 purse; nothing distorts the eye
 like the love of riches. Stake that is held

¹ *vv.* 20, 21: It is difficult to feel certain that our versions have preserved the exact sense of the original. These two verses entirely break up the continuity of the context; in verse 23 the Greek makes matters worse by giving us 'like an enemy's' instead of 'like a woman's'. The word translated 'sentence' in verse 21 is literally 'vengeance'; and it is hard to see from what other class of people than one's enemies vengeance could reasonably be expected. ² A few Greek manuscripts insert here nine more verses upon the subject of women.

between two stones cannot escape; nor may sin be avoided when there is seller on this side, buyer on that. Wrong done shall be undone, and the doer of it as well; hold fast to thy fear of the Lord, or thy wealth shall soon come to ruin.

The sieve shaken, nothing is left but refuse; so thou wilt find a man's poverty in his thought.¹

Pottery is tested in the furnace, man in the crucible of suffering.

Good fruit comes from a tree well dressed, and a man will be in word what he is in thought; do not give thy opinion of a man till he has spoken; there lies the proof.

Make right-doing thy quest, and thou wilt not miss the mark; this shall be a robe of honour to clothe thee, a welcome guest in thy house, to watch over thee continually, and to be thy stronghold at the hour when all is made known.

Bird mates with bird, and he that shews faithfulness faithfulness shall meet.

The lion waits in ambush for his prey; leave the right path, and sin shall be ever at thy heels.

Unfailing as the sun is the wisdom of a devout mind; moon and fool change continually.

When thou hast fools for thy company, thy word can wait; be closeted continually with the wise.

Out upon the wearisome talk of sinners, that of sin and its dalliance makes a jest! Out upon the man that uses oaths lightly; hair stands upright at his blaspheming, and ears are stopped! Out upon the proud, that provoke bloodshed with their quarrelling, and by their cursing offend all who listen!

Betray thy friend's secret, and all confidence is lost; never more shalt thou have friend to comfort thee. Use such a man lovingly, and keep faith with him; if once thou hast betrayed him, court no more his company. Friendship thus killed, thy friend is dead to thee; bird let go from the hand is not lost more irretrievably; he is gone, like hind released from the snare, gone beyond thy pursuit. The wound that

hurts a man's soul there is no healing; the bitter taunt may yet be unsaid, but once the secret is out all is misery, all is despair.

Sly glance of the false friend! How shall a man be rid of him? Here in thy presence, he smooths his brow, and is all in wonderment at thy wise sayings; but ere long he will change his tune, and lend thy words an ill colour. Above all else, he earns my hatred; God's hatred too, I doubt not.

None can throw stone in air but at his own head's peril, nor ever was blow struck treacherously, but the traitor must have his share of hurt; a man may fall into the pit he dug, trip on the stone he set in his neighbour's path, perish in the snare he laid for another. Plot ill, and the ill shall recoil on thyself, springing up beyond all thy expectation.

For the proud, mockery and shame! Vengeance, like a lion, couches in wait for them.

For all who triumph at the ill fortune of the just, a snare to catch them, and a long remorse before death takes them!

Rancour and rage are detestable things both; and the sinner has both in store.

28 He that will be avenged brings on himself the Lord's vengeance; watch and ward shall be kept over his sins continually. Forgive thy neighbour his fault, and for thy own sins thy prayer shall win pardon; should man bear man a grudge, and yet look to the Lord for healing? Should he refuse mercy to his fellow-man, yet ask forgiveness, should he think to appease God, while he, a mortal man, is obdurate? Who shall plead for his acquittal? Look to thy last end, and leave thy quarrelling; with the grave's corruption God's commandments threaten thee.² Thy God fear, thy neighbour forgive; the covenant of the most High remember, thy neighbour's slip forget.

Keep clear of quarrelling, and sin shall less abound. Quick temper sets feuds a-raging, and wicked men there are that will embroil fast friends, and stir up strife

¹ This obscure maxim may be interpreted in several ways, none of which is quite satisfactory. There may have been an error in the text: 'poverty' is represented in the Greek by a second word for 'refuse', and in the Latin by an abstract noun which signifies 'not knowing which way to turn'.
² Literally, in the Latin, 'Corruption and death threaten in his commandments'; in the Greek '(look to) corruption and death, and abide in his commandments'.

12 among folk that lived at peace. More fuel,
more fire; strong man will rage the more,
rich man push his vengeance further.

13 Heat is gended by the haste of rivalry,
and bloodshed by hot blood; but it is
14 tongue of witness that brings death. Spark
blown upon will blaze, spat upon will die
out; see how of both the mouth is arbiter!
15 A curse on every tale-bearer and traducer
that disturbs the world's peace! Tongue
16 that comes between two friends, how many
it has exiled, sent them to wander far
17 away, how many rich cities dismantled,
18 great houses demolished, what armies it
has routed, what proud nations brought to
19 ruin, what noble women it has driven out
from their homes, and left all their toil
20 unrewarded! Pay heed to it, and thou
shalt never rest more, never find friend in
21 whom thou canst trust. Whip that lashes
does but bruise the skin; tongue that lashes
22 will break bones; the sword has killed
many, the tongue more.

23 Blessed is he that is preserved from the
tongue's wickedness, that has never felt its
fury, never borne its yoke or worn its
24 chains; that yoke of iron, those chains of
25 bronze! Here is death worse than death
itself, here is loss the grave cannot outvie.
26 Not for ever shall its reign persist, but
where wicked men go it still follows; the
27 just it cannot consume, but if thou forsake
God thou shalt encounter it, a fire that
burns thee and will not be quenched, an
assault more perilous than assault of lion
28 or pard. Fence thy ears about with thorns,
and give the wicked tongue no hearing;
make fast thy mouth with bolt and bar.
29 Melt down gold and silver of thine, and get
thee a balance that shall weigh thy words,
a bridle that shall be the rule of thy
30 mouth; 'do all that lies in thee to keep thy
tongue from speaking amiss, lest lurking
enemies triumph over thy ruin, the fatal
and final ruin that shall be thine.

29 Heart full of kindness and hand
full of comfort will keep the com-
mandment, Lend to thy neighbour.

Neighbour must borrow easily when he
needs, must repay readily when his need
is over. Keep thy bond, deal faithfully,
and thou shalt never lack. Out upon the
man that treats loan as treasure trove, and
is a burden to his benefactor! What, kiss
the hand that gives, and make humble
promises of repayment; then, when the
debt falls due, ask for grace, and complain
peevishly of hard times? Pay grudgingly
when pay thou canst, offer but half the
sum, and count it a windfall for the lender?
Or, if thou canst not, disown the debt and
make an enemy of him, rewarding thy
benefactor not with due honour, but with
angry curse and reproach? What wonder
if many refuse to lend, not churlishly but
for fear of wilful wrong? Yet I would have
thee patient with needy folk; do not keep
them waiting for thy charity; befriend
them, as the law commands, nor ever send
them away in their misery empty-handed.
It is thy brother, thy friend that asks;
better lose thy money than leave it to rust
in a vault. Lay up store for thyself by
obeying the commandments of the most
High; more than gold it shall profit thee;
the good deed treasured in poor men's
hearts shall ransom thee from all harm,
shall more avail than stout shield or lance
to ward off thy enemies.

Kindness bids thee go bail for thy neigh-
bour; he has lost all shame if he plays thee
false.² And if another goes bail for thee,
do not forget the benefit done thee; he gave
his life for thine. It is right foully done to
play a surety false; wouldst thou treat his
goods as if they were thy own? Wouldst
thou, ungrateful wretch, leave thy ran-
somer to suffer for it? Men have gone bail
ere now for shameless friends that so aban-
doned them. By going bail for scoundrels,
men of good fortune have fallen upon ruin
and shipwreck; men that held their heads
high must now wander far and wide, exiles
in strange countries. Leave godless sin-
ners to become sureties to their ruin; men
that take rash ventures to fall into the law's
clutches. For thyself, relieve thy neighbour

¹ vv. 28, 29: The Greek here differs from the Latin considerably, but its effect is the same, and makes it clear that the sacred author is alluding, all through this paragraph, not to the danger of incurring calumny, but to the danger of falling into a habit of calumniating others. ² *op. cit.* 19 sqq.: In Prov. 17, 18, and elsewhere a warning is given against the folly of becoming surety for a friend, and verses 26, 27 of the present chapter seem to imply the same moral. These warnings perhaps refer to rash commercial speculations; where it is a question of charity, we may have the duty of making ourselves responsible on behalf of some poor man, at the risk of his defrauding us.

as thy means allow, but never to thy own entanglement.

28 What are man's first needs? Water, and
bread, and clothing, and the privacy of a
29 home. Better the poor man's fare under
his roof of bare boards, than to be guest at
a splendid banquet, and home have none.
30 Make much of the little thou hast; never
be it thine to bear the reproach of a wan-
31 derer. A wretched life it is, passing on
from house to house to find a welcome;
that welcome found, thou wilt lack all con-
32 fidence, and sit there mumchance. Then,
when thou hast helped to entertain, with
food and drink, the guests that owe thee
no thanks, thou wilt have a poor reward
33 for it: Up, wanderer! Lay me a fresh
table, and what lies before thee hand to
34 others; I have honoured guests coming,
and thou must make way for them; a kins-
man of mine stands in need of my hos-
35 pitality! Bitter words for an honest man
to hear; shall he owe his bread to one that
reviles him as homeless?

30 Inure thy son to the rod, as thou
lovest him; so shalt thou have
comfort of him¹ in thy later years, nor go
about knocking softly at thy neighbour's
2 doors. Discipline thy son, and thou shalt
take pride in him; he shall be thy boast
3 among thy familiars. Discipline thy son,
if thou wouldst make thy ill-wishers envy
thee, wouldst hold thy head high among
4 thy friends. Father that dies lives on, if a
5 worthy son he has begotten; here is a sight
to make life joyous for him, and death not
all unhappiness, and a bold front he keeps
6 before his ill-wishers; such an heir will
shew loyalty to his race, its foes warding
7 off, its friends requiting. Let a man pam-
per his children, binding up every wound,²
8 his heart wrung by every cry, and he shall
find spoil son headstrong and stubborn as
9 a horse unbroken. Cosset thy son and
make a darling of him, it shall be to thy
10 own anxiety, thy own remorse. Smile at
his follies now, and the bitter taste of it
11 shall set thy teeth on edge hereafter. Thou
canst not afford to give him freedom in his
youth, or leave his thoughts unchecked;
12 none is too young to be bent to the yoke,

none is too childish to be worth a drubbing,
if thou wouldst not see him wilful and dis-
obedient, to thy heart's unrest. Discipline 13
thy son, be at pains with him, or his shame-
less ways will be thy downfall.

Poor man sound and strong of body is 14
better off than rich man enfeebled, and
racked with disease. Health of the soul, 15
that lies in duty done faithfully, is more
worth having than gold or silver; no trea-
sure so rare that it can match bodily
strength. Health is best wealth; no com- 16
fort wilt thou find like a merry heart.
Better the endless repose of death, than 17
life by lingering sickness made irksome.
For mouth that refuses nourishment what 18
use in dainties? They are no better than
the banquet left on a tomb, little availing 19
yonder idol, that cannot taste or smell.
Once the Lord has laid thee by the heels, 20
to do penance for thy sins, thou shalt 21
hanker and sigh for these dainties but as
eunuch that fondles maid.

Nor let anxious thoughts fret thy life 22
away; a merry heart is the true life of man, 23
is an unfailing store of holiness; length of
years is measured by rejoicing. Thy own 24
self befriending, doing God's will with en-
durance, and giving all thy heart to the
holiness he enjoins, and banish thy sad 25
thoughts; sadness has been the death of
many, and no good ever came of it.
Jealousy and peevishness shorten a man's 26
days; cares bring old age untimely; gay 27
and gallant heart is ever feasting, sets to
and makes good cheer.

31 Wilt thou pine away with care for
riches, lose thy sleep for thinking
of it? These solicitudes breed a madness 1
in the brain, such as only grave sickness
can expel. Toils rich man for gain, till he 3
can rest and enjoy what is his; toils poor
man to fend off need, and when he ceases 4
he is a poor man still. Love money, and
thou shalt be called to account for it; thy 5
quest corruption, of corruption thou shalt
have thy fill. Many have given themselves 6
up to the lure of gold, and in its beauty
found their ruin; its worship was a snare to 7
catch their feet; alas, poor fools that went
searching for it, and themselves were lost!

¹ Or possibly, 'so shall he have comfort'.

² The sense given here is that of the Greek; the Latin version, apparently through misunderstanding a rare word in the Greek, gives us the meaningless phrase, 'he will bind up his own wounds for the souls of his sons'.

8 Blessed is the man who lives, for all his
wealth, unproved, who has no greed for
gold and puts no trust in his store of
9 riches! Shew us such a man, and we will
be loud in his praise; here is a life to
10 wonder at. A man so tested and found
perfect wins eternal honour; he kept clear
of sin, when sinful ways were easy, did
no wrong, when wrong lay in his power.
11 His treasure is safely preserved in the
Lord's keeping and wherever faithful
men are met, his alms-deeds will be
remembered.

12 Sit thou at a rich man's table, be not
13 quick to remark upon it; it is ill done to cry
out, Here is a table well spread! Be sure
14 a covetous eye shall do thee no good; eye
is a great coveter, and for that, like no other
15 part of thy face, condemned to weep. Be
not quick to reach out thy hand, and be
16 noted, to thy shame, for greed; jostling
goes ill with a feast. Learn from thy own
17 conjecture thy neighbour's need; take
sparingly the good things set before thee,
20 nor court ill-will by thy gluttony. For
manners' sake, leave off eating betimes, or
21 thy greed shall give offence. When there
are many about thee, do not be quick to
stretch out thy hand, quick to call for
22 wine. For a man well disciplined a little
wine is enough; spare thyself the un-
easy sleep, the pains that shall rack thee;
23 wakeful nights come of excess, and bile and
24 griping pains. For the temperate man,
there is sound sleep; sleep that lasts till
morning, and contents his whole being;
25 though thou have been constrained to eat
beyond thy wont, thou hast but to leave the
table and vomit, and thou shalt find relief,
nor come to any bodily harm.

26 Take good heed, my son, do not belittle
this advice of mine; thou shalt live to prove
27 it true. Put thy heart into all thou doest,
and no infirmity of purpose shall hinder
28 thee.¹ The generous host is on all men's
lips; ever they bear witness to his loyal
29 friendship; the niggard has the ill word of
a whole city; men form shrewd judgement
of a niggard.

30 Never challenge hard drinker to a
drinking-bout; wine has been the ruin of

many. Fire tests the strength of steel; and
31 a proud man fuddled with wine betrays his
quality. Easy flow wine, easy flow life, but
32 to men of sober habit; sobriety must drink
within measure. To the drunkard,² life is
33 no life at all; wine is death, when it so
34 deprives a man of life. Wine was made for
mirth, never for drunkenness; drink wisely,
35 and it shall rejoice thy heart and thy whole
being; health it brings to mind and body,
36 wine wisely taken. Wine drunk in excess
brings anger and quarrelling and calamities
37 a many; it is the poison of a man's
38 life. What does the false courage of the
drunkard? It takes him unawares, and
39 makes him less a man; grievous wounds
come of it. When the wine goes round, do
40 not find fault with thy neighbour, or think
the worse of him for being merry; never
41 taunt him, never press him to repay the
debt.

32 If they will make thee master of
the feast, do not give thyself airs;
bear thyself as an equal. Make good pro-
42 vision for the guests, and so take thy place
among them; thy duty done, recline at
ease, and in their pleasure rejoice, accept-
43 ing the crown that marks their favour, the
honour bestowed by their gifts. Speak
44 first, as becomes thy seniority, but with
due choice of words; and do not break in
45 when music is a-playing; no need for thy
words to flow when none is listening, for
thy wisdom to be displayed unseasonably.
46 Music and wine, carbuncle set in gold,
music and wine, signet ring of gold and
47 emerald, so the wine be good, and taken in
due measure.

Keep silence, and give others a hearing;
48 it shall win thee a name for modesty; if
thou art but a young man, be loth to speak
49 even of what concerns thee, and if thou art
pressed for an answer, give it in brief. For
50 the most part keep thy knowledge con-
cealed under a mask of silence and en-
51 quiry; nor ever be familiar among great
men, nor garrulous among the wise. Sure
52 as the lightning is sign of a storm, men's
good word is the sign of a modest nature;
they will love thee all the better for thy

¹ The bearing of this maxim is very doubtful; we may translate 'sickness' instead of 'infirmity of purpose'.
² v. 33: 'To the drunkard'; literally, 'to him who is lessened by (or, in respect of) wine'. Elsewhere in this book this verb expresses some deficit in personal qualities. The sense 'to him who must go without wine' is admissible, and if it is adopted, the next verse will refer not to immoderate drinking, but to an empty cellar.

15 bashfulness. When the time comes for going, do not linger; get thee gone speedily to thy home, there to divert thyself, and
16 take thy ease, and follow the whim of thy own thoughts, yet innocently and with no word proudly said. And for all this give thanks to God thy maker, that so contents thee with his gifts.

18 If thou fearest the Lord, thou wilt accept the schooling he gives thee, waiting early at his door to win his blessing. In the law, the law's follower finds deep content, the false heart nothing but a snare to catch it.
20 Those who fear the Lord will discover where right lies, the light of truth shall shine from their awards;¹ the sinner fears to have his life reproved, and will ever be finding precedents for gratifying his own whim. A man of prudence will never throw caution to the winds; his proud enemy feels no dread even upon rashly provoking him, but shall live to rue the assault.² Do nothing, my son, save with consideration, and thy deeds shall not bring thee repentance. Take not some ruinous road that shall trip thee with its boulders; some road where all journeying is difficult³ and thou mayest expose thy life to sudden dangers. Of thy own children beware, be on thy watch against thy own household; be it thine to trust with all thy soul's confidence,⁴ and thou hast kept the commandments. Who trusts in God, keeps well God's command; confidence in him was never disappointed.

33 If a man fears the Lord, he shall meet with no disaster; God will be watching over him, even when his faith is put to the test, and from such disaster will preserve him. A wise man does not grow weary of the law, and the duties it enjoins, and no shipwreck can befall him. If thou art a man of judgement, thou hast only to trust God's commandment, and it will not fail thee; . . . giving a true answer to the question asked . . .⁵ thou wilt prepare thy plea, and find audience for thy prayer; wilt

recollect the teaching given thee, and so satisfy thy questioner. A fool's heart is but a wheel that turns; his are whirling thoughts. Hast thou a friend that will ever be mocking? Be comforted; stallion will ever neigh, ride him who will.

Why is it that one day which dawns, one year, takes precedence of another, when all come of the same sun? God's wisdom it was that so set them apart when he made the sun, and gave it a law to keep; made a succession of seasons, a succession of feast days, when at stated times men must keep holiday. To some he would assign high dignity; others should be lost in the common rabble of days. So it is that all men are built of the same clay; son of Adam is son of earth; yet the Lord, in the plenitude of his wisdom, has marked them off from one another, not giving the same destiny to each. For some, his blessing; he will advance them, will set them apart and claim them as his own. For some, his ban; he will bring them low, and single them out no more. Clay we are in the porter's hands; it is for him who made us to dispose of us; clay is what potter wills it to be, and we are in our maker's hands, to be dealt with at his pleasure. Evil matched with good, life matched with death, sinner matched with man of piety; so everywhere in God's works thou wilt find pairs matched, one against the other.

Think of me as one that has toiled last of all, and goes about gleaming a fruit here, a fruit there, after the vintagers have done. Yet did I trust that I, too, might have God's blessing, and I, too, have filled the wine-press, a vintager like the rest. See how I have toiled, not for my own sake merely, but for all such as covet wisdom! Words for the hearing of all, high and low; you that hold high place in the assembly, never disdain to listen.

Long as thou livest, do not put thyself in the power of others, though it be son or wife, kinsman or friend; do not make over thy goods to another; it is ill to go

¹ Or perhaps 'examples of obedience' (to the Law). ² *cc.* 22, 23. In the language here is very confused, and it seems likely that the true text may have been lost. ³ In the Greek, 'where there is no danger of stumbling'. ⁴ Or perhaps, 'to trust with all confidence in thy own soul', that is, in thyself; this is probably the meaning of the Greek. But, in these later chapters, we have a Hebrew text to consult, which doubtless goes back (though with certain alterations) to the original manuscript from which Jesus, son of Sirach, made his Greek translation. And this, supported by the Syriac version, gives us 'keeps watch over his own soul' instead of 'trusts his own soul'. ⁵ There may be some confusion in the text here; the words 'giving a true answer to the question asked' are connected by the Greek with what goes before, by the Latin with what follows.

21 a-begging for what is thy own. While life
and breath is in thee, never change places
22 with another; it is for thy children to
ask thee for what they need, not to have
23 thyself for their pensioner. Be at the
24 head of thy own affairs, nor ever tarnish
thy renown, until thy days are finished;
then, at the hour of thy death, make thy
bequests.

25 Fodder thy ass must have, and the whip,
and a pack to bear; thy slave, too, needs
26 food and discipline and hard work. Under
duress he toils, what marvel if ease should
tempt him? Leave his hands idle, and he
will seek to be his own master. The stub-
27 born ox yoke and rein will subdue; slave
held to his task is slave bowed to thy will;
28 keep rack and stocks for one that is bent on
mischief. To the task, no hours of leisure!
29 Idleness is a great teacher of ill habit. Toil
first assign to him; toiling is his lot; then,
if he disobeys thee, with the stocks thou
mayst tame him. Yet do not burden flesh
and blood more than it can bear, nor inflict
more than lawful punishment while the
30 plea is still unheard. Faithful slave if thou
hast, make much of him as of thy own self;
treat him as if he were thy brother, as if thy
own life were¹ the price of his purchase.
32 Wrong him, and he may run away from thy
33 service; once he takes to his heels, who can
tell thee where or in what guise thou mayst
discover him?

34 Fools are cheated by vain hopes,
buoyed up with the fancies of a
2 dream. Wouldst thou heed such lying
visions? Better clutch at shadows, or chase
3 the wind. Nought thou seest in a dream
but symbols; man is but face to face with
4 his own image. As well may foul thing
cleanse, as false thing give thee a true
5 warning. Out upon the folly of them, pre-
tended divination, and cheating omen, and
6 wizard's dream! Heart of woman in her
pangs is not more fanciful. Unless it be
some manifestation the most High has sent
7 thee, pay no heed to any such; trust in

dreams has crazed the wits of many, and
brought them to their ruin. Believe rather
8 the law's promises, that cannot miss their
fulfilment, the wisdom that trusty counsellors
shall make clear to thee.

A man will not learn until he is tested by
9 discipline.² That experience gained, he
will think deeply, and the many lessons he
has learned will make him a wise talker.
Without experience, a man knows little;
10 yet, if he is too venturesome, he reaps a
rich harvest of mischief. . . . A man will not
11 learn until he is tested by discipline. . . . and
if he is led astray he will be full of
knavery. . . .³ I myself have seen much in
12 my wanderings, the customs of men more
than I can tell.⁴ Sometimes, by this means,
13 I have been in danger of death, and only
the divine favour has preserved me
from it.

The life of such as fear the Lord is held
14 precious, and wins a blessing from his
regard; they have a deliverer they can
15 trust in, and God's eye watches over them
in return for their love. Fear the Lord,
16 and thou shalt never hesitate; nothing may
daunt thee, while such a hope is thine.
Blessed souls, that fear the Lord! They
17 know where to look for refuge. Fear the
Lord, and his eyes watch over thee; here
is strong protection, here is firm support;
shelter when the hot wind blows, shade at
noon-day; here is reassurance when a man
20 stumbles, support when he falls; soul up-
lifted, eyes enlightened, health and life and
blessing bestowed.

Tainted is every sacrifice that comes of
21 goods ill gotten; a mockery, this, of sacri-
fice, that shall win no favour. For those
22 who wait upon him in loyal duty, the Lord
alone is God.⁵ Should the most High
23 accept the offerings of sinners, take the
gifts of the wrong-doer into his reckoning,
and pardon their sins because their sacri-
24 fices are many? Who robs the poor and
then brings sacrifice, is of their fellowship
that would immolate some innocent child
before the eyes of his father. Poor man's⁵ 25

¹ Literally, 'since thy own life is'. Different versions have different variants of the phrase, and it is not certain what meaning should be assigned to it. ² 'Tested by discipline'; some of the Greek manuscripts have 'chastised', or perhaps simply 'schooled'; others, more plausibly, a 'travelled man', *ut.* 10, 11: The Latin here seems to have suffered from much confusion. 'Mischief' and 'knavery' in the Greek are 'discernment' and 'resourcefulness'; 'if he is led astray' is 'when he has travelled'. The Latin translator seems to have given two separate renderings of the same verse, neither of them accurate. ⁴ In the Greek, 'I know more than I am ready to tell'. ⁵ It is difficult to see the appositeness of this phrase. The rendering 'The Lord is only (approachable) for those who wait upon him in loyal duty' does not represent the Latin.

bread is poor man's life; cheat him of it,
 26 and thou hast slain him; sweat of his brow,
 27 or his life's blood, what matters? Dis-
 appoint the hireling, and thou art own
 28 brother to a murderer. Build while an-
 other pulls down, and toil is its own
 29 reward. Pray while another curses, and
 which of you shall find audience with
 30 God? Cleanse thyself from dead body's
 contamination, and touch it again, what
 31 avails thy cleansing? So it is when a man
 fasts for his sins, yet will not leave his sin-
 ning; vain is the fast, the prayer goes
 unanswered.

35 Live true to the law, and thou hast
 2 richly endowed the altar. Let this
 be thy welcome-offering, to heed God's
 3 word and keep clear of all wickedness; this
 thy sacrifice of amends for wrong done, of
 atonement for fault, to shun wrong-doing.
 4 Bloodless offering wouldst thou make, give
 thanks; ¹ victim wouldst thou immolate,
 5 shew mercy. Wickedness and wrong-
 doing to shun is to win God's favour, and
 pardon for thy faults.

6 Yet do not appear in the Lord's presence
 empty-handed; due observance must be
 8 paid, because God has commanded it. If
 thy heart is right, thy offering shall enrich
 the altar; its fragrance shall reach the pre-
 9 sence of the most High; a just man's
 sacrifice the Lord accepts, and will not
 pass over his claim to be remembered.
 10 Generously pay the Lord his due; do not
 grudge him the first-fruits of thy earnings;
 11 all thou givest, give with a smiling face,
 12 gladly bring in the tithe. In his own
 measure God's gift repay; grudge thou
 13 must not what afford thou canst; the Lord
 is a good master, and thou shalt have
 sevenfold in return.

14 But think not to bribe his justice; he
 15 will have none of thy bribery. Never pin
 thy hopes on the power of wealth ill gotten;
 the Lord is a true judge, not swayed by
 16 partiality, and thou canst not win him to
 take thy part against the friendless, turn
 17 him deaf to the plea of the wronged. Prayer
 of the orphan, eloquent sigh of the widow,
 18 he will not disregard; see the tears on
 yonder widow's cheeks, that accuse the
 19 author of her misery! From her cheeks

they rise to heaven, where all prayers are
 heard, a grievous sight. None but his true
 20 worshippers he makes welcome; for their
 supplication the clouds give passage.
 Pierce those clouds if thou wouldst, thou
 21 must humble thyself, inconsolable till that
 prayer finds audience, unwearied till it
 wins redress.

And will the Lord keep us waiting long? 22
 Hearing and redress he will grant to the
 innocent; strong as of old, patient no
 longer, he will crush the backs of our op-
 23 pressors. The Gentiles punished, scattered
 the hordes of insolence, broken the sceptre
 of wrong! Men called to account every-
 24 where for their deeds, the harvest of their
 mortal pride, and his own people vindic-
 25 ated at last, triumphing in his mercy at
 last! God's mercy, welcome to the afflicted
 26 as rain-clouds are welcome in time of
 drought!

36 God of all men, have mercy on us;
 1 look down, and let us see the smile
 of thy favour. Teach them to fear thee, 2
 those other nations that have never looked
 to find thee; let them learn to recognize
 thee as the only God, and to acclaim thy
 wonders. Lift up thy hand, to shew these 3
 aliens thy power; let us see them, as they
 have seen us, humbled before thee; let 4
 them learn, as we have learnt, that there is
 no other God but thou. Shew new mar- 5
 vels, and portents stranger still; win re- 6
 nown for that strength, that valiant arm of 7
 thine; rouse thyself to vengeance, give thy 8
 anger free play; away with the oppressors, 9
 down with thy enemies! Hasten on the 10
 time, do not forget thy purpose; make 11
 them acclaim thy wonders. Let none of 12
 them escape their doom, the oppressors of 13
 thy people; let there be a raging fire ready
 to devour them; heavy let the blow fall on 14
 the heads of those tyrants, that no other
 power will recognize but their own. Gather 15
 anew all the tribes of Jacob; be it theirs
 to know that thou alone art God, to acclaim
 thy wonders; make them thy loved
 possession as of old. Have compassion on 16
 the people that is called by thy own name,
 on Israel, owned thy first-born; have com-
 passion on Jerusalem, the city thou hast
 set apart for thy resting-place; fill Zion's

¹ This would more naturally be rendered from the Latin, 'If thou wouldst give thanks, make a bloodless offering', but the context seems to indicate that this is a misinterpretation of the Greek.

walls, fill the hearts of thy people, with wonders beyond all telling come true, with thy glory made manifest. Vindicate the race that was from the first thy chosen; old prophecies uttered in thy name, at last fulfil; have we waited for thee to no purpose? Shall thy prophets be proved false? Listen to thy servants' plea, that claim the blessing Aaron pronounced over thy people; guide us into the right path; let all the world know that thou art God, watching us eternally.

Take what food thou wilt, belly is content; yet meat and meat differ. The savour of venison only palate can reach; only wise heart can discern lying tongue.

False heart breeds dismal thoughts; mind well schooled keeps them at bay.¹

Any woman is a mate for any man; yet maid and maid differ.

Fair wife, blithe husband; as no other lure, beauty draws us. What of her tongue? If that, too, has power to charm, if that is soft and gentle, never was man so blessed.

Good wife won is life well begun; a comforter thou hast, of thy own breed, a stay to support thee. No hedge, no garden; and if wife thou hast none, thou shalt wander homeless. Trust him never, that has not found a nest to dwell in, and does but lodge where night overtakes him, cut-purse that travels light from city to city.

37 Friends every man has that will say, I love him well; yet friends they may be in name only. Death itself cannot match it for sadness, when friend and companion becomes thy enemy. Cruel pretence, what mind first conceived thee, to turn solid earth into a morass of foul treachery? A companion, how he will enjoy the delights of his friend's prosperity, and turn against him in the hour of need! A companion, how he will share a friend's grief if he may share his bakes-meats; use him as a shield against some enemy!² Never let friend of thine be far from thy thoughts; in thy prosperity never forget him.

Never take counsel with one who may be laying a trap for thee; from his envy

hide thy purpose; advice every counsellor will give thee, but some will counsel thee for their own ends. Be on thy guard, then, against him who advises thee; how is his own turn best served? What is his secret mind? It may be, he will hide stake in pit for thee, crying, Thy course lies clear; then stand at a distance to see what becomes of thee. Consult, if thou wilt,³ unbeliever about holiness, knave about justice, woman about her rival, dastard about war, merchant about value, buyer about price, cynic about gratitude, scoffer about piety, rogue about honesty, farm labourer about work to be done, yearman about year's end, idle servant about great undertakings; but all the advice they give thee heed thou never. Closet thyself rather with some man of holy life, known to thee as God's worshipper, some soul well matched with thine, such as would grieve to see thee stumbling in darkness. And thy own heart enthrone as thy best counsellor; nothing may compare with that; there are times when a man of piety sees truth clearer than seven sentinels high in a watch-tower. With all this, entreat the most High to guide thy steps in the right path.

For every undertaking, every act of thine let just consideration prepare thee, and trustworthy counsel. Ill counsel may make the heart veer round; four points its compass has, good and evil, life and death; and it is ever the tongue that sways it.⁴

Shrewdness there is that can much impart, yet is its own enemy. And there is experience that imparts much to others, and is its own friend besides. There is quibbling talk that will earn thee enemies, and an empty belly; no power to win men the Lord has given it, so empty is it of all wisdom. But there is wisdom that benefits the owner of it, earning high meed of praise; if thus thou art wise, wisdom thou shalt impart to thy fellows, and shalt not miss thy own reward; blessings the wise man reaps from all around, to see him is to praise him. Man's days are numbered, Israel's none can number, and among our people the wise man wins an inheritance of honour, a deathless renown.

¹ The meaning of this verse is uncertain.

² This is usually rendered, 'he will take up his shield against an enemy', but this, without further qualification, seems meaningless.

³ The words 'if thou wilt' are not in the original; but the context evidently demands them in the Latin version; the Greek provides no difficulty; since it gives a negative, 'Do not consult...'

⁴ The text here is uncertain, and the meaning obscure. The Latin seems to demand some such rendering as that given above.

30 Son, as thy life goes on, make trial of thy
 appetites, and if harmful they be, give
 31 them no liberty; not all things all men suit,
 32 nor please. When there is feasting, thy
 greed restrain; do not fall upon all the
 33 meats thou seest; much feasting breeds
 34 infirmity, gluttony the bile, and many
 have died of surfeiting; the temperate
 live long.

38 Deny not a physician his due for
 thy need's sake; his task is of
 2 divine appointment, since from God all
 healing comes, and kings themselves must
 3 needs bring gifts to him. High rank his
 skill gives him; of great men he is the
 4 honoured guest. Medicines the most High
 has made for us out of earth's bounty,
 and shall prudence shrink from the use of
 5 them? Were not the waters of Mara made
 6 wholesome by the touch of wood?¹ Well
 for us men, that the secret virtue of such
 remedies has been revealed; skill the most
 High would impart to us, and for his
 7 marvels win renown. Thus it is that the
 physician cures our pain, and the apothecary
 makes, not only perfumes to charm
 the sense, but unguents remedial; so in-
 8 exhaustible is God's creation, such health
 comes of his gift, all the world over.

9 Son, when thou fallest sick, do not neglect
 thy own needs; pray to the Lord, and
 10 thou shalt win recovery. Leave off thy
 sinning, thy life amend, purge thee of all
 11 thy guilt. With frankincense and rich oil
 12 make bloodless offering of meal; and so
 13 leave the physician to do his work. His
 task is of divine appointment, and thou
 hast need of him; let him be ever at thy
 14 side. Needs must, at times, to physicians
 thou shouldst have recourse; and doubt
 not they will make intercession with the
 Lord, that they may find a way to bring
 thee ease and remedy, by their often visit-
 15 ing thee. Offend thou thy maker by
 wrong-doing, much recourse thou shalt
 have to physicians.

16 When a man dies, let thy tears flow, and
 set up a great lamenting, as for thy
 grievous loss; shroud him according to his
 quality, and grudge him no pomp of
 17 funeral; then, to be rid of gossip, bemoan

him bitterly for a day's space, ere thou wilt
 be comforted in thy sorrow; one day or
 18 two, as his worth claims, bemoan him; no
 need to win thyself an ill name. But grief
 19 will but hasten thy own death, will be the
 grave of thy own strength; where heart
 goes sad, back goes bowed. So long as thou
 20 withdrawest thyself, sad thy heart will be;
 and what patrimony but heart's mirth is
 left to the poor? Why then, do not give
 21 thyself over to regrets; put them away
 from thee, and bethink thee rather of thy
 own end. Do not fancy that the dead can
 22 return; by torturing thyself thou canst
 nothing avail him. Remember, he tells
 23 thee, this doom of mine; such shall thine
 be; mine yesterday, thine to-day. Let his
 24 memory rest, as he rests, in death; enough
 for thee that thou shouldst comfort him
 in the hour when his spirit leaves him.²

The wisdom of a learned man is the
 25 fruit of leisure; he must starve himself of
 doing if he is to come by it. How shall he
 drink full draughts of wisdom that must
 26 guide the plough, that walks proud as any
 spearman while he goads on his team, all
 his life taken up with their labours, all his
 talk of oxen? His mind all set on a straight
 27 furrow, the feeding of his cows an anxiety
 to deny him sleep? So it is with every
 28 workman and master-workman, that must
 turn night into day. Here is one that cuts
 graven seals; how he busies himself with
 devising some new pattern! How the
 model he works from claims his attention.
 while he sits late over his craft! Here is
 29 blacksmith sitting by his anvil, intent upon
 his iron-work, cheeks shrivelled with the
 smoke, as he battles with the heat of the
 furnace, ears ringing again with the ham-
 30 mer's clattering, eyes fixed on the design
 he imitates. All his heart is in the finishing
 of his task, all his waking thoughts go to
 the perfect achieving of it. Here is potter
 31 at work, treadles flying, anxious contin-
 ually over the play of his hands, over the
 rhythm of his craftsmanship; arms strain-
 32 ing at the stiff clay, feet matching its
 strength with theirs.³ To finish off the
 glaze is his nearest concern, and long he
 must look to keep his furnace clean. All
 these look to their own hands for a living.

¹ See Ex. 15. 23.² Enough for thee that thou shouldst comfort him; the meaning of the Septuagint Greek is, 'And be comforted for his loss'.

his feet', but the Greek has, 'its strength'.

³ Literally, 'bowing down his strength before

36 skilful each in his own craft; and without
 37 them, there is no building up a common-
 wealth. For them no travels abroad, no
 38 journeyings from home; they will not pass
 beyond their bounds to swell the assem-
 bly; or to sit in the judgement-seat. Not
 theirs to understand the law's awards, nor
 theirs to impart learning or to give judge-
 39 ment; they will not be known for uttering
 wise sayings. Theirs it is to support this
 unchanging world of God's creation; they
 ply their craft and ask for nothing better;
 . . . lending themselves freely and making
 their study in the law of the most High.²

39 But the wise man will be learning
 the lore of former times; the pro-
 2 phets will be his study. The tradition
 handed down by famous men will be in his
 keeping; his to con the niceties of every
 3 parable, learn the hidden meaning of every
 proverb, make himself acquainted with
 4 sayings hard to understand. To great men
 he will render good service, will be sum-
 5 moned to the prince's own council; will go
 upon his travels in foreign countries, to
 learn by experience what the world offers
 6 of good and of harm. With dedicated
 heart, he will keep early vigil at the Lord's
 gates, the Lord that made him, to win
 audience for his plea from the most High.
 7 His lips will be eloquent in prayer, as he
 8 entreats pardon for his sins. At the Lord's
 sovereign pleasure, he will be filled with a
 9 spirit of discernment, so that he pours out
 showers of wise utterance, giving thanks to
 10 the Lord in his prayer. His plans and
 thoughts guided from above, he will have
 11 skill in the divine mysteries; will make
 known to all the tradition of teaching he
 has received, and take pride in that law
 which is the Lord's covenant with man.
 12 This wisdom of his, extolled on every side,
 13 will never fall into oblivion; the memory
 of him, the renown of him, will be held in
 14 honour from age to age. His wise words
 will become a legend among the nations;

where faithful men assemble, his praise
 will be told. A life that shall leave such
 15 fame as one man wins in a thousand; a
 death not unrewarded.

And still I have thoughts worth the
 16 telling; madman as easily might contain
 himself. A voice proclaims, Give heed to
 17 me, you that are scions of the divine stock;
 yours to burgeon like a rose-bush that is
 18 planted by running water; yours to yield
 the fragrance of incense; yours to blossom
 19 like the lily, and smell sweet, and put forth
 leaves for your adornment; yours to sing
 songs of praise, and bless the Lord for all
 things he has made. His name extol; songs
 20 of praise let your lips utter, and let harp's
 melody mingle with the song. And you
 shall praise him in these words following.

Good, wondrously good, is all the Lord
 21 has made.³ Piled high the waters stand at
 his command, shut in by cisterns of his
 22 appointing.⁴ All-sufficient is his will, un-
 failing his power to save; open to his view
 23 are all deeds of mortal men, nothing can
 24 escape that scrutiny. On every age of time
 his glance rests; marvel is none beyond his
 25 compass. Not for man to ask what this or
 26 that may be, each shall be needed in its
 turn. His blessings flow like a stream in
 27 full flood, like rain pouring down to refresh
 28 the parched earth. But the nations that
 never look to find him, shall be the prey of
 his vengeance; did he not turn the waters
 29 into firm ground, and dry up the floor of
 them, so that it made a path for the passage
 of his own people,⁵ and yet a trap to punish
 the wicked?

From the first, good things were made
 30 for good men to enjoy; for sinners, they are
 good and evil at once. What are the first
 31 needs of man's life? Water, fire, iron, salt,
 milk, wheat-meal, honey, the grape-
 32 cluster, oil and clothing. Thereby, for just
 men, nought but good is intended, yet for
 33 sinners they turn to evil. Some powers⁶
 there be that are created for wreaking of
 vengeance, and sternly they wield the lash

¹ Some would interpret the first part of this verse differently, taking it with verse 36 and giving it the sense 'there will be no living or going to and fro in common'.

² The last fourteen words of the chapter really belong, as the Greek shews, to the beginning of the next chapter. As applied to the manual labourers described above, they give exactly the wrong sense.

³ It is not clear how many of the remaining verses in this chapter the hymn of praise includes.

⁴ Cf. Ps. 32, 7 (33, 7 in the Hebrew text).

⁵ In the original, simply 'their passage'; but it seems clear that the Latin intends an allusion to the crossing of the Red Sea. The other versions would rather suggest a reference to the destruction of Sodom.

⁶ Literally, 'some spirits'. It may be that diabolical agencies are referred to; but the word 'spirits' may mean simply 'winds'; or (perhaps with greater probability) it may be taken as describing the forces of nature which are to be mentioned in verse 35.

34 in their raging; when the time for reckon-
 ing comes, they will put out all their force,
 until their Maker's anger is appeased.
 35 Fire, hail, hunger and death, all these were
 36 made for wreaking of vengeance; ravening
 beasts, too, and scorpions, and serpents,
 and the sword that punishes the wicked
 37 till there are none left. All these hold high
 revel as they perform his will; ready they
 stand till earth has need of them, and when
 the need comes, they will obey.
 38 From the first, all my questioning and
 all my thought confirms me in what I have
 39 written, all things God has made are good,
 40 and each of them serves its turn; nor ever
 must we complain things have happened
 for the worse, since each has its own occa-
 41 sion to justify it. With full hearts, then, and
 full voice, praise we and bless the Lord's
 name.

40 Great is the anxiety all men are
 doomed to, heavy the yoke each
 son of Adam must bear, from the day when
 he leaves his mother's womb to the day
 when he is buried in the earth, that is
 2 mother of all. What solicitude is his, what
 fears catch at his heart; how quick his
 mind runs out to meet coming events!
 3 And the term of it all is death. What
 matter, whether a man sit on a throne, or
 4 grovel in dust and ashes; whether he goes
 clad in purple and wears a crown, or has
 but coarse linen to wear? Anger he shall
 know, and jealousy, and concern, and be-
 wilderment, and the fear of death, and the
 5 grudge that rankles, and rivalry. Rest he
 on his bed at night, sleep comes to fashion
 his thinking anew; even there, the rest he
 6 wins is but little or none at all, and there-
 upon, in his dreams, he is anxious as sentry
 7 waiting to be relieved, his are such whirling
 thoughts as fugitive has, just escaped from
 the battle. Then, at the moment of deliv-
 erance, comes waking; and he marvels to find
 8 his fears all vain. This lot he shares with all
 living things; beast has it as well as man,
 but for the sinner it is multiplied sevenfold.
 9 There is more besides, mortal sickness,
 bloodshed, quarrelling, the sword, op-

pression, famine, devastation and plague;
 all such things are designed for the punish-
 ing of the wicked; was it not from wicked-
 ness the flood came?

All that is of earth, to earth must needs
 return, and all waters find their way back
 to the sea; what shall become of bribery
 and oppression? The memory of them
 shall vanish; faithfulness will endure for
 ever. All the riches of the wrong-doer will
 disappear, like stream that runs dry, will
 die away, like roll of thunder in a storm-
 cloud; open-handed is merry-hearted, the
 sinners it is that shall pine away at the last.
 Never a branch will the posterity of the
 wicked put forth; dead roots they are that
 rattle on the wind-swept rock. How green
 yonder rushes grow by the river's bank!
 But they shall be plucked up before hay-
 harvest. But kindness, like the garden
 trees, lasts on, remembered in blessing;
 charity remains unforgetten.

Sweet is his lot, that toils and is con-
 tented; here is hidden treasure for thy
 finding.¹

Children born, and a city founded, will
 bring thee a great name; best of all, a
 woman without spot. Wine and music
 make heart glad; best of all, the love of wis-
 dom. Flute and harp make sweet melody;
 best of all a kindly tongue. Grace and
 beauty charm the eye; best of all, the green
 wheat. Friend and friend, gossip and
 gossip, are well met; best of all, man and
 wife. Kinsmen . . .² will help thee in hard
 times; best of all thy alms-deeds to de-
 liver thee. Gold and silver give thee sure
 vantage-ground; best of all, right counsel.
 Riches and strength make the heart beat
 high; best of all, the fear of the Lord.

Fear the Lord, lack thou shalt have
 none, help need none; the fear of the Lord
 is a garden that yields blessing. . . and in
 splendour above all splendour they have
 clothed him.³

Long as thou livest, my son, never turn
 beggar; die is better than beg. Look thou
 for thy meat to another's table, I count thy
 life no life at all; what, owe thy very being
 to another man's larder? From such a

¹ The other versions assimilate this maxim to the formula observed in verses 19-25: 'Contentment and hard work (in the Hebrew, a life of wine and strong drink) may be sweet, but best of all is finding a treasure'—an observation so little worth making, that it looks as if the Latin had preserved the true text.

² It seems clear that something has fallen out here; probably the original had 'Kinsmen and neighbours'.

³ The last clause of this verse does not fit on to what precedes it, either in sense or in grammar; once more, it seems likely that the text is defective.

chance, good teaching and good training shall keep thee safe.

³² Poverty, on a fool's lips, will pass for a thing desirable; but trust me, he has a fire raging within.

41 Out upon thee, death, how bitter is the thought of thee to a man that lives at ease in his own home, a man untroubled by care, no difficulties in his path, that his food still relishes! Hail, death! Welcome is thy doom to a man that is in need, and lacks vigour; worn out with age and full of anxieties, that has no confidence left in him, no strength to endure. Never fear death's doom; bethink thee of the years that went before thee, and must come after thee. One sentence the Lord has for all living things. What the will of the most High has in store for thee, none can tell; what matter, whether it be ten years, or a hundred, or a thousand? Once thou art dead, thou wilt take no grudging count of the years.

⁸ The children wicked men beget are born under a curse, familiars of a godless home; ⁹ all they inherit is soon lost to them; reproach dogs the footsteps of their posterity. How bitter their complaints against the father who is the author of their ill fame! Woe to you, rebels, that have forsaken the law of the Lord, the most High, ¹² born of an unholy birth, an unholy death ¹³ your destiny! All that is of earth, to earth must needs return; from ban to bale is the cycle of a life ill lived.

¹⁴ Man sighs over his body's loss; what of his name? The wicked are lost to memory. ¹⁵ Of thy good name heed take thou; it shall remain thine longer than a thousand heaps of rare treasure. Life is good, but its days are numbered; a good name lasts for ever.

¹⁷ My sons, here is wholesome teaching.¹ Wisdom hidden, I told you, is wasted, is treasure that never sees the light of day; ¹⁸ silence is rightly used when it masks folly, ¹⁹ not when it is the grave of wisdom. Yet sometimes bashfulness is no fault, as I will

now make known to you. It is ill done to ²⁰ be abashed on every occasion; but yet neither is self-confidence for all and every use. Of these things, then, be ashamed;²¹ that thy parents should find thee a fornicator, ruler or prince a liar, magistrate or judge a wrong-doer, assembly of the people a law-breaker, partner or friend a knave, ²³ or thy neighbour a thief. . . . concerning the faithfulness of God, and his covenant; concerning thy sitting over meat. . . . Ashamed be thou of belittling the gift received, of leaving the greeting unreturned, of letting thy eyes stray after harlots, of denying thyself to kinsman that has a near claim on thy regard, of property fraudulently shared. Let not thy eye fall on ²⁷ woman wed to another, nor ever exchange secrets with handmaid of hers, nor come between her sheets. Be ashamed of uttering reproach against thy friends, nor insult the receiver of thy gift. ²⁸

42 Nor ever do thou repeat gossip to the betraying of another's secret. If of such things thou art ashamed, shame thou shalt never feel, and thou shalt have all men's good word besides.

And other dealings there are over which thou must never be abashed,³ nor, through respect for any human person consent to wrong. Such are, the law of the most High and his covenant; and right award, that gives the godless his due; a matter between some partner of thine and strangers from far off, the apportioning of an inheritance among thy friends, the truthness of weight and balance, profit overmuch or too little, the exchange between buyer and seller, the strict punishing of children, the cudgelling of a wicked slave till he bleeds. . . . Thriftless wife if thou hast, seal is best. Where many hands are at work, lock all away; part with nothing, till it be measured and weighed, and of all thy spending and receiving, written record kept. . . . Nor be ⁸ thou abashed, when there is question of chastising reckless folly, and the complaints of old men against the young. So

¹ *vs.* 17-20: The order of the text here seems to be confused both in the Greek and in the Latin; they are here interpreted in the light of the Hebrew. The words, 'I told you', are not in the original, but there seems to be a deliberate quotation from 20. 32, 33. ² *vs.* 21-28: There is further confusion here, as even the grammar of the sentences shows, and several phrases cannot be interpreted with certainty.

³ *vs.* 1-8: Once more the text seems curiously confused. Verse 2 ought, judging by its form, to be a list of things we ought never to be ashamed of; 'Concerning the law of the most High, and his covenant, and acquitting the guilty' yields no tolerable sense. Verses 6, 7 look as if they had been displaced, and belonged to some quite different context. The explanation of verse 8 is perhaps to be found in Deut. 21. 18.

thou shalt shew prudence in all thy dealings, and win the good word of all.

- 9 Daughter to her father is ever hidden anxiety, a care that banishes sleep. Is she young? Then how if age creep on too soon? Is she wed? Then how if her husband should tire of her? Is she maid? Then how if she were disgraced, and in her own father's house brought to bed? Once more, is she wed? Then how if she were false to her husband? How if she prove barren? Over wanton daughter of thine thou canst not keep watch too strict; else she will make thee the scorn of thy enemies, the talk of the city; strangers will point the finger at thee, and all the rabble know thy shame. Gaze not on the beauty of human kind, nor occupy thyself much with women; garment breeds moth, and woman wickedness in man. Man's wickedness is too strong for woman at her best;¹ and a woman that plays thee false brings thee only disgrace.

- 15 Recount we now what things the Lord has made; his visible creation be our theme; nothing he has fashioned but hangs on his word. Just as yonder sun that looks down on all gives light to all, so the glory of the Lord shines through all his creation; how should his faithful servants herald them enough, these marvels of his, enabled by divine omnipotence in that glory to endure? Nothing is hidden from him, the deepest depths of earth or of man's heart; he knows our most secret designs. All knowledge is his; does he not hold the clue of eternity, making plain what has been and what is yet to be, laying bare the track of hidden things? No thought of ours escapes him, never a whisper goes unheard. How great the wisdom that so ordered all things, his wisdom who has neither beginning nor end; nothing may be added, nothing taken away from them, nor needs he any man's counsel. How lovely is all he has made, how dazzling to look upon!² Changeless through the ages, all of it lives on, responsive to his calls. All things he has made in pairs, balanced against one another; never a fault of sym-

metry;³ to each one its own well-being assured. His glory contemplating, thou shalt never have thy fill.

43 Like a jewel the vault of heaven is set above us; the sight of it is glory made visible. Plain to our view is the sun's passage as it shines out, a very masterpiece of his workmanship, who is the most High. How it burns up the earth at noon-day! How fierce its glow, beyond all endurance! Tend thou the furnace, heat is thy daily portion; yet three times hotter the sun, as it burns up the hill-side, scorching all with its fiery breath, blinding men's eyes with its glare. Swiftly it speeds on its course, to do the bidding of the Lord, its glorious maker. The moon, too, that keeps tryst so faithfully, ever marking how the seasons change, and giving the signal when feast days come round! The moon, whose light must decrease till it vanishes, and then increase to the full circle, the month its name-child; cresset of a watch-fire that lights up the high vault of heaven with its radiant glow. And the stars that deck the sky with their splendour, a beacon-light the Lord kindles high above us; the summons of his holy word answering so loyally, watching so patiently at their post!

Look up at the rainbow, and bless the maker of it; how fair are those bright colours that span heaven with a ring of splendour, traced by an almighty hand. Swift comes the snow at his word, swift flashes the fire that executes his vengeance; he has but to unlock his store-house, and the clouds hover, bird-fashion, arsenals of his might, whence the pounded hail-stones fall. How his glance makes the hills tremble! Blows the south wind at his bidding, earth echoes with the crash of his thunder; blows the north wind, and there is whirling storm. Soft as roosting bird falls the snow, spread all around; not more silently comes locust-swarm to earth; what eye is but captivated by its pale beauty, what heart but is filled with terror at the dark cloud that brings it? He it is pours out the frost, that lies white as salt on the

¹ The Greek is just patient of the rendering given above; but the natural sense of all the versions is 'Man's wickedness is better than a woman who does good'—a sentiment which could have little meaning, even in the mouth of the most determined cynic. Probably the true text is lost in this passage; the Greek in verse 13 has 'wickedness in woman', and the Hebrew in verse 12 has 'let her not shew her beauty to male eyes'.
² Literally, 'and like a spark which is to consider'; the Greek is hardly more intelligible.

³ Cf. 33. 15.

earth, the frozen earth that seems covered with thistle-down.

22 Cold blows the north wind, and ice forms on the water; no pool but it rests there, arming the water as with a breast-plate; frost gnaws at the mountain-side, parches the open plains, strips them, as fire might have stripped them, of their green.

24 Remedy for all these is none, but the speedy coming of the mist; frost shall be overmastered by the showers the sirocco drives before it,¹ and at the Lord's word the chill blast dies away.

What else but divine wisdom tamed the rising of the seas,² and planted the islands there? Hear we what perils in the deep mariners have to tell of, and wonder at the tale; of the great marvels it contains, living things a many, both fierce and harmless, and monstrous creatures besides. Who but the Lord brought the venture to a happy issue? His word gives all things their pattern.

29 Say we much as we will, of what needs to be said our words come short; be this the sum of all our saying, He is in all things.³ To what end is all our boasting?⁴ He, the Almighty, is high above all that he has made; he, the Lord, is terrible, and great beyond compare, and his power is wonderful. Glorify him as best you may, glory is still lacking, such is the marvel of his greatness; praise him and extol him as you will, he is beyond all praising; summon all your strength, the better to exalt his name, untiring still, and you shall not reach your goal. Who can tell us what he is from sight seen of him? Who can magnify his eternal being? Much more lies beyond our ken; only the fringe of creation meets our view; and of all things the Lord is maker. Yet, live thou in the worship of him, wisdom thou shalt have for thy reward.

44 Speak we now in honour of famous men that were our fathers, long ago. What high achievements the Lord has

made known in them, ever since time began! Here were men that had power and bore rule, men that excelled in strength, or in the wisdom that dowered them; prophets that worthily upheld the name of prophecy, issuing to the people the commands their times needed, uttering, through their foresight, a sacred charge to the nations. Here were men that had skill to devise melodies, to make songs and set them down in writing. Here were men rich in ability, noble of aim, that dwelt peacefully in their homes. These were the glories of their race, the ornament of their times; and the sons they begot have left a memory that adds to the recital of their praise. Not like those others, who are forgotten in death as if they had never been; nameless, they and their children, as if they had never lived; no, these were men of tender conscience;⁵ their deeds of charity will never be forgotten. Blessings abide with their posterity; their descendants are a race set apart for God, the pledged heirs of his promises. For their sakes this line of theirs will endure for all time; their stock, their name, will never be allowed to die out. Their bodies lie in peace; their name lasts on, age after age. Their wisdom is yet a legend among the people; wherever faithful men assemble, their story is told.

Enoch there was, that did God's will, and was taken away to Paradise, repentance his gift to mankind.⁶ Noc, too, blameless lived and faithful proved; when the day of retribution came, he made amends for all;⁷ so it was that earth had a remnant left when the flood came; with him God's covenant was made, never again should all living things be drowned together. What greatness was Abraham's, to be the father of so many nations! Where shall we find another that can boast he kept the law of the most High as Abraham kept it? He, too, entered into a covenant with God, and was bidden to bear on his own body the record of it. Once he had put

¹ *ec.* 23, 24: It is possible, both in the Greek and in the Hebrew, to interpret verse 23 as referring to drought, with Almighty God himself as the subject of the sentence; verse 25 will then mean that the showers save the grass from the effects of the sirocco.

² Literally, 'pacified the abyss', but it seems clear that the reference is to Gen. 1. 9 and kindred passages.

³ Both the Greek and the Hebrew give, 'He is all'.

⁴ In the Greek and in the Hebrew, 'our glorifying of him'.

⁵ Here, and in verse 27, we may translate 'men well beloved'; that is, God's favourites.

⁶ This is commonly interpreted by the Fathers in connexion with Apoc. 11. 3. In the Greek, Enoch is represented as an *example* of penitence; in the Hebrew, of wisdom.

⁷ The Greek word thus translated might also mean, 'was (allowed to survive) in exchange for all'.

- him to the test and found him obedient,
 22 God took an oath that this should be the
 father of a renowned posterity; their num-
 23 bers should rival the dust on the ground,
 stretching from southern to western sea, from
 24 Euphrates to the ends of earth. Isaac, the
 25 son of such a father, fared no worse; to him
 the Lord gave that blessing which should
 extend to all nations. In Jacob's person,
 26 too, the covenant should be revived; the
 blessings Jacob uttered should be ratified,
 and the lands promised him should be
 divided among twelve tribes of his own
 begetting.
 27 Him a posterity of famous sons awaited,¹
 men of tender conscience, that had the
 good word of all their fellows.

- 45** Well loved by God, well loved
 among men, on the name of Moses
 2 a benediction rests. The Lord gave him
 such honour as he gives to his holy ones;
 gave him renown by striking terror into his
 enemies, and then, at his word, abated the
 3 prodigies that had befallen them. He made
 him great in the eyes of kings, entrusted
 commandments to him in full view of the
 chosen people, made a revelation to him of
 4 the divine glory. The Lord set him apart,
 chosen out from the rest of mankind, so
 5 loyal he was and so gentle; answered his
 prayer by taking him up into a cloud, and
 6 there, face to face, imparting command-
 ments to him, the law that gives life and
 wisdom; here, Jacob, was thy covenant,
 here Israel, the rule thou wast to live by.
 7 Of Levite blood, too, sprang another
 renowned as Moses himself, his brother
 Aaron. To Aaron the Lord gave high
 8 office, making an eternal covenant with
 him, investing him with the priesthood of
 the chosen race, enriching him with his
 9 own glory. Bright was the cincture that
 girded him, bright the robe that clothed
 him; no ornament he wore but spoke of
 10 majesty. The long tunic, the breeches, the
 sacred mantle, and golden bells a many
 11 compassing him about, that tinkled still as
 he walked, echoing through the temple to
 12 keep Israel's name unforgotten! The hal-
 lowed robe, all gold and blue and purple,

work of a master weaver, that lacked
 neither skill nor faithfulness!² What
 craftsmanship of twisted thread dyed scar-
 let, of rare stones in a gold setting, en-
 graved with all the gem-cutter's art, twelve
 of them to commemorate the twelve tribes
 of Israel! The gold finishing, too, of his
 mitre, engraved with the legend, Holiness;
 so proud an adornment, so noble a work of
 art, such a lure for men's eyes in its
 ordered beauty! Never vesture till then
 was seen so fair; and, from time im-
 memorial, no other might put it on, only
 the sons of Aaron's line, in undying
 succession.

Day in, day out the fire should consume
 his sacrifice; when Moses consecrated him
 with the holy oil's anointing, this was a
 right granted in perpetuity, long as the
 heavens should last. His to perform the
 priest's office, to echo God's praise, to
 bless the people in his name. Alone of
 living men, he was chosen out to offer
 sacrifice, and the sweet-smelling incense
 that is a people's plea for remembrance, a
 people's atonement. Power was his to ad-
 minister the divine decrees, a justiciary by
 right, handing on to Jacob its tradition,
 giving Israel the law's light to guide it.
 Once, out in the desert, that right was
 challenged; with envious cries, men of
 another clan surrounded him, Dathan and
 Abiron for their leaders, espousing Core's
 quarrel. Ill-content was the Lord God at
 the sight of it; his vengeance swept them
 away; by no common doom, a raging flame
 devoured them. Fresh privileges for Aaron
 were kept in store; he must share in the
 conquest by receiving all the land's first-
 fruits; his clan first of all must have bread
 enough and to spare, his children should
 inherit the eating of the Lord's own sacri-
 fice. But he must have no lands in the
 conquered territory, no share like the rest
 of his race; the Lord should be his wealth,
 the Lord his portion.

Next to these two, Phinees the son of
 Eleazar won high renown; like Aaron, with
 the fear of God to guide him, he stood firm
 while the people shrank away; a loyal and
 a willing heart that made amends for Is-
 rael. For his reward, he received assurance

¹ The Greek and the Hebrew give 'him a descendant awaited'; that is, Moses.

² The Latin translator has probably missed the meaning of the original. It seems clear from the other versions that a reference is made here to the oracular burse described in Ex. 28. 30.

of the divine favour; command he should have of sanctuary and of people both, and the high priesthood that was his should descend to his heirs for ever. David the son of Jesse, of Juda's tribe, should bequeath to his children a legacy of kingship...

...with wise hearts endowing us, to preserve justice among his people, and keep safe the blessings he has given to it; and this pre-eminence over his people he has settled on them in perpetuity.¹

46 Next to Moses in the line of prophets comes Josue the son of Nave, that fought so well. With him, name and renown are one; who is more renowned for the deliverance he brought to God's chosen people, beating down the enemies that defied him until Israel made their land its own? What fame he won by those valiant blows he dealt, hurling his armed strength at city after city! What chieftain had ever stood his ground so manfully? And still the Lord brought enemies to confront him. On his fierce resolve the sun itself must wait, and a whole day's length be doubled. Let enemies attack him on every side, he would invoke the most High, to whom all strength belongs, the great God, the holy God, and his prayer was answered.² Hail-stones came down in a storm of wondrous violence, that fell on the opposing army and shattered the menace of it, there on the hill-side. So the Gentiles should feel God's power, and learn that it is a hard matter to fight against him. Ever had Josue followed in that Prince's retinue, since the days when Moses yet lived; he it was, and Caleb the son of Jephone, that took a generous part together; they would have engaged the enemy, and saved their own people from guilt by hushing the murmurs of rebellion. These two alone, out of six hundred thousand warriors, survived the perils of the journey; these two were appointed to lead Israel into the land, all milk and honey, that was its promised home.

On Caleb, too, the Lord bestowed such vigour, that in his old age he was a warrior still, and made his way up into the hill-country, where his descendants held their lands after him; no doubt should Israel have that he is well rewarded who serves so holy a God. The judges, too, have their glorious muster-roll, men of resolute heart, that God's cause never forsook; be their names, too, remembered in blessing, and may life spring from their bones, where they lie buried; undying be their memory, in their own posterity continued, undying be the sacred record of their renown.

Dearly the Lord God loved his prophet Samuel, that restored Israel's fortunes and anointed kings to rule over it. Well was the divine law kept, when he ruled our commonwealth, and the God of Jacob was gracious to it; here was a prophet of proved loyalty, and ever his word came true, such vision had he of the God that gives light. With foes about him on every side, he invoked the Lord, the Almighty, with an unblemished lamb for sacrifice; and there-with came thunder, sent from heaven, loud echo of the divine voice,³ that overthrew all the princes of the sea-coast, all the captains of the Philistines. There must be an end at last to his life, and to the age he lived in; but first he would make profession, with the Lord and the new-anointed king for his witnesses, bribe he had never taken from any living man, though it were but a gift of shoe-leather; and none might gainsay him.⁴ Even when he had gone to his rest, he had a revelation for the king's ear, and gave warning of the death that awaited him; a prophet, even in the tomb, while there was yet guilt among his people to be effaced.

47 Among prophets, Nathan was the next to arise, and it was then the reign of David began. Only the fat from the sacrifice, only David out of all Israel; the Lord must have ever the best! Here was one that would use lion or bear as playthings for his sport, tussle with them

¹ A comparison with the other versions confirms the impression, which the incoherence of the Latin would in any case suggest, that several words have been omitted. Both the Hebrew and the Greek indicate that King David was introduced into the narrative only by way of contrast; the sacred author is pointing out an analogy between the ecclesiastical and the secular government of Israel. In the Hebrew, the concluding words of the chapter form part of a doxology, which begins, 'And now bless the Lord, that is so bountiful'.
² *vv.* 5, 6: See Josue 10. 10-14.
³ See I Kg. 7. 10.
⁴ See I Kg. 12. 3.

as if they had been yearling lambs. Such
 4 was his boyhood; and who but he should
 save the honour of his people, by slaying
 5 the giant? He had but to lift his hand, and
 the stone aimed from his sling brought
 6 low the pride of Goliath; prayer to the
 Lord, the Almighty, gave him the mastery
 over a great warrior, and retrieved the fortunes
 7 of his race. Ere long, they had given
 him the title, Slayer of ten thousand, and
 sang his praises, blessing the Lord's name;
 8 kingly honours they accorded him. He it
 was that laid their enemies low all about
 them, extirpating, to this day, the malice
 of the Philistines, shattering their power
 9 for ever. Yet there was no feat of David's
 but made him thank the most High, the
 10 most Holy, and to him give the glory; still
 with all his heart he praised the Master he
 loved so well, the God who had created
 him and endowed him with strength to
 11 meet his enemies. He would have musicians
 wait around the altar, and rouse
 12 sweet echoes with their chant; feast-days
 should be kept with splendour, times and
 seasons duly observed, all his life long;
 morning after morning the Lord's holy
 name should be praised, God should receive
 13 his full tribute of worship. So it was
 that the Lord pardoned his sins, and bade
 him carry his head high evermore; his by
 right was the kingship, and the proud
 throne of Israel.
 14 To a wise son of his that throne passed;
 for David's sake all the threats of the
 15 enemy were stilled, and Solomon might
 reign undisturbed. If God gave him
 mastery all around, it was because he
 would have a temple built in his honour,
 to be his sanctuary for all time. Ah, Solomon,
 how well schooled in thy youth!
 16 Deep as a river flowed thy wisdom; thy
 ambition it was to lay bare all the secrets
 17 of earth; full scope thou wouldst have for
 riddle and proverb. Even to the distant
 18 isles thy renown spread, and everywhere
 thy peaceful reign made thee beloved. The
 whole earth stood in awe of song and
 19 proverb and parable and interpretation of
 thine; in awe, too, of the name of the Lord
 God, who is known among men as the God
 20 of Israel. Gold thou didst amass in such
 plenty, as it had been only bronze; silver
 21 was abundant in thy domains as lead. Yet
 women bowed thee to their will; of boy's

appetites thou wouldst brook no restraint,
 and thus thy renown was tarnished with
 2 the gendering of a breed unhallowed. So
 it was that vengeance fell upon thy children,
 that must rue thy folly in after times;
 the kingdom divided, and in Ephraim
 a rebel dynasty exercising dominion,
 through thy fault.

Yet God is ever merciful; his own design
 2 he will not mar fruitlessly, nor undo;
 should he destroy it root and branch, the
 posterity of his chosen servant? Should
 the man that so loved him have begotten
 sons in vain? Jacob must have a stock to
 3 breed from; the root of David should burgeon
 yet. Solomon once laid to rest with
 4 his fathers, what heirs left he? A man of
 his own blood, born to infatuate a nation,
 insensate Roboam, whose ill counsel drove
 5 the people to rebellion; and that other,
 Jeroboam son of Nabat, who taught Israel
 to sin. All Ephraim followed the example
 of his misdoing; high rose the tide of their
 6 sins, till it swept them away altogether
 from their own country.

For all this wickedness of theirs God
 7 held them to account, waiting till the time
 should come for punishing them, and
 purging them of their guilt.

48 And now another prophet arose,
 Elias, a man of flame; blazed, like
 a fire-brand, his message. This man it was
 brought down a famine to punish them,
 till few were left of the enemies that bore
 him a grudge, and found the Lord's
 commandment too hard for them. At the
 Lord's word, he laid a ban on heaven itself,
 and three times brought fire down from it;
 such was the fame of Elias' miracles. Who
 else could boast, as thou, of calling back
 1 the dead from the tomb, by the power of
 the Lord God, and to life restoring them;
 of kings brought to ruin and all their
 2 power lightly shattered, proud kings, that
 might leave their sick-beds no more? Sinai
 should tell thee, Horeb should tell thee, of
 3 award made, and doom pronounced; kings
 thou shouldst anoint, to be the redressers
 of wrong, and prophets to come after thee;
 then, amidst a flaming whirlwind, in a
 4 chariot drawn by horses of fire, thou wast
 taken up into heaven. Of thee it was
 5 written that in time of judgement to come
 thou wouldst appease the divine anger, by

reconciling heart of father to heart of son, and restore the tribes of Israel as they were. Ah, blessed souls that saw thee, and were honoured with thy friendship! We live only for a life-time; and when death comes, we shall have no such renown as thine.

In that whirlwind Elias was lost to view, bequeathing his spirit of prophecy in full measure to Eliseus. Here was a man that in all his life never held prince in awe, never made way for human greatness. For him no task too difficult; was not his dead body prophetic still, to prove him a wonder-worker in death, that in life was marvellous? Yet the nation for whom all this was done would not amend, nor leave its sinning, until all the inhabitants of the land were driven out, and scattered through the world; only that little kingdom remained that was ruled by the heirs of David, and of these rulers, though some did God's will, there were some that had sins a many to answer for.

Well did Ezechias fortify his city, and brought a running stream into the midst of it, breaking through the rock with tools of iron, and building a cistern for the water. In his reign Sennacherib marched against the country, and sent Rabsaces to threaten it; Sion itself he threatened with attack, so proudly he trusted in his own strength. Heart and hand were unnerved at his coming; worse anguish woman in labour never knew. Yet they cried out upon God for pity, with hands outstretched heavenwards; and he, the holy One, he the Lord God, was not slow to answer them. Their sins he would remember no more; he would not leave them at the mercy of their enemies; by means of his holy prophet Isaias they should find release. With that, the Lord's angel fell on the camp of Assyria, and brought its armies to nothing. So faithfully Ezechias did the Lord's will, following boldly the example of his father, king David; so well he obeyed Isaias, a great prophet and a faithful interpreter of the vision the Lord gave him. In Isaias' days it was that the sun went back, in token that the royal life

should be prolonged; Isaias it was that saw things far distant, by the power of inspiration, and comforted mourning hearts in Sion. Without end or limit future things he foretold, that still lay hidden in the womb of time.

49 Josias, too, is still remembered; a memory grateful as some mingled scent, pride of the perfumer's art, or the honey that tastes sweet in all men's mouths, or music over the wine. A king divinely ordained to make a nation's amends, how he swept away all the foul idols of the law-breakers; how true he kept his heart to the Lord's bidding, what comfort he gave to piety, when wickedness abounded! David, Ezechias, Josias, these three only were exempt from the guilt of their line; the other kings of Juda forsook the law of the most High, and counted the fear of God a light matter. What wonder if they were doomed to bequeath all the glories of their kingdom to strangers, to princes of an alien race, who set fire to the city that was God's chosen sanctuary, and left the ways unfrequented?

... By means of Jeremias;¹ so ill they used him, that was set apart to be a prophet when he was yet in his mother's womb, empowered to overthrow, to uproot, to destroy, then to rebuild and to plant anew. And next Ezechiel, to whose eyes God shewed the vision of glory, by wheeling cherubs borne aloft...

And in storm he remembered the enemy... to reward all such as pointed men to the right path.²

May life spring from the bones of the twelve prophets, where they lie buried; men that put heart into the sons of Jacob, and by trusting in God's power won deliverance.

The fame of Zorobabel what words of ours shall enhance? The jewel God wore on his right hand for signet-ring; he, with Josue son of Josedec, rebuilt God's house that then lay ruined; raised up a holy temple, of the divine glory the eternal dwelling-place. Nor shall Nehemias be soon forgotten, that mended these ruined

¹ It is very doubtful whether the words 'in the hand of Jeremias' can be construed so as to form a single sentence with verse 8; a gap in the text seems more probable. ² A further gap should perhaps be indicated here; Ez. 13. 13 hardly justifies us in making Ezechiel the subject of verse 11. The Hebrew and the Syriac have 'he remembered (or, made mention of) Job', which again would not naturally apply to Ezechiel, in spite of Ez. 14. 14.

walls of ours, our gates built and barred, our homes restored to us.

- 16 Enoch no man born on earth can match,
17 that from earth was taken away; nor Joseph, that was born to be his brethren's master, and the bulwark of a great nation.
18 Lord of his brethren, stay of a people, he left his bones to await the day of God's deliverance, in death prophetic still.
19 Seth and Sem are among the heroes of their race, and Adam, too, that when earth began was made Lord of all living creatures.

- 50 A great priest was Simon, son of Onias;¹ in his day the house of God was repaired, to make the temple strong was his life's task. The high part of the temple, where the building was of double thickness, and the towering walls about it, he underpinned; in his day, too, the cisterns received their full flow of water, rose beyond all measuring, sea-deep. So well he cared for his fellow-citizens; no enemy should be able to compass our ruin; nor lacked he means to enlarge the city's span. See in what state he comes out to meet the people; entrance of temple and of temple-court lifted high above him! Bright he shone as the day-star amid the clouds, as the full moon in her season; nor sun ever shed on our own temple such generous rays as he. What shall be compared with him? Rainbow that lights up the clouds with sudden glory, rose in spring-time, lilies by the water-side, scent of olibanum on the summer air? Fire that glows brightly, and glow of incense on the fire? Ornament of pure gold, set with whatever stones are rarest; olive-tree that burgeons, tall cypress pointing to the sky? Such was he when he put on his robe of office, clad himself with the full majesty of his array; sacred the garments in which he went up to the sacred altar, yet were they ennobled by the man that wore them.

- 13 There he stood, by the altar, with the priests handing him their portions, every one, for sacrifice; and all these standing about him were but Lebanon cedars

standing about Lebanon, were but as palm branches growing from their parent stem, all these sons of Aaron in the splendour of their attire. Theirs to hold out, before assembled Israel, the offerings made to the Lord; and he, completing his task at the altar, for the due observance of the great King's sacrifice, would reach out his hand for the cup, and with the grape's blood offer libation. And as he poured out at the altar's foot its consecrated fragrance, loud shouted the sons of Aaron, loud the silver trumpets blew; great was the cry raised to win God's audience. And with that, down fell all the people, face to earth, worshipping the Lord their God and pouring out their prayers to him, the Almighty, to him, the most High. The singers, too, broke out into chants of praise; sweetly their voices echoed through the wide courts; nor would the people leave off their praying to the Lord, the most High, till the divine praise was completed, and all their duty done. And then Simon would come down, his hand outstretched over the assembly of Israel, a blessing on his lips, and his heart proud to serve such a Master; and so fell to prayer again, for the better manifesting of God's power.

Bless we now his name who is God over all;² wide as earth is his wondrous power, the God that has granted us life since first we were borne in the womb, and most mercifully used us. Gladness of heart may he give us, and send Israel in our time peace that shall last for ever; and still may it be Israel's faith that God's mercy is with us, ready, when his time comes, to grant us deliverance.

Two nations with all my heart I loathe; and a third I can name, that nation indeed is none; the hill-tribes of Edom, and the Philistines, and the miscreant folk that dwell at Sichem.

The lessons of discernment and of true knowledge in this book contained were written down by Jesus, the son of Sirach, of Jerusalem; his heart ever a fountain of true wisdom. Blessed is he who lingers in these pleasant haunts, and treasures the memory of them; wisdom he shall never

¹ There were two high priests who could be described as 'Simon the son of Onias'. One of these flourished about three hundred, the other about two hundred years before Christ. The former is probably the one here alluded to. We have no information elsewhere about the improvements which are described, somewhat obscurely, in verses 2-5. ² *vv.* 24-26: It is not clear whether this is the formula of blessing used by Simon, or an epilogue written in the person of the author.

31 lack; and if by these precepts he live,
nothing shall avail to daunt him; God's
beacon-light shews the track he shall
travel.

51 A prayer uttered by Jesus, son of
Sirach. O Lord, my king, I give
thee thanks, O God, my deliverer, I praise
thee; I extol thy name, for all the succour
and protection thou hast given me, saving
my life from deadly peril, when calumny
lay in wait, and lying tongues assailed me.
In full sight of all that stood by thou didst
come to my rescue; roaring lions stood
ready to devour me, and thou in that great
mercy, that renowned mercy of thine, didst
deliver me. I was in the hands of my
mortal enemies, shut in on every side by
misfortune; there were stifling flames all
round me, and I stood in the heart of the
fire uninjured. I looked down into the
deep womb of the grave, when foul lips
brought lying accusations, and cruel king
gave unjust sentence. And still I would
praise the Lord, long as I had breath to
praise him, though death's abyss yawned
at my very feet, though I was cut off on
every side, with none to aid me. Man's
help I looked for, and could not find; yet
I bethought me, Lord, of thy mercy, thy
deeds of long ago; if men will but wait for
thee patiently, thou, Lord, dost deliver
them, dost rescue them from the power of
the heathen. It was thou who hadst prospered
my life on earth, and now, death
ready to overwhelm me, to the Lord,
Father of the Master I serve,¹ I made my
plea. Would he leave me unaided when I
was in distress, when my enemies were
triumphing over me? I will extol thy name
unceasingly, with grateful praise; my
prayer did not go unregarded. Thou didst
rescue me from deadly peril, didst save me
in the hour of defeat; shall I not give

thanks, shall I not praise and bless thy
name?²

A young man still, ere ever my wan-
derings began, I made my prayer for wis-
dom.³ Before the temple I asked for this,
my life's quest to the end. Came early the
ripening of those grapes, and my heart
rejoiced at it. Down a straight path I sped,
the ardour of youth to aid my search. Ear
that little listens shall yet hear; much wis-
dom that little listening gave. Further and
further yet I travelled, thanks be to the
God that all wisdom bestows. Good use
to make of her was all my love and longing;
never was that hope disappointed. Hardily
I strove to win her, put force on myself to
keep her rule; I stretched out my hands
towards heaven, and grieved for the want
of her. Kept I but true to the search for
her, I found and recognized her still. Long
since trained by her discipline, I shall
never be left forsaken. Much heart-
burning I had in the quest for her, but a
rich dowry she brought me. Never shall
this tongue, with utterance divinely re-
warded, be negligent of praise. O hearts
untutored, come near, and frequent the
school of learning! Parley at the gates no
more, complaining of thirst ever unsatis-
fied. Rather, to my proclamation give
heed; win the treasure that is to be had
without price paid. Suffice it that you bow
your necks to her yoke, are content to
accept her schooling. To find her, needs no
distant travel. . . .³ Unlaborious days, as all
can testify, what a harvest they have won
me of repose! Would you grudge free
expense of silver in the search for wisdom,
that shall make you ample returns in gold?
Your hearts shall yet triumph in his mercy,
nor ever rue the day when you learned to
praise him.

Do, while time serves, what needs doing;
when the time comes, he will reward you.

¹ It is not easy to see what the sacred author meant by 'the Master whom I serve'; the obscure words used in Ps. 109. 1 are only an incomplete parallel. ² It is not clear whether we are to understand the word 'wanderings' literally (cf. 34. 12) or metaphorically. ³ It seems clear that some words have dropped out at the end of this verse; the Hebrew gives 'and the man who is intent upon her will discover her'.

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAS

THIS is the revelation made to Isaias, son of Amos, about Juda and Jerusalem, during the reigns of Ozias, Joatham, Achaz and Ezechias in Juda. Listen, you heavens, and let earth attend to this, a divine remonstrance; my own sons, that I reared and brought to manhood, hold me in defiance! Ox recognizes its owner, ass knows the way to its master's crib; and I? I go unacknowledged; my own people of Israel gives me never a thought. Woe to a sinful nation, a people bowed with guilt, a rebellious race, a brood foully degenerate! They have forsaken God, they have spurned the Holy One of Israel, turned strangers to me. Would you have me smite you again, that you shew yourselves ever more faithless? Everywhere bowed heads, and faint hearts; no health anywhere, from sole to crown, nothing but wounds, and bruises, and swollen sores, that none binds up, or medicines, or anoints with oil! Your land a desert, your cities burnt to ashes, your fields ravaged before your eyes by strangers, desolation everywhere, as if an enemy had plundered you! Poor Sion, forlorn as vineyard watch-tower, summer-house in a herb-garden, a beleaguered city! A stock to breed from, so much the Lord of hosts has left us; but for that, we should be as Sodom is, Gomorrha's doom should be ours.

10 Listen, then, to this, the Lord's word, chiefs of the Sodom-city; people of Gomorrha, here is a command from our God

11 for your hearing. What do I care, the Lord says, how you multiply those victims of yours? I have had enough and to spare. Burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of stall-fed beasts, and the blood of calves and

12 lambs and goats are nothing to me. Think you it is a welcome sound, the tramp of your feet in my courts bringing worship

13 such as yours? Vain offerings, bring them no more, this incense of yours is an abomination. Enough of new moons and sabbaths, of thronged assemblies where none

but sinners meet! The new month begins, the feast day comes round, how it cloy the appetite! These be hateful tasks I can bear no longer. Hold out your hands as you will, you shall get no heed from me; add prayer to prayer, I will not listen; are not those hands stained with blood?

Wash yourselves clean, spare me the sight of your busy wickedness, of your wrong-doing take farewell. Learn, rather, how to do good, setting your hearts on justice, righting the wrong, protecting the orphan, giving the widow redress; then come back, says the Lord, and make trial of me.

Crimson-dyed be your guilt, it shall turn snow-white; like wool new-washed yonder scarlet stain. Will you think better of it, and listen, and have rich harvests to feed you? Or will you refuse, and defy me, and yourselves be food for the sword? The Lord has given sentence. Strange, that the city once so faithful, once so upright, has turned harlot; the haunt of murderers, that was the home of right! The silver in thee turned to dross, the wine grown watery to the taste, thy law-givers wanting loyalty; so that they make common cause with thieves! None of them but takes bribe and looks for profit, none will give the orphan redress, none listen to the plaint of the widow.

What, then, does the Lord proclaim; he, the God of hosts, he, the Prince of Israel? Out upon it, I will rid myself of these rebels, my enemies shall have their deserts. And then I will take thee in hand again, smelting thee till thou art free from dross, purging away all that base alloy. Once more I will give thee judges like the judges of old, counsellors like the counsellors of past days, and thou shalt be called the home of right, the faithful city. Right and justice shall be done, when Sion is redeemed, when her exiles return; with one blow, the wayward sinner shall be overthrown, by the Lord he has forsaken doomed to perish. Tree-idols that have

played you false, fond trust in your garden-shrines, you shall learn to rue them; yourselves but an oak-tree whose leaves are falling, a garden unwatered; when all your strength is like smouldering tow, and the idols you have made but a spark to set light to it, until both burn together, with none to quench them.

2 This is a message which was revealed to Isaias, the son of Amos, about Juda and Jerusalem. In later days, the mountain where the Lord dwells will be lifted high above the mountain-tops, looking down over the hills, and all nations will flock there together. A multitude of peoples will make their way to it, crying, Come, let us climb up to the Lord's mountain-peak, to the house where the God of Jacob dwells; he shall teach us the right way, we will walk in the paths he has chosen. The Lord's commands shall go out from Sion, his word from Jerusalem, and he will sit in judgement on the nations, giving his award to a multitude of peoples. They will melt down their swords into plough-shares, their spears into pruning-hooks, nation levying war against nation and training itself for battle no longer. Come you too (they will say), children of Jacob, let us walk together in the path where the Lord shews us light.

And still they are cast off, these children of Jacob, the Lord's own people; ever since they grew rich, like the men who went before them,¹ and began to trust in divination, like the Philistines, and to ally themselves with men of alien breed. A land full of silver and gold, with no end to its treasures, a land full of horses and chariots innumerable; a land full of idols, where men worship the devices their own hands have made. For this, high and low fall to earth, abate their human pride; and shall they find forgiveness?

See where the Lord comes, in all his terrors, in all the glory of his majesty; take refuge, now, in some rock-cavern, hide thee in some pit! Now indeed man's haughty looks must fall to earth, human pride must be abated; no room for any

greatness but the Lord's, when that day comes. The day of the Lord of hosts! With the dawn of it all human pomp and state must be overshadowed, all human magnificence grow dim. High it will rise above the cedars of Lebanon, that grow so straight and tall, above the oaks of Basan; above aspiring mountain and swelling hill; above every topless tower, every impregnable citadel, above all the navies of Tharsis, above every sight that is fair to see. Shall not man's greatness fall to earth, shall not human pride be abated then? No room for any magnificence but the Lord's, when that day comes. Vanished the false gods, only cave in the rock, crevice in the ground will afford shelter, when the Lord comes, great and terrible, when he rises up to smite earth with dread! Flung away, when that day comes, idols of silver and gold they once made and worshipped; moles and bats all their worship now, as they slink into clefts of the hills, into rocky caverns, to hide themselves from the terrors of the Lord's coming, from this sublime majesty that daunts the earth! Trouble mankind no more;² this at least man can boast, he has the breath of life in his nostrils.

3 See where the Lord of hosts, our Master, takes away from Jerusalem and from Juda all that was valiant and strong, all the support they had against famine and thirst! Gone the hero and the warrior, judge and prophet, diviner and senator, captain of the watch, and nobleman, and counsellor, and skilful workman, and master of charms. Only boys will be left to rule, and wantonness shall govern all; the citizens coming to blows, neighbour falling out with neighbour; for age and rank there shall be no reverence. Here is one catching hold of his own brother, his own house-mate, What (says he) hast thou a coat to thy back? Be our chieftain, then; take these ruins into thy keeping. And the other answers, Who, I? Nay, I have no doctor's skill. As for my house, there is neither bread nor coat in it; ruler thou shalt never make of me. Jerusalem in ruins, Juda lying prostrate! Whispering

¹ 'Like the men who went before them'; the Hebrew text more probably means 'from the east'. But the whole of the verse is very obscure, and perhaps corrupt. ² This verse seems to be addressed to the false gods. But the Hebrew text is best translated, 'Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; what claim has he to regard?' The sense is not clear, and the Septuagint Greek omits the whole verse.

and scheming of theirs defied the Lord,
 9 challenged his divine scrutiny. Their
 hang-dog looks betray them; they publish
 their guilt abroad, like the men of Sodom,
 making no secret of it. Ill-fated souls,
 retribution has come upon them.

10 For the just, courage! His reward is
 11 earned; but woe betide the sinner! He
 12 shall be repaid for his ill deeds. My people
 has been despoiled by the tyrants that rule
 it; women have gained power over it; those
 who call thee happy, my people, are de-
 ceiving thee, are luring thee into false
 13 paths. Even now the Lord stands ready to
 hold his assize, waits there to pass judge-
 14 ment on all nations. The Lord will enter
 into a reckoning with the senators and the
 rulers of his people: You have made spoil
 of the vineyard, your houses are full of the
 plunder you have taken from the opp-
 15 pressed; what means it, that you ride
 roughshod over my people, that you spurn
 the right of friendless folk? Such warning
 he gives you, the Lord God of hosts.

16 This, too, the Lord says: See what airs
 they put on, the women-folk of Sion, walk
 head in air, look about them with glancing
 eyes, click the trappings on their feet with
 mincing steps. Ay, but the Lord has his
 17 doom ready for them; bald of head and
 bare of temple the women of Sion shall
 18 know it. In one day the Lord will sweep
 away all their finery, the shoes with the
 19 rest; locket, and collar, necklace and brace-
 20 let and veil; hair-pin, ankle-ring, chain,
 21 scent-box, pendant, signet-ring and nose-
 22 ring; gala dress and gown and scarf,
 23 bodkin and mirror and shawl and riband
 24 and kerchief. There will be new fashions
 then; stench for scent, hempen rope for
 waist-band, baldness for curls, and hair
 shirt for stomacher.

25 Of the men-folk, too, all that is fairest
 shall fall by the sword, all that is bravest,
 26 slain in battle. See where she sits on the
 ground desolate, every gateway of hers full
 of sorrow and lament!

4 Day of desolation! Here are seven
 women catching hold of one man, and
 promising, We will earn our bread, find

ourselves in clothing; only let us bear thy
 name, and be saved from the reproach of
 barrenness!

When that day comes, bud and fruit
 there shall be, of the Lord's fostering;
 burgeoning of glory made manifest, har-
 vest of our soil, the trophy of Israel's
 gleanings.¹ Set apart for him, all that
 dwell in Sion now, all that survive the
 city's purging; none else will be left alive
 in Jerusalem, when the Lord sweeps away
 the guilt of Sion's women-folk, washes
 Jerusalem clean from the blood that stains
 her, with the searing breath of his judge-
 ment. And over mount Sion, the shrine of
 his name, cloud shall hang by day, glowing
 haze by night, a veil for glory. Canopy
 they shall have, to shade them from the
 day's heat, a refuge to give them shelter
 from storm and rain.

5 A song, now, in honour of one that is
 my good friend; a song about a near
 kinsman of mine, and the vineyard that he
 had. This friend, that I love well, had a
 vineyard in a corner of his ground,² all
 fruitfulness. He fenced it in, and cleared
 it of stones, and planted a choice vine
 there; built a tower, too, in the middle, and
 set up a wine-press in it. Then he waited
 for grapes to grow on it, and it bore wild
 grapes instead. And now, citizens of Jeru-
 salem, and all you men of Juda, I call upon
 you to give award between my vineyard
 and me. What more could I have done for
 it? What say you of the wild grapes it bore.
 instead of the grapes I looked for? Let me
 tell you, then, what I mean to do to this
 vineyard of mine. I mean to rob it of its
 hedge, so that all can plunder it, to break
 down its wall, so that it will be trodden
 under foot. I mean to make waste-land of
 it; no more pruning and digging; only
 briars and thorns will grow there, and I
 will forbid the clouds to water it. Alas, it
 is the house of Israel that the Lord called
 his vineyard; the men of Juda are the plot
 he loved so. He looked to find right reason
 there, and all was treason; to find plain
 dealing, and he heard only the plaint of the
 oppressed.

¹ Literally, 'In that day there will be a bud (or, according to the Hebrew, a burgeoning' of the Lord, for magnificence and glory, and fruit of the earth high uplifted, a source of triumph to those in Israel who are saved'. Scholars are not agreed whether this is a direct or only an indirect reference to the coming of the Messias.

² Literally, 'a horn, the son of oil'. The word 'horn' is generally interpreted here as a hill; but a rocky crag such as the word would indicate would be no place for a vineyard.

Woe upon you, that must ever be acquiring house after house, field after neighbouring field, till all the world goes wanting! Would you have the whole land to yourselves to live in? The news of all this has reached me, says the Lord of hosts; see if I do not leave these many houses, these fine great houses of yours, lonely and untenanted. Wait, till you find ten acres of vine-land yielding but one flagon of wine, thirty bushels of seed-corn yielding but three. Woe upon you, the men who must be up betimes to go a-drinking, and sit late into the evening, till you are heated with wine! Still you must have zither and harp, tambour and flute and wine for your entertainment; you give no thought to God's dealings, to the world his hands have made. It is this inconsiderateness that has made my people homeless exiles, their nobles starving, and common folk parched with thirst; that is why the abyss hungers for you, opens its greedy jaws, till all alike, the nobles of Sion and her common sort, that boast and triumph now, go down to its depths. The low-born must fall, the high-born abate his pride; the eyes of the boaster will be downcast; doom, by which the Lord of hosts will be exalted, just award, by which the God of holiness will shew holier yet! There, with his flocks browsing undisturbed, the stranger shall enjoy the rich pastures you left a wilderness.

Woe upon you, that lightly harness yourselves to ill-doing, and draw down upon you, as with a strong rope, its guilt! What is this, you say, that the Holy One of Israel threatens? Quick, no waiting; let us know the worst, and with all speed! Woe upon you, the men who call evil good, and good evil; whose darkness is light, whose light darkness; who take bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe upon you, that think yourselves wise, and boast of your own foresight! Woe upon you, heroes of the tankard, brave hearts round the mixing-bowl, that take bribes to acquit the guilty, and rob the innocent of his rights!

See how stubble is eaten away by the fire that licks round it, melting away into the heat of the flame; so the root of them will turn to smouldering embers, and the fruit of them will go up like flying ashes; men who reject the law of the God of hosts, who defy every warning from the Holy One of Israel. That is why the Lord's anger against his people has been so fierce; that is why his hand has been raised to smite them, so that the mountains trembled at it, and corpses lay unregarded like dung in the streets. But even so his anger is not yet appeased, his hand threatens us still.

And now he will raise up among the distant nations one people to be a signal to the rest;¹ he will whistle it up from the ends of the earth, swiftly and suddenly it will answer his call. Not a man in those ranks that will faint or lag behind; none grows weary or falls asleep; never a belt is unbuckled, never a shoe-string loosed. Sharp arrows this people has, and all its bows are ready bent; it has horses with hoofs like flint, and chariot-wheels like the rushing of the storm. No lion roars so loud; it will roar as lion-cubs do, growling and holding its prey fast, encircling it so that none can bring rescue. Sounds of dread shall usher in that day, loud as the roaring of the sea; look where you will, all shall be dark with misery; light itself will be darkened by the shadow of its coming.

6 In the year of king Ozias' death, I had a vision. I saw the Lord sitting on a throne that towered high above me, the skirts of his robe filling the temple. Above it rose the figures of the seraphim, each of them six-winged; with two wings they veiled God's face, with two his feet, and the other two kept them poised in flight.² And ever the same cry passed between them, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts; all the earth is full of his glory. The lintels over the doors rang with the sound of that cry, and smoke went up, filling the temple courts.

Alas, said I, that I must needs keep silence;³ my lips, and the lips of all my

¹ This is the only possible way of translating the Hebrew text as it stands; but it seems likely that the word 'nations' has been written, through a copyist's error, instead of 'nation'. In that case the passage would run quite simply: 'And now he will raise a signal to a nation that is far away; he will whistle it up...' etc.

² The Hebrew text here is ambiguous, and may mean that the seraphim veiled their own faces and their own feet (cf. Ez. 1. 11), but the sense given above is that of the Latin version.

³ 'I must needs keep silence'; in the Hebrew text, 'I am lost!'; cf. Ex. 33. 20.

countrymen, are polluted with sin; and yet these eyes have looked upon their King, the Lord of hosts. Whereupon one of the seraphim flew up to me, bearing a coal which he had taken with a pair of tongs from the altar; he touched my mouth with it, and said, Now that this has touched thy lips, thy guilt is swept away, thy sin pardoned. And now I heard the Lord say, Who shall be my messenger? Who is to go on this errand of ours? And I said, I am here at thy command; make me thy messenger.

Go then, said he, and give a message to this people of mine: Listen as you will, but ever without understanding; watch all, and nothing perceive! Thy office is to dull the hearts of this people of mine, deaden their ears, dazzle their eyes, so that they cannot see with those eyes, hear with those ears, understand with that heart, and turn back to me, and win healing.¹ For how long, Lord? I asked. And he said, Till the cities are left unpeopled, and the houses untenanted, and the whole land a wilderness. The Lord will send its people into exile far away; wider, ever wider desolation must spread over it. Though a tenth of their number remain, it is but empty show,² like leafage of terebinth or oak that needs pruning; only a remnant of it will be left, the true stock of holiness.

7 Afterwards, in the reign of Achaz, whose father was Ozias' son Joathan, an attack was made upon Jerusalem by Rasin, king of Syria, and Phacee, son of Romelia, king of Israel. As it proved, they were not strong enough to take it; but when the news reached David's palace that Syria had gained a footing in Ephraim, the hearts of Achaz and his people trembled like forest trees before the wind. Then it was that the Lord said to Isaias, Take with thee thy son, Jashub the Survivor,³ and go

out to the end of the aqueduct that feeds the upper pool in the Fuller's Ground. There thou wilt meet Achaz, and this shall be thy message to him, Shew a calm front, do not be afraid. Must thy heart fail thee because Rasin king of Syria and the son of Romelia are thy sworn enemies? What is either of them but the smouldering stump of a fire-brand? What if Syria, what if Ephraim and the son of Romelia are plotting to do thee an injury? They think to invade Juda and strike terror into it, so that they can bring it into their power, and set up the son of Tabeel as its ruler; a vain errand, the Lord says; it shall not be. As surely as Damascus rules Syria,⁴ and Rasin rules Damascus, within sixty-five years Ephraim will be a people no longer. As surely as Samaria rules Ephraim, and the son of Romelia rules Samaria, if you lose courage, your cause is lost.

The Lord sent, besides, this message to Achaz, Ask the Lord thy God to give thee a sign, in the depths beneath thee, or in the height above thee. But Achaz said, Nay, I will not ask for a sign; I will not put the Lord to the test. Why then, said Isaias, listen to me, you that are of David's race. Cannot you be content with trying the patience of men? Must you try my God's patience too? Sign you ask none, but sign the Lord will give you. Maid shall be with child, and shall bear a son,⁵ that shall be called Emmanuel. On butter and honey shall be his thriving, till he is of age to know good from harm;⁶ already, before he can tell this from that, king they shall have none, the two kingdoms that are thy rivals.

As for thee, and for thy people, and for thy father's house, the Lord means to bring upon thee such days of trouble as have not been seen since Ephraim parted from Juda, with the coming of the king of Assyria. Days when the Lord will whistle

¹ The effect of prophecy or preaching, if it is met by an impenitent attitude, is to put the hearer in a worse frame of mind than ever, since the message has become staled by repetition. Cf. Mt. 13. 14: where, however, our Lord quotes the prophecy in a milder form. ² 'It is but empty show'; in the Hebrew text, 'it will once again be destroyed'. ³ The full name of the prophet's son would seem to have been Shearjashub, 'a remnant shall return' (10. 22). ⁴ The words 'as surely as' are not expressed in the original; but it seems very difficult to explain the context if they are not understood.

⁵ Literally, the verse begins 'Therefore the Lord, he will give you a sign': 'Maid shall be with child'; cf. Mt. 1. 23. The Hebrew text, but not the Greek, would admit 'a maid' instead of 'the maid'. In the Hebrew text, the word used should perhaps be translated 'maid' rather than 'virgin', since it refers rather to a time than to a state of life; but in view of the event, we cannot doubt that this prophecy looks forward to the Virgin Birth. No very successful attempt has been made to explain its relevance to contemporary happenings. ⁶ Probably, both here and in verse 22 below, butter and honey signify not prosperity, but privation, the arable lands of Judaea having been turned into pasture.

up those plagues of his, yonder flies that hatch by the last rivers of Egypt; yonder bees, that hive in the land of Assur. Invading swarms, that settle even upon mountain, gully and rock, cavern; thicket is none, nor underground pit, shall be safe from them. Hard times, when the Lord will be hiring mercenaries from beyond Euphrates, the king of Assyria's men, and will leave you quite bare, hair of head and legs shaved close with this hired razor of his, and the beard too! Hard times, when one heifer and a pair of sheep are all the stock a man has; milk plentiful, so that he has butter to eat; of butter and honey the survivors will have no lack; but where once a thousand vines grew, each worth a silver piece, all will be thorns and brushwood. Covert of thorns and brushwood, where men go armed with bow and arrows; only the hill-sides, that have felt the hoe, shall be free from the terrors of the covert, and these the cattle shall graze, the sheep trample under foot.

8 Then the Lord said to me, Take a great scroll, and write on it, in thy human penmanship,¹ the words, Spoiler, haste; there's plunder afoot. I took care to have men of credit for my witnesses, the priest Urias and Zacharias, son of Barachias. Afterwards, when the prophetess conceived and bore me a son, the Lord said to me, Call him by this name, Spoiler, haste; there's plunder afoot. This boy will not have learned to use the words Father and Mother, before the king of Assyria comes to carry off the wealth of Damascus, the spoils of Samaria.

5 And the Lord went on to say to me, **6** This people of mine has cut itself off from the gently-flowing waters of Siloe, to welcome Rasin and the son of Romelia in-

stead;² and now the Lord will bring the waters of Euphrates upon it, in full flood; I mean the king of the Assyrians, in all his greatness. This flood will fill up all the channels of the river, overflow all its banks, till it pours over Juda, overwhelming her and reaching up to her very neck. Wings spread out wide, till they cover the whole breadth of thy own land, Emmanuel, the God who is with us!

Muster, then, you peoples, to your own overthrow; obey the call, distant lands, in vain; summon up your valour, arm yourselves in vain! All your scheming baffled, all your boasts belied; God is with us!³ Strict warning the Lord has given me, I must not fall in with the fashion of Israel; Not for thee and thine to go about crying Treason; this people is for ever crying treason.⁴ Not for thee and thine to go in fear, dismayed like these others; enthrone the Lord of hosts above all else, him you must fear, of him stand in awe. Let the hour of peril consecrate you to him; for the rest, both in Israel and in Juda, it will be a stone to trip men's feet, a boulder that catches them unawares.⁵ A trap, a fine snare, for the citizens of Jerusalem; and there are many of them that will stumble, and fall, and bruise themselves, caught in its meshes. (Now to guard the prophetic record close, now to seal up these instructions, in the keeping of my disciples! What though the Lord hide his face from the men of Israel? To him will I look, and wait patiently for him; here stand I, and these children⁶ the Lord has given me, a portent, a warning sent to Israel by the Lord of hosts, who dwells on mount Sion. Men will bid you consult wizard and diviner, that talk in ghostly voices over their enchantments; Who doubts, they say, God will send his own people answer,

¹ Literally, 'the pen of a man'. This has often been translated 'with an ordinary pen' or 'in the common speech of the country', but it is difficult to see why either direction should be necessary. In *Deut.* 3. 11 'the cubit of a man' is evidently a measurement taken from the arm of an ordinary man, not from that of a giant.

² The people of Juda are blamed for cutting themselves off from the holy city (here represented by the pool of Siloe, its water-supply), and permitting the son of Romelia to enter their country. (*II Par.* 28. 6). They will be punished by a flood, that is, the invasion of Juda by Sennacherib (*IV Kg.* 18); it will drown them only up to the neck, because Jerusalem will remain unconquered.

³ *vs.* 9. 10. These verses are evidently addressed to the defeated forces of Sennacherib.

⁴ The Latin (though not the Hebrew text) would also yield the sense 'it is rather the (alarmist) language of these people themselves that should be accounted treason'.
⁵ It is commonly assumed that Almighty God himself will be a stone, a boulder, etc.; but the sense of this is not evident, and there is no reason, either in the Latin or in the Hebrew, why the subject of the verb should not be neuter. This national crisis will be a means of sanctification to Isaiah and his disciples; others, taken unawares by it, will involve themselves in ruin (e.g., by taking flight and falling into the hands of the Assyrians).

⁶ The word 'children' may be taken literally (cf. 7. 3 and 8. 3 above); St Jerome, however, understands it of the prophet's disciples.

- 20 an oracle from the dead to the living? By these instructions rather abide, this record of prophecy; who follows other inspiration, shall not see the dawn.)
- 21 As for the invader,¹ he shall meet with disaster, and then famine. Famine-stricken, he will turn with curses against his king, his god; first looking upwards and then to earth, to find nothing but distress and darkness, ruin and want, with night pressing hard upon him; from his calamity there is no escaping.

9 Land of Zabulon and Nephthali, its burden at first how lightly borne! but afterwards affliction weighed on it, Galilee, by the sea road where the Gentiles dwell west of Jordan.² And now the people that went about in darkness has seen a great light; for men abiding in a land where death overshadowed them, light has dawned. Their number thou didst increase, but gavest them no joy of it;³ now, they shall rejoice in thy presence, as men rejoice when the harvest is in, as men triumph when victory is won, and booty taken, and they fall to dividing up the spoils. Yoke that fixed the burden, shaft that galled the shoulder, rod of the tyrant, all lie broken now, as they did long ago, when Madian fell. All the trophies of the old tumultuous forays,⁴ all the panoply stained with blood, will be burnt up now, will go to feed the flames. For our sakes a child is born, to our race a son is given, whose shoulder will bear the sceptre of princely power. What name shall be given him? Peerless among counsellors, the mighty God, Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace. Ever wider shall his dominion spread, endlessly at peace; he will sit on David's kingly throne, to give

it lasting foundations of justice and right; so tenderly he loves us, the Lord of hosts.

Meanwhile, the Lord has issued his sentence against Jacob, his writ is out against Israel: Ephraim will soon know of it, all the citizens of Samaria. Fools, that boast in the pride of their hearts: The brick houses have fallen, we must build them up in stone; the sycamores have been cut down, we must plant cedars instead! The Lord will make Rasin's rivals more powerful than Rasin himself;⁵ all the enemies of Israel he will set astir, Syria on the East, and the Philistines in the west, that will fall upon him wide-mouthed. And even so the Lord's anger is not appeased; his hand threatens us still. Alas for the people that will not come back to God, who chastens it; that leaves the Lord of hosts unregarded as ever!

And now, in one day, the Lord will cut off from Israel both head and tail, both pliant reed and stubborn bough.⁶ (What is the head, but the senator that holds his head so high? What is the tail, but the prophet that gives lying assurances?) False guides, that promised all was well; fools that gave them credence, to their own undoing! Pride in their warriors the Lord has none, pity for orphan and widow has none; all are false and worthless, no mouth but talks presumptuously. Even so the Lord's anger is not appeased, his hand threatens us still. Our wickedness is like a raging fire, that will devour brushwood and thorn-bush, then set light to the forest's tangled boughs; see how proudly yonder column of smoke whirls upward! Fiery vengeance of the Lord of hosts, that ravages country-side and devours citizen! Brother shews brother no mercy; turn he to the right, nought but famine is there;

¹ Literally, 'he will go through it' (the land). Verses 21, 22 probably relate to the position of Sennacherib after his defeat (IV Kg. 19. 35), the prophet's thought having gone back to verse 8 above. The invasion is there described as a spreading out of wings, and here, in verse 22, Sennacherib is warned that he will not be able to 'fly away' from his calamity.

² In the Hebrew text, this is given as verse 24 of ch. 8, and connected with verse 22 by the words, 'Yet that ruin shall not be like the (former) straits'. But the transition here to Messianic rejoicing, and back again to lamentation in verse 8, perhaps represents a shifting current of prophetic inspiration, rather than any connexion of thought; a principle which deserves to be remembered all through the writings of the prophets. Cf. Mt. 4. 15.

³ The negative here is of doubtful authority in the Hebrew.

⁴ Literally, 'every violent foray accompanied by tumult'. The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'the boots whose tramping was so loud'. The sense here is very confused, and some think the word 'Rasin' has crept in by error; in which case the original meaning was, that Israel's own enemies were exalted above him. As the text stands, the rivals of Rasin will be the Assyrians (IV Kg. 16. 9).

⁵ 'Pliant reed and stubborn bough'; literally, 'him who bends down and him who holds back'. The Hebrew text has, 'both the palm-branch and the reed', which is commonly understood as meaning 'both high and low', but seems to be interpreted by the Latin translator as meaning 'both the stubborn (senator) and the pliant (prophet)', so as to correspond with the 'head' and the 'tail', as explained in verse 15.

eat he what comes to his left hand, he is yet hungry, so that at last he will fall on his own flesh and blood,¹ Manasses on Ephraim and Ephraim on Manasses, and both will be banded together against Juda.
 21 And even so the Lord's anger is not appeased; his hand threatens us still.

10 Out upon you, that enact ill decrees, and draw up instruments of wrong; suppress the claims of the poor, and refuse redress to humble folk; the widow your spoil, the orphan your prey!
 3 What shifts will you be put to, when the day of reckoning comes, when the storm overtakes you that is brewing far away? With whom take refuge, where hide away
 4 your treasures? Yours to crouch down in chains, or fall among the massacred. And even so the Lord's wrath is not appeased, his hand threatens us still.

5 Woe, too, upon the Assyrian! What is he but the rod that executes my vengeance, the instrument of my displeasure? I have sent him to punish one nation that has proved false to me; against one defiant people he holds my warrant; let him prey on it as he will, carry off what spoils he will, trample it like the mire in the streets.
 7 Not such are his own thoughts, not such the dreams he cherishes; he dreams of extermination, of realm after realm dispeopled. Are not my chieftains, he says, as good as kings, every one of them? What difference between Charcamis and Calano, between Arphad and Emath, between Damascus and Samaria? I have had my way with the kingdoms that worship false gods; shall it not be the same with the images they worship at Jerusalem and Samaria?
 11 May I not treat Jerusalem and her images as I treated Samaria and her false gods?²

12 Wait we, till the Lord has carried out all his designs upon mount Sion and Jerusalem. Then he means to reckon with the

boastful ambition of Sennacherib, with the proud glance of those scornful eyes. My own strength (the king says to himself) has done all this, my own wisdom has planned it; I have removed the frontiers of nations, I have robbed princes of their treasure, with a strong hand I have pulled down rulers from their thrones. Mighty peoples, and my hand closed over them like a nest; I gathered up a whole world, as a man gathers up eggs that lie abandoned; no flapping of wings, no angry screech to forbid me. Poor fool, can axe set itself up against woodman, saw defy carpenter? Shall the rod turn on him who wields it, the staff, that is but wood, try conclusions with a living man?

What says our Master, the Lord of hosts? He will send a wasting sickness into that gorged frame; beneath that pride a living firebrand shall burn, burn deep. He who is our light will turn into a fire, the Holy One of Israel will be a flame, that will burn up suddenly; in one day those thorn-bushes, that dry brushwood shall be consumed. Like a proud forest, or a garden plot, he shall be eaten up, body and soul; see where he flies in terror! Of all the trees in that forest so few shall be left, a child might count them. And when that day comes, the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob's line, will learn to trust, not in the staff that turns into rod to smite them,³ but in the Lord, the Holy One of Israel; here he shall find loyalty. A remnant will turn back, only a remnant of Jacob, to God, the Mighty One. Countless though Israel be as the sea sand, only a remnant of it will return; there must be a sharp reckoning first, before we are restored, abundantly, to his favour.⁴ Short and sharp is the reckoning the Lord, the God of hosts, will make, with the whole world for the scene of it.

Here, then, is a message for you from the

¹ Literally, 'the flesh of his own arm', but the context seems to shew that the words are used metaphorically. ² *vv.* 10, 11. Cf. IV Kg. 18. 34, 35. Sennacherib is represented as supposing that the God of Israel would have images like the gods of the neighbouring countries; in calling these 'false gods', he is using the prophet's language, not his own. ³ Literally, 'in him who smites them'. The sense is, that Achaz, instead of trusting in God, had put his trust in the king of Assyria to help him against his own neighbours (IV Kg. 16. 7), and this staff on which he had leaned was to turn into a rod which would chastise him.

⁴ This is the general sense of the Hebrew text, which seems to mean, 'there is (to be) a decisive bringing-to-an-end, which will produce an overflow of rightness of heart'; that is, God will leave in Juda a remnant that is pleasing to himself, only at the price of destroying many other lives first. The Latin version means literally, 'An abbreviated consummation will overflow with rightness of heart'—perhaps in the sense given above, but not necessarily. The Septuagint Greek has, '(God is) consummating and cutting short his word (that is, his action upon the world) in rightness of heart (or perhaps, in justice)'. This Greek version is the basis of the quotation which St Paul makes in Rom. 9. 27.

Lord, the God of hosts: Never lose heart, men of Sion, my own people, before the Assyrian, rod though he have to smite thee, staff to chastise thee, when thou meetest
 25 him on the road to Egypt.¹ Wait for a little, for a short moment wait, and my angry vengeance for his ill doings shall find full
 26 scope. The Lord of hosts will bring the lash down upon him, as he did once on Madian at the rock Oreb; by the sea-shore, on the road to Egypt, his rod will be up-
 27 lifted. And with that, thy shoulder will be eased of the burden, the yoke will fall from thy neck, yoke that has gone rotten for want of oil.²

28 See where he enters Aiath, crosses to Magron, halts his baggage-train at Machmas; Already the pass lies behind them; Geba will be theirs by nightfall. In Rama, what terror! Saul's own city of Gabaa is in
 30 flight. Cry aloud, maidens of Gallim, and listen, Laisa, to the cry; woe upon thee, poor Anathoth! Medemena stands empty; now, men of Gabim, you need courage!
 32 Daylight still! Why, he will make his halt at Nobe, threaten the mountain where queen Sion stands, the very hill of Jerusalem!

33 Then, as we look, our Master, the Lord of hosts, will spread terror among them, and break them like earthenware.³ Yield
 34 greatness, and pride topple; axe-iron for yonder tangled forest, the strength of Lebanon outmatched!

11 From the stock of Jesse a scion shall burgeon yet; out of his roots a
 2 flower shall spring. One shall be born, on whom the spirit of the Lord will rest; a spirit wise and discerning, a spirit prudent and strong, a spirit of knowledge and of
 3 piety,⁴ and ever fear of the Lord shall fill his heart. Not his to judge by appearances, listen to rumours when he makes award;
 4 here is judgement will give the poor redress, here is award will right the wrongs

¹ 'When thou meetest him on the road to Egypt'; literally 'in the way of Egypt', presumably in the sense that Sennacherib was on his way to invade Egypt when he laid siege to Jerusalem. Some, however, would interpret these words in the Hebrew text as meaning 'after the fashion of Egypt', i.e. the Assyrians will press hard on Israel as the Egyptians did at the time of the Exodus. In that case, it becomes necessary to alter the text at the end of verse 26, to give the sense 'as he did once on Madian at the rock of Oreb, and as he lifted his rod against Egypt by the shore of the (Red) sea'.

² Literally, 'from the face of oil'. If the text is sound, it seems necessary to interpret the phrase here as meaning 'away from', 'deprived of' oil, not in its usual sense, 'as the result of'.

³ Literally, 'break an earthen vessel in (an atmosphere of) terror'. Cf. Ps. 2. 9. The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'lops off branches terribly'.

⁴ The Hebrew text does not make any mention of the gift of piety; perhaps through a corruption, it seems to introduce 'fear of the Lord' twice over.

⁵ 'Where he rests in glory'; the Latin understands this of resting in the tomb, but this is not suggested by the Hebrew text.

of the defenceless. Word of him shall smite the earth like a rod, breath of him destroy the ill-doer; love of right shall be the baldric he wears, faithfulness the strength that girds him. Wolf shall live at peace with lamb, leopard take its ease with kid; calf and lion and sheep in one dwelling-place, with a little child to herd them! Cattle and bears all at pasture, their young ones lying down together, lion eating straw like ox; child new-weaned, fresh from its mother's arms, playing by asp's hole, putting hand in viper's den! All over this mountain, my sanctuary, no hurt shall be done, no life taken. Deep as the waters that hide the sea-floor, knowledge of the Lord over-spreading the world!

There he stands, fresh root from Jesse's stem, signal beckoning to the peoples all around; the Gentiles will come to pay their homage, where he rests in glory. Then, once again, the Lord's hand at work! From Assyria, from Egypt, Pathros and Ethiopia, from Elam and Sennaar, from Emath, from the islands out at sea, his people, a scattered remnant, shall return. High lifted, for a world to see it, the standard that shall call Israel home, gather in the exiled sons of Juda from the four corners of the earth. Gone, Ephraim's envious looks, vanished away Juda's enemies; Ephraim shall hate Juda, Juda harray Ephraim, no more. Together they will sweep down on Philistia's neck, there by the western sea; plunder the children of the east, Edom and Moab in their grasp, the sons of Ammon pliant to their will. And the Lord will make a desert out of the tongue of sea that flanks Egypt; with the blast of his breath he will threaten Euphrates, dividing it into seven streams, that a man can cross dry-shod. And so the remnant of my people which is left among the Assyrians will find a path made for it, as a path was made for it when it came up out of Egypt, long ago.

12 Angry with me, Lord? thou wilt say, when that day comes; ay, thou wast angry with me, but now, praised be thy name, the storm has passed; all is consolation. God is here to deliver me; I will go forward confidently, and not be afraid; source of my strength, theme of my praise, the Lord has made himself my protector.¹ So, rejoicing, you shall drink deep from the fountain of deliverance; singing, when that day comes, Praise the Lord, and call upon his name, tell the story of his doings among all the nations, keep the majesty of his name in grateful remembrance. Sing in honour of the great deeds the Lord has done, make them known for all the world to hear. Cry aloud in praise, people of Sion; great is the Holy One of Israel, that dwells among you.

13 The burden² that awaits Babylon, as it was revealed to Isaiah, son of Amos.

A signal raised amid the shadow of the mountain, voices lifted, and a waving of hands; all is ready for the captains to march in through the city gates. These are my chosen warriors, doing my bidding; my champions whom I have summoned to execute my vengeance; they boast of my renown. The hills echo with the voices of a multitude, as if a host had gathered; voices of assembled kings, of whole peoples mustered there; the Lord of hosts is marshalling his troops for battle. They come from far away, from the most distant region under heaven; the Lord is angry, and these are the instruments of his vengeance, to lay a whole world waste. Cry aloud, for the day of the Lord is coming; his the dominion, his the doom. No hand now but will hang useless, no heart but will be fainting with dismay; tortures and pangs will seize them, throes as of a woman in travail; each man looks at his neighbour in bewilderment, their faces ashy pale.³

Yes, the day of the Lord is coming, pitiless, full of vengeance and bitter retribution, ready to turn earth into a wilder-

ness, ridding it of its sinful brood. The stars of heaven, its glittering constellations, will shed no ray; sunrise will be darkness, and the moon refuse her light. I will punish the world's guilt, and tax the wicked with their misdoings, stilling the rebel's pride, crushing the haughtiness of tyrants, till a man is a rarer sight than gold, and a slave cannot be bought with all the treasure of Ophir. So terribly will I shake the heavens, and move earth from its place, to shew that the Lord of hosts will be patient no longer, and the hour of his bitter vengeance has come. Men will take to flight as deer or sheep would, with none to marshal them, each turning towards his own home, seeking refuge in his own country. Whoever is found left behind will be slain, and those who are encountered in the open will fall at the sword's point; their children will be dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses plundered, their wives ravished.

With such an enemy I mean to embroil them; the Medians, who reckon nothing of silver, who are not to be tempted with gold; they will make young boys a target for their arrows, have no pity for pregnant mothers, no kindly glance for children. So Babylon, the pride of many nations, glory and boast of the Chaldeans, will go the way of Sodom and Gomorrah, cities which the Lord overthrew. It shall remain for ever uninhabited; generation after generation will pass, but it will not be founded again; even the Arabs will not pitch their tents, wandering shepherds will not find a lodging there. Wild beasts will make their lairs in it, its houses will be tenanted by serpents; ostriches will nest there, and satyrs dance; the owls will hoot to one another in its palaces, birds of ill omen in its temples of delight.⁴

14 The day of her doom is close at hand, not long the respite that will be granted her.

And now the Lord will have pity on Jacob; on the sons of Israel, his chosen

¹ The second half of this verse is a quotation from Ex. 15. 2; cf. 11. 16 above.

² The word in the Hebrew text which is translated 'burden', here and in the following chapters, is understood by some as meaning 'utterance', 'oracle'.

³ Literally, 'burnt up'; in the Hebrew text, 'faces of flame'. This is understood by many commentators as meaning 'red with excitement', but St Jerome interprets it as pallor.

⁴ *vv.* 21, 22. The creatures here mentioned cannot be certainly identified; according to some, the 'wild beasts' are wild cats; the 'serpents', 'owls' and 'birds of ill-omen' may also be jackals, hyenas, wolves, etc. The 'satyrs' are perhaps wild goats.

people as of old. On their own lands they shall live undisturbed, whose new inhabitants will make common cause with them, and throw in their lot with Jacob's race. Alien peoples will take them by the hand, to escort them back to their home; content now to be Israel's servants and hand-maidens, the captors captive, the oppressors tributary now. When that time comes, when the Lord gives thee respite from all the hardship and turmoil and drudgery of old days, it will be thy turn to have thy say against the king of Babylon. Can it be (thou wilt say) that the tyranny is over, the exactions at an end? The Lord has broken the staff in the hands of the wicked, the rod that oppressed us; the rod whose mortal stroke once fell on the peoples so angrily, tamed the nations so cruelly, persecuted, and would not spare. The whole earth, now, sinks back into ease; listen to its cry of rejoicing! The very fir-trees and the cedars of Lebanon triumph over thee; no woodman comes near us any longer, since thou wast laid to rest. The shadow world beneath is astir with preparation for thy coming; wakes up its giants to greet thee. The great ones of the world, that ruled the nations, rise up from the thrones where they sit, hailing thee with a single voice, Thou too brought low as ourselves, thou too like us! All thy pride sunk down into the world beneath, and there thy corpse lies, with the moth for its shroud, worms for its cerecloth.

What, fallen from heaven, thou Lucifer, that once didst herald the dawn? Prostrate on the earth, that didst once bring nations to their knees? I will scale the heavens (such was thy thought); I will set my throne higher than God's stars, take my seat at his own trysting-place, at the meeting of the northern hills;¹ I will soar above the level of the clouds, the rival of the most High. Thine, instead, to be dragged down into the world beneath, into the heart of the abyss. Who that sees thee there, but will peer down at thee and read thy story:

Can this be the man who once shook the world, and made thrones totter; who turned earth into a desert, its cities into ruins; never granted prisoner release? For those other kings, honourable burial, each in his own palace; thee the grave itself rejects, like a withered root, like a thing unclean. Rots thy corpse unrecognized, beneath yonder coverlet of men slain, that went down to the deep pit together; no fellowship hast thou with those others, no share in their sepulture, thou who didst lead thy country to ruin, thou, who didst bring destruction on thy people. The posterity of the wicked shall be nameless for ever; for the guilt they have inherited, his sons too must be slain, they must not live to make the land their own, and people the world with cities. A message from the Lord of hosts: Now I mean to take arms against them, to destroy Babylon name and fame, root and branch. I will make the place over to the hedge-hog;² turn it into standing pools; I will sweep it clean, the Lord of hosts says, sweep it clean away.

And now the Lord of hosts has taken an oath, his doom shall be executed, his design shall stand: In this my own land I will break the power of Assyria,³ upon these hills I will trample him under foot. Gone his yoke; there shall be no more shouldering his burden; such purpose I have for the world's ordering; my hand once lifted, all the nations must bow. The Lord's decree, who shall annul it? The Lord's power, who shall thwart it?

And in the year of king Achaz's death, a fresh burden was imposed: Too soon, Philistia, thou wouldst make public holiday over the breaking of the rod that smote thee. The serpent has gone, but he has left a basilisk stock behind him; a race that can catch birds on the wing. Here, then, shall be food for the very poorest; beggar man shall lie down in safety; thee I will destroy with famine root and branch, slay all the remnant that is left in thee. All thy gates, now, must echo with lament, all thy cities

¹ Literally, 'on the hill of the covenant, on the northern slopes'. This may have some reference to the situation of Jerusalem (cf. Ps. 47. 2, and note there); but it is more generally understood by modern scholars as a reference by the King of Babylon to those northern hills upon which, according to his own mythology, the gods were supposed to meet.

² The word here translated 'hedge-hog' is found nowhere else, and some think it is the name of a bird, perhaps the bittern.

³ *vv.* 24-32. Hitherto this chapter, like the last, has dealt with the destruction of Babylon by the Medes, about two centuries after Isaiah's own time. Here the prophecy abruptly returns to contemporary events; the destruction of the Assyrians when they invaded Judah, and the ill fortune which nevertheless awaits the neighbouring country of the Philistines.

ring with cries; all Philistia swoons away. From the north a smoke comes ever nearer, signal of an army none may escape.

12 Our news when the world asks, what message? Tell them Sion never rested in the Lord so surely; here be friendless folk that trust in him.

15 What burden for Moab? Ar Moab has fallen in a night, and all is still; Moab's battlements have fallen in a night, and all is still! Prince¹ and people of Dibon have gone up to the hill-shrines to lament; on Nabo and on Medaba, Moab cries aloud, every head cropped, every beard shaved in mourning. In the streets, men walk girded with sackcloth; house-top and square echo with loud crying, that breaks into tears. The dirge goes up from Hesebon and Eleale, so loud that Jasa hears it; well may the warriors of Moab cry out; the very soul of Moab utters a cry.

5 My heart laments for Moab, once ringed with walled cities as far as Segor; Segor that now moans like a full-grown heifer.² There is weeping on the slopes of Luith; along the Oronaim road they wail aloud for misery. The waters of Nemrim will turn into desert; old grass has withered, new grass has failed, and their banks are green no more. Heavy their reckoning, to match the abundance of their riches; a nation in exile, carried away to the Vale of Willows.³ 8 A cry goes up all about the frontiers of Moab; Gallim echoes the lament, and the well of Elim hears the sound of it. Dibon's waters already swollen with blood; and still for Dibon I have perils in store, lions to meet the fugitives, the remnant that is left in the land of Moab.⁴

16 Send forth (O Lord) a lamb to be ruler of the land,⁵ from Petra in the desert to the hill where queen Sion reigns. There they will be, the women-folk of Moab, waiting at the ford of Arnon, like fluttered birds, fledgelings that have taken wing from the nest; there are plans to be made, deliberations to be held; Shelter us, like the shadow, dark as night, that gives shelter at noon-day; hide these fugitives of ours, do not betray them in their wanderings; let them dwell as exiles in your land; poor Moab,⁶ give it sanctuary from threat of the invader! But see, the dust of armies has died down, the guilty wretch has met his end; vanished and gone, who trampled the world under foot! Mercy and faithfulness return; a throne set up in David's dwelling-place, for a judge that loves right and gives redress speedily!

The boasting of Moab has long been in our ears; who so boastful as he? Proud, scornful, and overbearing, with dreams that came to nothing. So, from one end of Moab to the other, there is a dirge, everywhere a dirge; for yonder folk, that live content behind walls of hardened brick, tidings of ruin.⁷ The fields about Hesebon lie deserted; alien chieftains have rooted up the vineyard of Sabama, whose shoots once reached as far as Jazer, strayed through the wilderness;⁸ forlorn, now, its tendrils, wandering overseas. I will weep, then, as Jazer weeps, for the vineyard of Sabama, water Hesebon and Eleale with my tears. That thy vineyard, thy vintage-time should be disturbed by the cry of trampling armies! All joy, all triumph gone from that fruitful land of thine; no mirth, no gaiety left; the presses shall be trampled

¹ 'Prince'; literally, 'the house', unless the word conceals a proper name, but it seems likely that the text here is corrupt.

² Literally, in the Latin, 'My heart laments for Moab; its bars reach as far as Segor, a calf of three years old'. Some think the word 'bars' should be 'fugitives', by a different understanding of the Hebrew text, and it is possible that the 'calf of three years old' conceals a proper name.

³ In the Hebrew text, the first half of this verse is generally understood to mean 'What remains of their abundance, their store', and it is this which is carried away to the 'Vale of Willows' in an effort to save it. St Jerome understands that the inhabitants themselves are carried away to the 'Vale of Willows', possibly with a reference to Ps. 136. 2.

⁴ The reference to fresh troubles soon to arise may be compared with 14. 29 above, though it is not certain that the events dealt with in the two passages are contemporary.

⁵ The word 'Lord' is lacking in the Hebrew text, and the verb 'send' is in the plural; many modern scholars omit the word 'be' and think the allusion is to the old tribute of lambs paid to Samaria. But the prophet is interested in Juda rather than in Israel, and Petra was in Edom, not in Moab. There may be corruption in the text; the Septuagint Greek has 'I will send forth as it were creeping things on the land'. For the whole of this chapter, cf. Jer. 48. 29-37.

⁶ The word Moab has the appearance of a vocative in the Latin; but the Hebrew idiom makes it probable that the refugees are coming out of Moab, not going into it, and the context implies as much.

⁷ The Hebrew text, in the second half of this verse, is usually interpreted as meaning, 'You will lament, all stricken, for the raisin-cakes (or perhaps, the foundations) of Cir-Chareset'.

⁸ According to the Hebrew text, the end of this verse may also be rendered, 'its tendrils spread out, they crossed the seas', perhaps with the implication that the Moabite wine was good enough for export.

no more by the labourers we knew; forgotten, now, the cry that used to go up
 11 when they trod the grapes. For Moab, my
 inmost being thrills like a harp's strings;
 my heart goes out to those brick-walled
 12 cities of hers. What shift will she make,
 when all goes ill with her on the heights?
 Prayer of hers, recourse to those shrines of
 hers, shall nothing avail her?

13 Such was the word the Lord spoke to
 14 Moab, long since, and now he declares his
 purpose: In three years, by the time a
 labourer's contract is out, Moab, so popu-
 lous now, shall be shorn of her glory; shall
 be left small and weak, a thriving nation
 no longer.

17 What burden for Damascus? Da-
 mascus, too, shall cease to be a city,
 2 shall become a heap of stones in ruin: the
 cities of Aroer will lie, now, abandoned to
 flocks, that take their ease undisturbed.
 3 Ephraim protected no more, Damascus a
 kingdom no more, what is left of Syria will
 enjoy no more renown than Israel itself;
 such is her doom from the Lord of hosts.
 4 The renown of Jacob, little enough will
 it be when that day comes; nothing but
 5 skin and bone will be left. Scanty as the
 corn a man gathers in his arm when he
 picks up what is left after the harvest, some
 6 gleaner in the valley of Rephaim. Only a
 cluster left here and there, a few olives still
 to be shaken off, two or three at the end of
 a branch, four or five on the top branch of
 all; that is what the Lord, the God of
 7 Israel, has decreed. Then at last man will
 turn to his Maker, will look towards the
 8 Holy One of Israel. He will turn no longer
 towards altars of his own designing, have
 eyes no longer for pillar and shrine of his
 9 own fashioning. The cities he had fortified
 will be abandoned then, as ploughs and
 crops¹ were abandoned when Israel itself
 was the invader, and thou shalt be left

forlorn. Thou didst forget the God who
 delivered thee, and gavest no thought to
 thy strong protector; thou art like one who
 plants on soil of good promise, but all the
 while is putting in bastard shoots. Wild
 grapes they were from the day when thou
 didst plant them, and soon this planting of
 thine will begin to bud; and now, when the
 time comes to enjoy it, here is all thy har-
 vest lost to thee, and bitterly thou dost
 repine.²

Doom goes with it, this swollen multi-
 tude of nations, like the swollen seas that
 go roaring past; like the roar of those
 swollen seas is the stir of such a throng.
 Nations roaring with the roar of waters in
 full flood; and then, God will rebuke him,
 and in a moment he is far away, swept like
 the dust when a wind blows on the hills,
 or the whirl of leaves before the storm.
 Night comes, and there is terror all around;
 day breaks, and it is seen no more. Such
 the invader's doom, so evermore shall they
 thrive, that come to despoil us.³

18 Woe to the land that has the whirr-
 ing of wings for its music, there
 beyond the Ethiop rivers! In skiffs of
 papyrus reed she sends her ambassadors to
 the sea-coast! Ay, speed on your errand, but
 to a people far away, sundered from you by
 leagues of travel, dreaded people at the end
 of the earth, race that bears a tyrant's yoke,
 in a land that is all rivers like your own.⁴

All you peoples of the world, all you that
 dwell on earth, wait till you see the signal
 raised on the mountains, till you hear the
 trumpet sound. Such warning the Lord
 has given me: I will keep silent and watch,
 here in my dwelling-place, as still as the
 bright sunshine of noon-day, or the haze
 that comes with the dew in harvest-time.
 What a blossoming was here before the
 time of harvest, how fully formed the buds
 that were still ripening! But its boughs

¹ The meaning of the words in the Hebrew text is uncertain, and many modern scholars follow the Septuagint Greek, which has 'the Amorrhites and the Hevites'—that is, the old inhabitants of Chanaan.

² *vv.* 10, 11. The text here is difficult, and variously explained; but all are agreed on the general meaning, which is, that the Ten Tribes, in adopting the worship of false gods, were like men who are deceived, until it is too late, about the quality of the plants they put into the ground.

³ *vv.* 12–14. These verses are generally interpreted as a doom pronounced against the Assyrians, as if the subject were abruptly changed. But it is possible that it is Israel who will be 'rebuked' in verse 13, and will disappear in verse 14, with the Assyrians as the cause of his downfall.

⁴ *vv.* 1, 2. Almost every word in these two verses is interpreted by scholars in a variety of ways; nor is there any agreement as to the bearing of what is said. The race referred to may be the Egyptians, or the Ethiopians, or some nation still more distant; and it is not clear whether the messengers in verse 2 are being sent back to give a message to their own race, or sent on their way to give a message to some other race, for example the Assyrians. Some think the prophet is discouraging an Egyptian offer of alliance (*IV Kg.* 18. 24).

shall be cut back with the pruning-knife, its straying tendrils shall be torn off and thrown away. All alike will be left a prey to the mountain birds, and the beasts that roam through the land; all through summer the birds will hover about it,¹ and the beasts flock to it in winter. And then the people that is sundered far away, dreaded nation at the ends of the earth, land of the tyrant's yoke, land of the branching rivers, will bring gifts to the Lord of hosts, be-taking itself to mount Sion, where the name of the Lord of hosts is worshipped.

19 What burden for Egypt? See where the Lord comes into Egypt, with the cloud-drift for his chariot, and all the false gods of Egypt tremble, the very heart of Egypt melts away! Egyptians I will embroil with Egyptians; each man will turn on his neighbour, one city, one kingdom on another. The spirit of Egypt shall fail her, and I will daze her wits, till men go about consulting oracle and diviner, wizard and soothsayer. Tyrants for Egypt's masters, a fierce king to rule over it; the Lord of hosts has decreed it. Waters of the sea shall ebb, river waters be parched and dried up, the brooks failing, the channels, with their high banks,² flowing in a thin stream, reed and sedge withered away. Laid bare, yonder river-bed, from its source; fade the crops its moisture nourished, fade and dwindle to nothing. Sad days for the fisher-folk; never a hook cast, never a net sunk, all is grief and repining. Disappointed of their trade, the men who worked in flax, combing and weaving it so cunningly; in those brackish swamps there are no fish-ponds a-making now.³

Nonplussed, all the princes of Tanis; all Pharaoh's wise counsellors must needs give him a fool's answer. Where is that inheritance of learning they boast, come down from ancient kings? What has become of thy wise men, Pharaoh? Let them give thee news, let them tell thee what the

Lord means to do with Egypt. No, the princes of Tanis are nonplussed; degenerate, the lords of Memphis; Egypt is deceived in her great men, that should have been the corner-stone of her commonwealth.⁴ The Lord has mazed her wits; fuddled brains of drunkard had been as well advised; head and tail, reed and stubborn branch, in Egypt's troubled counsels avail alike.⁵

Weak as a woman Egypt shall be, when that day comes, dazed and terrified, to see the Lord of hosts lift his hand so threateningly. Upon Juda Egypt must needs look with awe; fear is in the very name of it, as they scan the future; what means the Lord of hosts now? Cities five there shall be in the land of Egypt that talk with the speech of Chanaan, and take oaths in the name of the Lord of hosts; a city that bears the sun's name among them. There will be an altar set up to the Lord for all Egypt to see, and at its frontier a pillar dedicated to him, a trophy, there, in Egypt, bringing the Lord of hosts to mind. Cry they out to him, when they suffer oppression, he will give them a saviour, a champion, to deliver them. Thus the Lord will reveal himself to Egypt; the Egyptians, when that day comes, will acknowledge him, doing him worship with sacrifices and offerings, will make vows to the Lord and perform them.

First calamity, then healing; when they come back to the Lord, he will relent and restore. There will be a high-road, then, between Egypt and the Assyrians; either shall visit other, and Egypt under Assyria be at peace.⁶ And with these a third people shall be matched; who but Israel, source of the whole world's happiness? Such blessing the Lord of hosts has pronounced upon it, Blessed be my people in Egypt, and the home I have made for the Assyrian to dwell in; but Israel is the land of my choice.

20 It was in the year when Tharthan, at the bidding of king Sargon of Assyria, invaded the territory of Azotus,

¹ Owing to the doubts alluded to above, it is difficult to say what nation is referred to by the 'it' of this verse. ² 'The channels, with their high banks'; or perhaps (according to the Hebrew text) 'the channels of Egypt'.

³ *vv.* 7-10. Several phrases in this passage are of doubtful interpretation, particularly the last verse; the Hebrew text here being understood by some as meaning 'The pillars of the land (that is, the nobles) shall be crushed, and those who work for hire will grieve'.

⁴ The Latin implies that Egypt is the corner-stone of her own commonwealth, but the Hebrew text can equally well be interpreted as applying that description to the great men of the country.

⁵ See note on 9. 14 above. ⁶ The Hebrew text here may mean, not that the Egyptians will serve the Assyrians, but they will serve (i.e. worship the true God) with the Assyrians.

and captured it by assault, that the Lord sent out a message through Isaiah, son of Amos. Up, said he, and undo the sackcloth that girds thee, and take off thy shoes. This Isaiah did, and went bare and unshod. Whereupon the Lord said, Look, how my servant Isaiah goes bare and unshod; that is a sign and a portent of what must come upon Egypt and Ethiopia when three years are past.¹ It is thus that the king of Assyria will lead away the prisoners he takes in Egypt, the exiles from Ethiopia, young and old alike. Bare and unshod they shall go, with their buttocks exposed, to the shame of Egypt. A time of dismay and confusion for those who put their trust in Ethiopia, who boasted of Egypt's power! Dwellers in this nook of earth, they will cry out, Here lay all our hope; these were to be our protectors, and bring us deliverance when the king of Assyria came! And what of us? For us no refuge now.

21 What burden for the desert by the sea?² From the desert it comes, from a land full of terrors, like the storm-wind rising from the south. Here be stern threats revealed to me: the treacherous one still treacherous, the plunderer still at his plundering! Elam, to the attack! Lay siege to him, Medians! From yonder desert there shall be groaning no more! What wonder if pain gripped the loins of me, sudden as woman's pangs in travail? What wonder if sight and sound of it daunt and daze me, if heart fails and I grope in darkness, bewildered over her ruin, the Babylon³ I love?

What, the banquet spread? From yonder post of vantage look down on them, where they sit at their meat and drink! Now, captains, to arms!
Yes, the Lord's word has come to me, Go and bid the watchman stand at his post,

to give tidings of all he sees. A chariot he saw, with two out-riders, one that rode on an ass, and one that rode on a camel; looked long at them, watching them eagerly. Then he cried, Lonely as lion am I, that have charge of the Lord's watch-tower; day after day I have stood here, night after night I keep my post. Nearer now, the chariot and its two outriders; Tidings! cries charioteer. Babylon has fallen, has fallen; images of the gods she worshipped have come crashing to the ground.⁴ My countrymen, winnowed with me in the same threshing-floor of trial, from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, such tidings I bring.

What burden for Duma?⁵ A cry comes to me from Seir, How goes the night, watchman? How goes the night? Morning is on its way, says he, but with morning, the night. Come back again and enquire, if enquire you must.

What burden for the Arabs?⁶ By evening, sleep in the woods you must, you that travel to Dedanim. Dwellers in the south, bring out water to meet the thirsty, bread to meet fleeing men. They have fled to escape the sword, the drawn sword, to escape the bow already bent against them, the stress of battle. In a year's time, the Lord says, by the time a labourer's contract is out,⁷ Cedar shall be robbed of all its glory; of all the brave archers that were Cedar's sons, only a dwindling remnant shall be left; the Lord, the God of Israel has decreed it.

22 What burden for the Valley of Revelation?⁸ Here is great stir among the townspeople, climb they eagerly to the house-tops. What means this shouting everywhere, these thronged streets, as of a city that makes holiday? Alas for thy dead, that were never slain by the sword.

¹ Literally, 'a sign and portent of three years'. It is not clear whether the prophet was ordered to go half-clad and barefoot during all that time.

² The desert by the sea is evidently Babylon. Some think this prophecy refers to the defeat of Merodach-Baladan, who was friendly to Juda (see ch. 39 below), which would explain the prophet's sympathy. Others connect it with the defeat of Baltassar (Dan. 5, supposing verse 5 here to be an allusion to Baltassar's feast; in that case, the prophet must be speaking in an assumed character, or perhaps in irony.

³ 'Babylon'; the Hebrew text has 'twilight'.
⁴ It is not clear how much of this verse, if any, is spoken by the watchman.

⁵ Duma, which is the Hebrew word for silence, is here used to represent Idumaea, or Edom; some think, by a play upon words.
⁶ The Hebrew text reads 'in Arabia' twice over; some modern scholars, on the contrary, give this prophecy the heading 'A burden (or, oracle) at evening'.

⁷ Cf. 16. 14 above; the reference is perhaps to the time of year at which labourers were paid off.

⁸ The Valley of Revelation is clearly Jerusalem itself; but it is not clear to what period in its history the prophet refers, nor whether the disasters of which the Jews shew so little consciousness are already past, or still to come.

3 never died in battle; alas for rulers of thine,
 who with one accord have fled, or else been
 4 cruelly bound! Chains for all that were
 4 loudly, and distant exile. I pray you then,
 leave me alone, to weep bitterly; never try
 to comfort me, now that this people of
 5 mine is widowed. Day of doom, when the
 Lord of hosts will have yonder Valley of
 Revelation defeated, overrun, thrown into
 confusion; a day to test its ramparts, and
 6 overawe its citadel;¹ to archer, to chariot,
 to horseman, Elam sends out her chal-
 lenge, bids shield come down from its
 place on the wall. Chariots up and down
 all thy favoured valleys, horsemen halted
 at thy gate!

8 Here is Juda, then, stripped bare; here
 is a day for looking to the armoury, there in
 9 the Forest House.² How many breaches,
 already, in the wall of David's city! Water
 you must bring in from the lower pool;
 10 take count of the houses in Jerusalem,
 pulling down some to build up the de-
 fences; you must find a bed between the
 11 two walls to contain the waters of the old
 pool. And all the while, no thought of him
 who made it all, no eyes for him who
 12 fashioned it, long ago. This day the Lord,
 the God of hosts, summons you to mourn
 and lament, to shave your heads and wear
 13 sackcloth; and instead all is mirth and
 gladness, oxen killed here, rams slaugh-
 tered there, meat being eaten and wine
 drunk; come, let us eat and drink, for
 14 to-morrow we die! Plain it rings in my
 ear, the voice of the Lord of hosts, Never
 while you live shall this sin of yours be
 pardoned.

15 A message from the Lord God of hosts;
 Up, to my house betake thee, and find
 Sobna, that has charge of the temple.³ This
 16 be thy word to him, What claim of rank or
 kinship hast thou here, that thou shouldst
 hew out a burying-place for thyself?
 A tomb carefully hewed out on the hill
 side, an eyrie for thyself among the rocks?
 17 Wait till the Lord trusses thee like a trussed

fowl, folds thee like a cloak, twines thee
 18 about with misfortune, and tosses thee like
 a ball into the great open plain! There
 shalt thou lie, and there that chariot which
 is thy pride, which is the shame of thy
 master's house. I mean to expel thee from
 19 the rank thou holdest, deprive thee of thy
 office. And when that time comes, I will
 20 summon one who is a true servant of mine,
 Eliacim the son of Helcias, clothe him with
 21 thy robe, gird him with thy girdle, entrust
 him with the power that once was thine;
 to rule all the citizens of Jerusalem, all
 22 Juda's race, with a father's care. I will give
 him the key of David's house to bear upon
 his shoulders; none may shut when he
 opens, none open when he shuts.⁴ I will
 23 fix him securely in his place, like a peg that
 is to carry all the royal honour of his
 father's house; all the honour of his
 24 father's house will rest upon him, as a
 man's goods rest on a peg, the smaller of
 them, here a cooking-pan, there an instru-
 25 ment of music. A day is coming, says the
 Lord of hosts, when the peg that was once
 securely fixed will be dislodged from its
 place; suddenly it must break and fall, and
 all that hung from it be ruined; the Lord
 decrees it.⁵

23 What burden for Tyre? Mourn
 aloud, ocean-going ships,⁶ that
 reach Cyprus to learn that the home you
 left is in ruins! Stand thy aghast, dwellers
 2 in the coast-land that once was thronged
 with Sidonian merchants, that gathered
 3 its revenue from far over-seas; grain of
 Egypt's sowing, of the Nile's ripening, bar-
 tered they among the nations. Poor Sidon,
 4 by false hopes betrayed! A cry comes up
 from the sea, from her that was guardian of
 the sea, Not for me a mother's joys, a
 mother's pangs; never a son reared, never
 5 a maid brought to womanhood. Here is
 news for Egypt, news from Tyre that shall
 6 grip her with despair! Go out on your
 ocean voyage, dwellers on the coast-land,

¹ 'A day to test its ramparts, and threaten its citadel'; in the Hebrew text, it is possible to read proper names here, 'Cir is undermining, and Shoa is on the mountain side'—the two names being those of countries subject to Assyria. Similarly in verse 6 we may understand, 'Cir is laying bare (that is, is getting ready; the shield'.² See III Kg. 7. 2.

³ 'Of the temple'; in the Hebrew text, 'of the house', that is, probably, the royal palace.⁴ Apoc. 3. 7. ⁵ In the Hebrew text, the meaning of verses 23-25 is obscure; nor are scholars agreed, whether the peg that is to be dislodged from its place is Eliacim himself, at a later time, or Sobna, his predecessor in office. ⁶ 'Ocean-going ships'; in the Hebrew text, 'ships of Tharsis', and so in verses to and 14 below. The position of Tharsis is uncertain; but it is generally identified with Tartessus, on the Western coast of Spain. In that case a 'ship of Tharsis' would have to be one capable of resisting the seas of the Atlantic.

7 mourning aloud; your city come to this, the same city that had so long boasted of her ancestry! For her townfolk there is a journey to make on foot, a distant
8 journey.¹ Who was it plotted the downfall of Tyre, a city once so rich in crowns, whose merchants were princes, whose traffickers were among the great men of
9 the earth? He, the Lord of hosts, designed it; who else drags in the mire the boaster's pride, brings all the great men of the earth into derision?
10 Daughter of ocean,² henceforward thy land must be watered with streams; the girdle of strength thou hadst is thine no
11 more. The Lord's hand, now, is stretched out over the sea itself, throwing all the kingdoms into dismay; his writ has gone out against Chanaan, that all its strongholds
12 should be brought to nothing. Sidon, poor queen (he says), boast no more of thy virginity; thy name is tarnished now. Cross the sea, and betake thyself to Cyprus if thou
13 wilt; even there thou shalt find no rest. Her resting-place is the land of the Chaldeans, where Assur has founded a nation strong as no nation ever was; nation that has carried off her warriors into captivity, undermined her palaces, made her into a heap of
14 ruins.³ Mourn aloud, ocean-going ships; your stronghold is laid waste.
15 After this thou wilt be forgotten, thou city of Tyre, for seventy years, long as the life-time of one of thy kings. At the end of those seventy years, Tyre will know the meaning of the harlot's song, Take thy harp and go round the streets, poor harlot forgotten; now for thy best notes, now for thy whole store of music, to bring thee
17 back into remembrance! At the end of those seventy years, the Lord will relent towards Tyre, and send her back to her trafficking; all the world over, with all the world's kingdoms, she shall play the harlot
18 once more. But now the revenues of her

trafficking shall be devoted to the Lord's use, not hoarded up and laid by; revenue she shall earn, but for Sion's folk, the Lord's servants, to give them food in abundance, and brave clothes to wear.

24 Look you, the Lord means to make earth a void, a wilderness; twist it out of shape, and scatter its inhabitants far and wide. One law for priest and people, for master and servant, for mistress and maid; for seller and buyer, for borrower and lender, for debtor and exactor of debts. Earth drained of its dregs, earth ravaged and ransacked; such decree the Lord has uttered. Earth woebegone and withered, a world that withers and grows feeble; how feeble they have grown now, the great ones of the earth! Poor earth, polluted by the men that dwell on it; they have broken God's law, traversed the decree he made for them, violated his eternal covenant with men; cankered it lies by a curse, peopled with guilty men, only a frantic remnant left⁴ of its inhabitants. Woebegone the vintage, withered now the vine, hearts sighing that once were merry; silent the gay tambour, hushed the noise of holiday-making, silent the harp's mirth. No more feasting and song; the wine turns bitter in their mouths. Ransacked and ruined lies yonder city,⁵ where every house denies entrance, and a cry goes up in the streets because all the wine is spent, the mirth forsaken, the joy vanished; a city left to desolation, with ruin fallen upon its gates.

In the midst of the wide earth, among those many peoples, what shall be left? A remnant, the last olives that are shaken from the tree, the gleanings that remain when vintage-time is over. Few only, but they shall lift up their voices in praise; God's honour vindicated, their rejoicing shall be heard across the sea, Give glory to

¹ Literally, 'her feet will carry her far away to find a home'. In the Hebrew text, the sense may be 'her feet used to carry her', and the reference may be to the colonizing activity of the Phœnicians.

² In the Hebrew text, 'daughter of Tharsis'. This is understood by some as meaning that Tharsis, once Tyre had fallen, could enjoy complete liberty (the 'girdle' being interpreted as meaning the restraint of foreign domination). But there is no evidence that Tartessus was in any sense a colony of Tyre: it was only a trading station. The prophet, then, seems to be condoling with Tartessus on the loss of her imports, as he condoled with Egypt on the loss of her exports. Tharsis will now have to grow her own food; this is the sense implied by the rendering given in the Septuagint Greek, 'Till thy own land, for no more vessels will come to thee from Carthage'.

³ The Hebrew text here is different, and the interpretation of it is much disputed. It gives 'has raised towers' for 'has carried off her warriors'.

⁴ 'A frantic remnant left'; in the Hebrew text, 'they will be burned up till few of them are left'.

⁵ It is not clear whether any particular city, and if so what city, is meant.

God, where knowledge of him is revealed;¹ praise to the God of Israel among the distant isles; here at the ends of the earth his song of triumph has reached us, the boast of his elect.² Heart, keep thy secret, heart, keep thy secret; no more of that.

But alas, the traitors still betray his cause; treachery is treachery still, and its fruit is treason. For the dwellers on earth, tidings of fear; pit and snare await them; flee they from tidings of fear, they shall fall into the pit, flee they from the pit, they shall be held fast in the snare. The flood-gates of heaven will be opened, and the foundations of earth rock; earth must be rent and riven, earth torn and tattered, earth must quiver and quake; earth rolling and reeling like a drunkard, earth tottering like some frail shelter that is gone in a night, bowed down by the weight of its own guilt, till it falls, never to rise again. When that day comes, the Lord will hold a reckoning with the hosts of heaven, there above, with the kings of the earth, here on earth; huddled together, as captives are huddled together in a dungeon, they shall remain prisoners; so, at last, the reckoning will be held. And then the Lord of hosts will reign at Jerusalem, on mount Zion; and the moon will be put to shame, and the sun hide his face, before the glory in which he will appear then, with the elders of his people about him.

25 Lord, thou art my God; I extol thee and praise thy name for thy wonderful doings; for thy designs, so long prepared, so faithfully executed; see, it is done! A heap of stones where, but for thy decree, a town stood; a crumbling ruin, all that is left of a walled city; a fortress of the invader, dismantled now and never to be built again. What wonder great nations should do thee homage, embattled cities hold thee in dread? Stronghold thou art of the poor, stronghold of the helpless in

their affliction, refuge from the storm, shade in the noonday sun; against that wall the rage of tyrants blusters in vain. Uproar of the invader stilled, as it were the breathless summer of a parched land; oppression withered up from the roots, like haze of burning heat!³

A time is coming when the Lord of hosts will prepare a banquet on this mountain of ours; no meat so tender, no wine so mellow, meat that drips with fat, wine well strained. Gone the chains in which he has bound the peoples, the veil that covered the nations hitherto; on the mountain-side, all these will be engulfed; death, too, shall be engulfed for ever. No furrowed cheek but the Lord God will wipe away its tears; gone the contempt his people endured in a whole world's eyes; the Lord has promised it.

When that day comes, men will be saying, He is here, the God to whom we looked for help, the Lord for whom we waited so patiently; ours to rejoice, ours to triumph in the victory he has sent us. On yonder mountain the divine deliverance shall rest, and by his power Moab shall be crushed, like straw ground in the chaff-cutter;⁴ Moab shall stretch out his hands, like a man swimming, and low shall his pride fall when they crash down to earth!⁵ Down they must come, the battlements that crown those walls, lie inglorious in the dust.

26 But in the land of Juda, when that day comes, what shall their song be? Zion is ours, an impregnable fortress; divine protection it has for wall and breastwork; wide let its gates be opened, to welcome true hearts that still keep troth with him. Our thoughts wayward no longer, thou wilt maintain us in peace, peace that comes surely to those who trust in thee. Yours to trust in the Lord continually, the Lord that is evermore your protection.

¹ 'Where knowledge of him is revealed'; literally 'in the doctrines', the Hebrew word being that used for the oracular adornment of the high priest's breastplate. Its literal meaning is 'lights', and some think it is here used poetically for 'the east'. ² 'His elect'; that is, either the Messias, or the redeemed people generally. The words which follow are obscure in the Hebrew, and some think the meaning is, 'My weakness, my weakness' (literally, 'my leanness'). If this translation is right, the words are more naturally taken with what follows than with what precedes them.

³ The Hebrew text here is difficult, and may perhaps be corrupt; for 'oppression withered up from the roots' it has 'bring low the song of the oppressor'. ⁴ For 'ground in the chaff-cutter' the Hebrew text has 'trodden down in the dung-hill' (or perhaps, the cess-pool). ⁵ It is not easy, either in the Latin or in the Hebrew text, to be certain what the subject of the verbs is, or what the precise picture is meant to be. In the Latin it is, apparently, that of a man who puts out his hands to save himself from falling, but unsuccessfully.

5 Mountain-dwellers he can bring low,
towering city walls he can level, level them
with the ground, drag them down to the
6 dust. There they lie, trodden under foot;
poor folk trample on them now, the disinherited
spurn them as they pass.

7 Where heart is true, path lies plain;
level the road he treads that wins acceptance
with thee. And we, Lord, we have kept to the
8 path thou hadst decreed for us, waiting for thee
still; longing we had none but for thy greater
9 renown. All through the night my soul has yearned
for thee, to thee my heart aspires, watching for the
10 dawn; soon thou wilt execute thy decrees on earth,
and the whole world shall know how just thou art.
The godless will not learn that lesson from mercy
11 shewn him; in a land that is all holiness, they will
pervert justice still, no eyes for the Lord's
12 majesty. Hand of thine which threatened them,
heed they would not; heed now they must, those
envious eyes, and to their own confusion; they shall
13 see fire consume thy enemies! Thou wilt busy thyself,
Lord, to make peace for us; what achievement of
ours but the doing of it is thine?

13 O Lord our God, masters we have had
a many in place of thee, but only thy name
14 shall be held in remembrance; live they cannot
nor revive, gone down to death with the heroes
of long ago; thou hast called them to account,
and made an end of them, till the very memory
15 of their names has vanished. Didst thou win
thyself honour, Lord, when thou didst shew
favour, such high favour, to thy people, when
16 thou didst enlarge all the frontiers of its land?¹
No, Lord, it was in affliction they turned
back to thee; in silent hours of suffering
17 thy chastisement reached them.² We were
no better than woman with child that is
near her time, ready to cry out dolorously
in her pangs; such lot thou hadst given us.
18 Conceived we, aye, and travailed, yet no-

thing brought forth but wind; not through us
came deliverance to our country, not through us
were the peoples of the world cast down.³

Fresh life they shall have, Lord, that are
19 thine in death; lost to us, they shall live
again. Awake and utter your praises, you that
dwell in the dust. The dew thou sendest,
20 Lord, shall bring light to them; only the land
of dead heroes thou wilt doom to overthrow.

Up then, my people, to your innermost
21 chambers betake you; shut yourselves within
doors; hide for a little, until the time of
retribution is past. See, where the Lord
22 comes out from his dwelling-place, holds the
nations of the world to account for their
guilt! Earth shall disclose the blood spilt
on it, and no more cover its dead.

27 Hard and heavy and strong that
sword is which the Lord carries; shall he not
wreak his vengeance, in due time, upon the
monstrous serpent that bars the gate, and the
monstrous serpent that coils up yonder;⁴ shall
he not deal death to the great beast of the sea?
28 The praise of his doings shall be sung by his
own vineyard, a vineyard rich in wine.

I, the Lord, am the keeper of this vineyard;
I come soon to water it. Day by day I watch
over it, to shield it from attack, nor any
grudge my hearts bears it. Would I were an
enemy as relentless as thorns and briars are!⁵
Then I would trample it down and make a
bonfire of it. But now, see how it clings to
my protection! Ay, it shall have peace, it
shall make its peace with me. Israel shall
flourish and put forth shoots, multitudes that
shall be added to the number of Jacob; with
its offspring the wide face of earth shall be
peopled.

What, should the Lord smite Israel as

¹ In the Hebrew text, there is no sign that this is meant to be a question; but the statement 'Thou didst win honour' is more difficult to fit into the context.

² In silent hours of suffering thy chastisement reached them'; this is the sense indicated by St Jerome. The phrase runs, literally, 'Thy chastisement (came) to them in the tribulation of a whisper'; the Hebrew text gives the equally difficult sense, 'they poured out a whisper; thy chastisement (came) to them'.

³ The last clause in this verse is understood by some as meaning 'not through us were (new) inhabitants born to the land'; the sense suggested is that the small numbers of the surviving Jews will be supernaturally recruited by a resurrection. But there is no other instance of the word 'to fall' meaning 'to be born'; unless in the next verse, where the same scholars would translate 'thou wilt cause the land of dead heroes to be reborn'.

⁴ The enemies of Israel are probably alluded to here under symbolic names, but they cannot be identified with any certainty.

⁵ So the Latin version, which seems to suggest, rhetorically, that God is reluctantly unable to abandon his people. Some, supposing a very unusual construction in the Hebrew, translate, 'Would that I had thorns and briars for my enemies'.

he smote his enemies? Destroy it, like those others he doomed to overthrow? Nay, cast her away he might, but there should be due measure in her punishment; not for nothing did he expose her to cruel wind and burning heat; ¹ so should the race of Jacob find pardon for its sins. Cleansed now from guilt, to bear fruit in full abundance; ground fine as chalk the altar-stones, pillar and shrine raised up no more!

Meanwhile, the city that once was fortified must lie desolate, forsaken, that fair dwelling-place, abandoned, part of the wilderness; cattle will browse and lie down, and crop the tall bushes on it; nothing that grows there but will wither and be snapped off. Women shall be their teachers, ² so foolish has this nation grown, too foolish for its own maker to pity, for its own creator to spare. But a time is coming, when the Lord will beat the fruit from his trees, ³ as far away as the bed of Euphrates and the river of Egypt, and you, sons of Israel, shall be gathered in one by one. That day, a call will be sounded on a great trumpet, and men long lost will come from Assyria, and exiles from Egypt, to worship the Lord on his holy mountain, in Jerusalem.

28 Out upon the drunken lords of Ephraim, and the city that is their boast, their crown! Quickly shall it fade, this flower, in the pride of its beauty. Careless they dwell at the head of yonder fruitful valley, all besotted with their wine; and the Lord will come upon them like a rough, boisterous hail-storm, like a destroying whirlwind, like a swift flood that rises and spreads out over the plain. Trodden under foot it shall lie, the crown that was drunken Ephraim's boast; that flower, whose brief bloom once delighted him, shall look down over the fruitful valley no more. Fig ripens to its cost, that ripens ere autumn brings the harvest, no

sooner seen than plucked and eaten by the first that passes by!

But the Lord has his own people still left him; to these he shall be a crown to boast of, a garland of pride; his the justice inspires them when they sit in judgement; his the courage that rallies them when they fall back, fighting, to the gates.

What, these too? These too fuddled with wine, bemused with their revelling? High revel they hold, priest and prophet together, till all are fuddled and sodden with wine, their wits bemused; what wonder if the true seer goes unrecognized, if justice is forgotten? No room is left at their tables for aught but filth and vomit. Here is one (they say) has knowledge to impart, ⁴ has a message to make known, to whom? Does he think we are children new-weaned, fresh from their mothers' milk? It is ever, Pass the word on, pass the word on, Wait a while yet, wait a while yet, A word with you, here, A word with you, there! Here is stammering speech, here is outlandish talk for our folk to listen to! Yet he did but counsel rest and repose; rest none other, repose none other, than to give respite to a weary nation. And listen they would not; to them, the Lord's message was all Pass the word on, pass the word on, Wait a while yet, wait a while yet, A word with you, here, and a word with you, there! And so they will go on their way, to stumble backwards and break their bones, to fall into a trap and lie there caught.

Hear the Lord's word, then, you mockers, that bear rule over my people in Jerusalem. Did you think to make terms with death, enter into alliance with the grave itself, that the flood of ruin should pass you by, so confident in your vain hopes, so armed with illusion? A message to you, then, from the Lord God, See, I am laying a stone in the foundations of Sion that has been tested and found true, a corner-stone, a stone of worth, built into

¹ In the Latin, the second half of this verse reads literally, 'he meditated with his hard breath in the day of heat'. The Hebrew seems to mean, 'he removed (her) with his fierce wind, at the season of the sirocco'.

² 'Women shall be their teachers'; in the Hebrew text, the meaning generally understood is 'the vegetation shall come and set it (i.e. the vegetation just mentioned) on fire'.

³ Or possibly 'beat out (instead of threshing) his ears of corn'.

⁴ In verses 9-13, the prophet evidently relates a personal experience. It seems as if the dissolute notables of Jerusalem had taunted him, over their wine, with always repeating the same 'catch' phrases, like one teaching children to spell, or a stammerer who can get no further with his sentence, or a foreigner who cannot express himself. Some think that 'he' in verse 11 is Almighty God, who will 'speak to' his people through a foreign invasion, but it seems simpler to understand it of the prophet himself.

the foundations themselves.¹ Hurry to and
 17 fro who will; faith knows better. You shall
 have justice dealt out to you by weight,
 your sentence shall be strictly measured;
 shattered, the vain hopes, as by a storm of
 hail, buried the illusion as by a deluge.
 18 Hold they shall not, your terms with death,
 your compact with the grave; when the
 flood of ruin sweeps past, it shall leave you
 19 prostrate. It will carry you away as it
 passes; pass it will, suddenly, in the space
 of a day and a night, and the very alarm of
 it will make you understand the revelation
 20 at last. Too narrow a bed, and one or the
 other must fall out; a short cloak is no
 21 covering for two.² Who stands there?
 None other than the Lord himself, as he
 stood once on the mountain of Disrup-
 tion,³ vengeful still, as when he stood in
 the valley at Gabaon; but now, his own
 purpose to achieve, he lends himself to the
 22 purpose of another, now his will is, to let
 the alien have his will. Mock, then, no
 more, if you would not see your chains
 riveted tighter; the Lord God of hosts is
 my witness, he means to make a short and
 sharp reckoning with the whole earth.
 23 Listen now, and give me a hearing, mark
 24 well the message I bring. Plough the
 farmer must, ere he sow, but will he be
 ever ploughing? For hoe and harrow is
 25 there no rest? Nay, he will level it anon,
 plant fennel, sow cummin, with a border
 of wheat or barley, miller or vetch; such
 26 lore he has learned, such prudence his God
 has given him. What, shall sledge crush the
 fennel seed, threshing-wheel pass to and
 27 fro over the cummin? A switch for the
 fennel, a rod for the cummin, and they
 28 shall be beaten enough. Thrashed the corn
 must be, sure enough, yet not for ever
 does the wheel harry it, do the spikes
 29 wear it down.⁴ This lesson, too, the Lord
 would teach us; learn we how wonderful
 are his designs, how high above us his
 dealings.

29 Out upon her, Ariel,⁵ the lion-city
 King David stormed long ago!
 This year once added to the tale of years,
 feast-days of it over and gone, I will lay
 2 siege to Ariel, that shall roar and roar
 again, a lion-city indeed. Trust me, I will
 3 ring thee round, throw up earth-works
 against thee, set engines in place to besiege
 thee. Cower down thou must, and offer
 4 parley from the earth where thou liest;
 from the ruins thy voice will make itself
 heard, no better than a muttering from the
 ground, as it were some ghost that moaned
 there under the earth.

Then, like fine dust, the hordes that
 5 routed thee shall vanish; like a spark that
 smoulders, thy conquerors shall die away.
 Suddenly, in a moment, the Lord will
 6 sweep down upon them in thunder, and
 earthquake, in a storm of roaring wind, in
 fire that devours all before it; gone,
 7 the thronging nations that fought against
 Ariel, like a dream that passes with the
 night; gone, the fighting, and the siege,
 8 and their triumph. Dreams hungry man
 of a full belly, then wakes empty as ever;
 dreams thirsty man of a cool draught, then
 9 wakes weary, and thirsty, and still unsatis-
 fied! Such comfort shall be theirs, the
 many folk that beleaguered Sion.

Ay, gape and gaze as you will; hum and
 haw you, bemused ere you lifted cup, be-
 10 sotted ere you have been at your wine,
 besotted with never a taste of drink! So
 11 deep a lethargy the Lord instils, blinding
 the prophets that should be your eyes,
 muffling with a veil the wise heads that
 12 should see visions for you. What is revela-
 tion to you, but a sealed book, offered as
 13 vainly to scholar that finds it sealed, as to
 yonder simpleton, that vows he never
 14 learned his letters? This people, the Lord
 says, makes profession of worshipping me,
 15 does me honour with its lips, but its heart
 is far from me.⁶ If they fear me, it is a
 lesson they learned from human precepts.

¹ In verses 15 and 16 the reference, according to some, is to those Jews who put their trust in a projected alliance with Egypt against Assyria (cf. ch. 31 below). We know nothing about the corner-stone, except that the prophet refers here, at least indirectly, to our Lord's coming. Cf. Rom. 9. 33, where the verse ends 'The believer will not be disappointed' instead of 'Hurry to and fro who will; faith knows better'.

² This is clearly a proverb, intended to justify God's design in saving some of the Jewish people, rejecting others. ³ 'The mountain of Disruption', that is, Baal Parasim, II Kg. 5. 20; for Gabaon, see Jos. 10. 10. The same God who once fought for his people will now carry out his purposes by granting success, for the time being, to foreign invaders.

⁴ It is not certain whether this parable in verses 23-28 is meant to explain the merciful gradation God shows in his judgements, or to recommend a less oppressive policy to the Jewish rulers (cf. verse 12 above).

⁵ Ariel is generally interpreted as meaning, Lion of God. It is nowhere else used as a name for Jerusalem, and no certainty can be felt about the sense of the passage.

⁶ Cf. Mt. 15. 8.

14 What remains but some great, some re-
sounding miracle, to strike awe into such
hearts as these? Bereft of wisdom their
wise men shall be, cunning of their coun-
15 sellors vanish. Out on you, that would
hide your designs from the Lord in the
depth of your hearts, plotting on in the
dark and telling yourselves none can see,
16 none can find you out! What a strange
thought is this! As well might clay scheme
against the potter; handicraft disown its
craftsman, or thing of art call the artist
fool.

17 Short the time shall be, and quickly fled,
ere Lebanon forest shall be fruitful as
Carmel, ere land fruitful now shall be
reckoned as forest. Then this book will
have a message for deaf ears to hear, for
blind eyes to see through the mist that
18 darkens them; humble folk shall yet learn
to rejoice in the Lord, poor clods of earth
triumph in the Holy One of Israel.
19 Vanished, the triumphant foe, scornful
incredulity is silenced; where are they
now, that spent themselves on wrong-
20 doing, watching a man's words to convict
him of guilt, defrauding him of justice at
the city gate, setting aside, with a quibble,
21 the plea of the innocent? Here is a message
to the race of Jacob from the Lord, that
was Abraham's deliverer: No longer shall
Jacob be disappointed, no longer put to
22 the blush. He shall see children of his, my
gift, doing honour publicly to my name;
honour to the Holy One of Jacob, homage
23 to the God of Israel! Restless hearts will
attain true knowledge then, and the mur-
24 murers learn wisdom.

30 Out upon you, the Lord says, what
treason is this? Here be plans afoot
that were never mine, webs a-weaving, and
the pattern none of my choice. Trust me,
2 you do but add to your guilt. What are
these journeyings down into Egypt, and I
never consulted? Think you to find refuge
in the strength of Pharaoh, look you to
3 Egypt for shelter? Strength of Pharaoh
shall play you false, nor shelter Egypt
4 bring you, but shame. Princes of thine in
Tanis, ambassadors from thee making
5 their way to Hanes! Fruitless errand to
a folk that could not save them; no help, no
comfort there, only failure and mockery.

6 What burden for the cattle-droves in the

south? Here is a land of difficulty and
danger, home of lion and lioness, of viper
and flying serpent; and through it, goods
piled on asses' backs, treasures stored on
the humps of camels, go men asking for
help where help is none. From Egypt's
7 protection you shall have neither gain nor
good; my word has been said about her,
8 There goes Pride, let her alone. Go home,
then, and engrave it on a tablet of box-
wood for their instruction; write it down,
too, carefully on a scroll, to be an abiding
9 record in after days. So rebellious a people
is this, so treacherous a breed, refusing, my
own children, to listen to the law of their
God; forbidding the prophet to prophesy, 10
the man of vision to have vision of the
truth. Ever they must be told what likes
them best, comforted in their illusions; for
them no marching orders, no prescribed 11
path; he, the Holy One of Israel, must be
kept far from their view.

From him, the Holy One of Israel, this 12
message: Warning of mine you have re-
jected, so blindly you trust your own
cunning, your own headstrong will. Sudden 13
and swift shall be your punishment, as the
crash of a high wall that has long gaped
ruinously, long been anxiously watched.
So shrewd a blow potter never dealt, 14
shivering earthen pot into fragments, till
no shard is left that will carry a lighted
coal from the hearth, or a mouthful of water
from the cistern. From the Lord God, the 15
Holy One of Israel, word was given you,
Come back and keep still, and all shall be
well with you; in quietness and in con-
fidence lies your strength. But you would
have none of it; To horse! you cried, 16
We must flee! and flee you shall; We must ride
swiftly, you said; but swifter still ride your
pursuers. Be you a thousand to one, yet at
17 the challenge of five men you shall take to
flight; nought left of you but a remnant,
lonely as flag-staff on the mountain-top, as
beacon on the hill.

What if the Lord waits his time before 18
he will have mercy on you? The more
glorious, when it comes, his deliverance.
The Lord is a God who makes award
justly, blessed they shall be that wait for
him. In Jerusalem they only will be left, 19
true citizens of Sion. And thou, Jeru-
salem, tears shalt have none to shed; mercy
is none he shall withhold. Soon as he hears

thee crying out to him, the answer will
 20 come. Bread the Lord will grant, though
 it be sparingly, water, though it be in short
 measure. Birds of passage they shall be no
 longer,¹ the men he gives thee for thy
 teachers; always thou wilt have a true
 21 counsellor in sight, always hear his voice
 in thy ear as he warns thee, This is the true
 path, follow it; no swerving to right or
 left!

22 Silver leaf on thy graven images defaced
 now, defaced the sheaths of gold; thou wilt
 cast all away, as a woman casts away def-
 23 filed cloths of hers, and bid it begone. And
 thereupon, sow where thou wilt all over
 the land, rain shall be granted to thy crops;
 rich and full shall be thy harvest of wheat;
 thou shalt have pasture, then, for lambs to
 24 browse in at liberty. Ox and ass on thy
 farm shall have mixed feed, pure grain
 fresh winnowed on the threshing-floor;
 25 never a mountain-top, never a high hill,
 but will flow with torrents of water, when
 that day comes. The dead shall lie in heaps
 that day, and towers come crashing down;
 26 moon's light will be like the light of the
 sun, and the sun will shine in sevenfold
 strength, as if the light of seven days were
 joined in one, when the time comes for the
 Lord to bind up his people's hurt, and heal
 their grievous wound.

27 See where the majesty of the Lord
 comes from far away; his anger is aflame,
 and there is no withstanding it! There is
 menace on his lips, his tongue is like a
 28 consuming fire, and his breath like a moun-
 tain stream that floods over till it is neck-
 deep. He will sweep away whole nations
 into oblivion, sweep away the bridle of
 false fears that curbed the peoples till now.²

29 But, you, that night, will be singing for joy,
 as if it were the night when a solemn feast
 begins; your hearts will be light, as men's
 hearts are light when they go up, with the
 flutes playing about them, to the mountain
 of the Lord, where he dwells, the strong

30 God of Israel. The Lord will make his
 dread voice heard, will lay bare his terrible
 arm, volleying out his anger in flashes of

devouring fire, laying all low with his
 whirlwind, with his hail-stones; and Assur
 31 will shrink in fear from the Lord's voice,
 and will feel his rod. So it is decreed that the
 32 rod should pass over him, brought down
 on him by the Lord's hand to the music
 of your tambours and harps; a strange
 warfare this,³ that shall quell them! In
 33 these times a new Topheth⁴ has been made
 ready; this, too, made ready by a king. It
 is deep and wide, fed with flaming brands
 in abundance; and the breath of the Lord
 comes down like a stream of brimstone, to
 kindle it.

31 Out upon you, that betake your-
 selves to Egypt for succour! Horses
 must be your speed in the hour of peril;
 great array of chariots you must have, and
 horsemen without number, to bring you
 confidence; to the Holy One of Israel turn
 you never, confidence in the Lord is none.
 And yet he too is a wise counsellor; brings
 he trouble to a man's door, he does not
 lightly change his purpose; doubt not he
 will take arms against a rebellious race, the
 unholy alliance bring to nothing. Strength
 of Egypt is human, not divine; its horses
 are weak flesh, not immortal spirit; one
 movement of the Lord's hand, and down
 comes rescuer, down falls the rescued, to
 lie there forgotten. A promise from the
 Lord God! Here is lion, or cub of a lion,
 growling over his prey; what though the
 shepherds rally, and go out to meet him?²
 Nothing cares he for their shouts, is not
 awed by their numbers. So it will be with
 the Lord of hosts, when he comes down to
 war, here on mount Sion, with his own
 hill-side for battle-ground. As parent bird
 hovers over nest, so will the Lord of hosts
 protect Jerusalem; protect her and bring
 her safe through, grant signal deliverance.
 Come back, sons of Israel, that have hid-
 den yourselves away so deep.

Time, then, for each man to cast away
 his idols of gold and silver, idols your
 guilty hands have made. Not by the sword
 of man Assur shall fall, earthly weapon is

¹ 'Birds of passage they shall be no longer'; the Hebrew text is more commonly interpreted as meaning, 'no longer hide away in corners'. ² It is not certain, here, what is meant by a 'bridle of false fears'; nor is it clear from the Hebrew text whether it is something the Lord will destroy (literally, 'winnow away'), or something which he will impose.

³ 'A strange warfare'; in the Hebrew text, 'a warfare of warring'. ⁴ Topheth was the name given to a place where human sacrifices were burned to Moloch, 'the King'. The burning of Sennacherib's dead soldiers will be a new Topheth, prepared (according to the Hebrew text) 'for a king'; but the Latin version gives a better sense, if we understand the King to be Almighty God.

none shall boast it slew him. Flee he must ere sword threaten him, and never warrior of his be left, but to slavery. All that stubborn strength of his by terror unmanned, all his princes fled away! Such comfort the Lord sends to Sion, where his fire is lit, to Jerusalem, where glows his furnace.

32 See, where a king rules his folk justly! His nobles, too, make right award; ¹ to them men look, as for shelter against the wind, cover in a storm; for running streams in drought, shade of towering rock in a parched land. Eyes they will have to see with, no darkness there; ears that are strained to listen attentively; rude minds shall learn wise thoughts, the stammering tongue speak out readily and clear. Noble rank shall no longer be for the reckless, or lordly titles for the crafty. The reckless man, that speaks ever recklessly, his heart set on mischief, still full of empty show, and blasphemy against the Lord; food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty denying still! And the crafty man, an ill craft is his, false pleas devising to ruin harmless folk, cheat the poor of their rights! From a noble nature spring noble acts; title is none to greatness higher than this.

Bestir you, fine ladies, and listen; for ears untroubled by alarm I have a message. Swiftly the days pass, the year goes round, and you shall have trouble enough, anxious foreboding, when the vintage fails, and no fruit-harvest comes. Bewildered, the minds that were once at ease, full of foreboding, those untroubled hearts; you must go stripped and shame-faced now, with sackcloth about your loins, mourn for lost fruitfulness, for the fields once so smiling, for the vineyards that bore so well. That thorns and briars should come up in these lands of yours; come up over haunts you loved, in the city that was all mirth! Empty, now, the palace, forgotten the hum of yonder streets; nothing but gloom, where a man must pick his way through caverns ²

endlessly; loved haunts of the wild ass, a pasture-ground for the flock.

All this, until the spirit is poured out on us from above; fruitful as Carmel then the wilderness, to make your well-tilled lands seem but waste. Alike desert and fruitful field the home, now, of innocence, the abode of loyalty; loyalty, that has peace for its crown, tranquillity for its harvest, repose for ever undisturbed. In quiet homes this people of mine shall live, in dwelling-places that fear no attack; all shall be ease and plenty. But first the hail-storm must do its work, forest be laid low, city levelled with the ground. Ah, blessed race, their seed sowing, their oxen and asses driving, by every stream that flows! ¹

33 What, plunderer of the nations, unplundered still? Proud lord of others, does none dispute thy lordship? A time comes when thou must cease plundering, and thyself be plundered, when of lordship thou hast had enough, and others lord it over thee. Have mercy on us, Lord, that wait for thee so patiently; day after day be our stronghold, our deliverer thou in time of trouble!

Fled, the alien host, scattered the heathen, thy angel's voice ⁴ once heard, thy power made manifest! Your spoils, Gentiles, how easily amassed! Easily as the locusts, where they swarm in the trenches. The Lord's power made manifest, that is throned high in heaven! With his just award Sion shall be well content; still in these times of ours ⁵ the promise well kept, the full deliverance. Knowledge and wisdom and the fear of the Lord, what treasure like these?

See, where they stand at the gates, the men we sent out to report, ⁶ hailing us; the messengers we sent to ask for peace, ⁷ weeping bitterly; Deserted, the highways, the lanes untravelling; the enemy has broken the truce, making no terms with the cities, not sparing the lives of men;

¹ Verses 1-8 are generally understood as a prophecy, e.g. of the reforming activities of king Ezechias. But they may be read simply as an expression of proverbial truths; and indeed the whole tone of them recalls that of the Wisdom literature.

² Literally, 'gloom and a groping over caverns'. The Hebrew text seems rather to mean, 'Ophel and the watch-tower shall be turned into caverns'. ³ It is not clear whether this refers to the security which God's people are later to enjoy, or whether it is a proverb whose meaning is now lost to us.

⁴ 'Thy angel'; in the Hebrew text, 'a rumour'. ⁵ 'Of ours'; literally, 'of thine', the prophet addressing (it seems) an imaginary contemporary of his own.

⁶ 'The men we sent out to report'; literally, 'those who see', but it does not seem probable that the phrase refers here, as it often does, to the prophets. The Hebrew text differs, and its meaning is much disputed.

⁷ Literally, 'The angels (or messengers) of peace'.

- 9 widowed the countryside and lifeless, Lebanon shrunken and withered, Saron a wilderness, Basan and Carmel quaking with fear. Now, the Lord says, to bestir myself, now to rise up in arms against them, now to make them feel my power!
- 11 A raging fire conceived in the womb, and nothing but stubble brought to the birth; your own impetuous spirit shall be a fire, 12 Gentiles, to devour you; like ashes in a kiln they shall be left, the alien hordes, bundles of brushwood eaten up by the fire.
- 13 Listen then, you that live far off, to the story of my doings; and you, who dwell close to me, learn the lesson of my power.
- 14 In Sion itself there be guilty folk that tremble, false hearts full of dismay; who shall survive this devouring flame, the near presence of fires that burn unceasingly?
- 15 He only, that follows the path of innocence, tells truth, ill-gotten gain refuses, flings back the bribe; his ears shut to murderous counsels, his eyes from every harmful sight turned away. On the heights his dwelling shall be, his eyrie among the fastnesses of the rocks, bread shall be his for the asking, 17 water from an unfauling spring. Those eyes shall look on the king in his royal beauty, have sight of a land whose frontiers are far away.
- 18 Of those old fears, how thou wilt recall the memory! Where are they now, the learned men, that could weigh each phrase of the law, that taught us like children?¹
- 19 No longer wilt thou see before thee a rebellious people,² all profound talk that passes thy comprehension, and no wisdom.
- 20 Look around thee at Sion, goal of our pilgrimage, see where Jerusalem lies, an undisturbed dwelling-place; here is tent securely fixed, its pegs immoveable, its ropes never to be broken. Here, as nowhere else, our Lord reigns in majesty; a place of rivers, of wide, open streams, yet no ship's oar will disturb it, no huge galleon pass by; the Lord our judge, the Lord our lawgiver, the Lord our king, will himself be our deliverance. Now, thy tackle hangs loose and unserviceable, too weak thy mast is to display thy pennon; then, thou wilt have the spoil of many forays to divide,

even lame folk shall carry plunder away. No more shall they cry out on their helpless plight, these, thy fellow citizens; none dwells there now but is assailed of his guilt.

34 Nations, come near and listen, here is news for all mankind; give heed the whole world must, and all that lives on it, earth and all earth breeds. On all nations the Lord will be avenged, never an armed host but must feel the blow, forfeit, all of them, and doomed to perish. See where they lie slain, their carrion polluting the air, the very hills rotted away with their blood! Fade they into nothing, yonder heavenly powers; shrivel, like a scroll, the heavens themselves, nor any star there but must wither, as leaf withers on vine or fig-tree; in the very heavens my sword shall drink deep of blood. On Edom doubt not it shall fall, death-sentence to execute, the sword of the Lord, glutted with blood! Well nourished with fat, where it drank the blood of lambs and goats, of stalled rams! There are victims ready for the Lord in Bosra; great slaughter then shall be in the land of Edom. Down go the wild bulls with the rest, the bullocks, leaders of the herd; earth must be sodden with their blood, rich grow the soil with fat of their pampered kings. Swiftly it comes, the day of the Lord's vengeance, the year that shall see Sion's wrongs redressed. Pitch they shall be henceforward, the brooks of Edom, its soil brimstone; a land of burning pitch, never quenched night or day, its smoke going up eternally; age after age it shall yet be desolate, untravelled for ever by the foot of man. Pelican and hedge-hog shall claim it, ibis and raven be its tenants; plotted with the Lord's measuring-line, an empty void, tried with his plummet, a hanging ruin. Cry they for a king to govern it, that has no chieftain now; all its princes have vanished. Thorns and nettles shall grow in its palaces, briers over its battlements; it shall be the lair of serpents, the pasture-ground of the ostrich. Devils and monstrous forms shall haunt it, satyr call out to satyr; there the vampire lies down and finds rest. Hedge-hog makes a

¹ According to the Hebrew text, the prophet asks what has become of the notaries, the men who weighed (out money, to buy off Assyria), the men who counted the towers of Jerusalem. ² A rebellious people; this word, nowhere else found, is understood by some modern scholars in the sense of 'barbarous', and the whole verse is taken as referring to the Assyrians.

nest to rear its young, nurtured safely in yonder shade; vulture there with vulture meets.¹

- 16 Turn back, when the time comes, to this record of divine prophecy,² and read it afresh; you shall learn, then, that none of these signs was lacking, none waited for the coming of the next. The Lord it was entrusted me with the prophecies I utter; by his Spirit that strange company was
17 called together. For each its own dwelling-place; in his hand was the line that measured it out to them; there they shall live on for ever, to all ages undisturbed.

- 35** Thrills the barren desert with rejoicing; the wilderness takes heart,
2 and blossoms, fair as the lily. Blossom on blossom, it will rejoice and sing for joy; all the majesty of Lebanon is bestowed on it, all the grace of Carmel and of Saron. All alike shall see the glory of the Lord, the
3 majesty of our God. Stiffen, then, the sinews of drooping hand and flagging
4 knee; give word to the faint-hearted, Take courage, and have no fear; see where your Lord is bringing redress for your wrongs,
5 God himself, coming to deliver you! Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and
6 deaf ears unsealed; the lame man, then, shall leap as the deer leap, the speechless tongue cry aloud. Springs will gush out in the wilderness, streams flow through the
7 desert; ground that was dried up will give place to pools, barren land to wells of clear water; where the serpent had its lair once, reed and bulrush will show their green.
8 A high road will stretch across it, by divine proclamation kept holy; none that is defiled may travel on it; and there you shall find a straight path lying before you, wayfarer is none so foolish he can go astray.
9 No lions shall molest it, no beasts of prey
10 venture on it. Free men shall walk on it, coming home again to Sion, and praising the Lord for their ransoming. Eternal happiness crowns them, joy and happiness in their grasp now, sorrow and sighing fled far away.

¹ The names of the beasts and monsters mentioned in verses 11-15 cannot be given with certainty. Some would understand a bird (perhaps the hedge-hog in verse 11; and in verse 15, where a different and very rare word is used in the Hebrew text, there is no clear agreement what animal, bird, or reptile is meant. ² Turn back, when the time comes, to this record of divine prophecy'; literally, 'search carefully in the book of the Lord'. The sense given above is that commonly adopted, but the text of the passage is uncertain; the Septuagint Greek has, 'there the hinds gather, and meet face to face'. ³ The whole of this chapter is to be found, with slight variations, in the fourth book of Kings (ch. 18).

36 It was in the fourteenth year of Ezechias' reign that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, marched on the fortified cities of Juda, and took them.³ And the king of Assyria, who was then at Lachis, sent Rabsaces at the head of a strong force to Jerusalem, where king Ezechias was. This Rabsaces took up his stand on the aqueduct that fed the upper pool, on the way that brings you to the Fuller's Field, and there he was met by Eliacim, son of Helcias, the controller of the royal household, and Sobna, the scribe, and Joahe, son of Asaph, the recorder. So he bade them
4 tell Ezechias, Here is a message to thee from the great king, the king of Assyria. What confidence is this that makes thee so bold? By what cunning or what force dost thou hope to meet me in arms? On whose help dost thou rely, that thou wouldst throw off my allegiance? What, wilt thou
6 rely on Egypt? That is to support thyself on a broken staff of cane, that will run into a man's hand, if he presses on it, and pierce him through; such does Pharaoh, king of Egypt, prove himself to all those who rely on him. Or wilt thou answer, We trust,
7 I and my people, in the Lord our God? Tell me, who is he? Is he not the God whose hill-shrines and altars their king, Ezechias, has cleared away, bidding Juda and Jerusalem worship at one altar here? Come now, if thou wert to make terms with
8 my master, the king of Assyria, by which I must hand over to thee two thousand horses, wouldst thou be able to do thy part by putting riders on them? Why, thou art
9 no match even for a city prefect, the least of my master's servants. Trust if thou wilt in Egypt, its chariots and its horsemen; but dost thou doubt that I have the Lord's warrant to come and subdue this land? It was the Lord himself who sent word to me, Make war on this land, and subdue it.

At this, Eliacim and Sobna and Joahe
11 said to Rabsaces, My lord, pray talk to us in Syriac; we know it well. Do not talk to us in the Hebrew language, while all these folks are standing on the walls within

12 hearing. What, said Rabsaces, dost thou think my master hath sent me with this message for thee only, and for that master of thine? It is for the folk who man the walls, these companions of yours that have nothing left to eat or drink but the ventings
 13 of their own bodies. Then Rabsaces stood up and cried aloud, in Hebrew, Here is a message to you from the great king, the
 14 king of Assyria! This is the king's warning, Do not be deluded by Ezechias, he is
 15 powerless to save you; do not let Ezechias put you off by telling you to trust in God; that the Lord is certain to bring you aid, he cannot allow the king of Assyria to become master of your city. No, do not
 16 listen to Ezechias; here are the terms the king of Assyria offers to you. Earn my good will by surrendering to me, and you shall live unmolested; to each the fruit of his own vine and fig-tree, to each the water
 17 from his own cistern. Then, when I come back, I will transplant you into a land like your own, which will grudge you neither wheat nor wine, so rich is it in cornfields
 18 and vineyards. No, do not let Ezechias stir you to action by telling you that the Lord will deliver you. What of other nations? Were their countries delivered, by this god or that, when the king of Assyria threatened them? What gods had Emath and Arphad, what god had Sepharvaim? Did
 19 any power rescue Samaria from my attack? Which of all the gods in the world has delivered his country when I threatened it, that you should trust in the Lord's deliverance, when I threaten Jerusalem?
 21 But all kept silence, and gave him no word in answer; the king had sent orders
 22 that they were not to answer him. So Eliacim, son of Helcias, the controller of the royal household, and Sobna, the scribe, and Joahe, son of Asaph, the recorder, went back to Ezechias, with their garments torn about them, to let him know what Rabsaces had said.

37 No sooner had king Ezechias heard it, than he tore his garments open, and put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.¹ Meanwhile, he sent word to the prophet Isaias, son of Amos. Eliacim, the controller of the household, and Sobna, the scribe, and

some of the older priests, went on this errand. Here is a message for thee, they said, from Ezechias. Troublous times have come upon us; times to make us mend our ways, or else blaspheme God.² What remedy, when children come to the birth, and the mother has no strength to bear them? Unless indeed the Lord God should take cognizance of what Rabsaces has been saying, Rabsaces, who was sent here by his master, the king of Assyria, to blaspheme the living God. Surely the Lord thy God has listened to the reproaches he uttered. Raise thy voice, then, in prayer for the poor remnant that is left.

Thus visited by the servants of Ezechias, Isaias answered, Give your master this message. Do not be dismayed, the Lord says, at hearing the blasphemies which the courtiers of the Assyrian king have uttered against me. See if I do not put him in such a mind, see if I do not make him hear such news, as will send him back to his own country. And when he reaches his own country, I will give the word, and the sword shall make an end of him.

And now Rabsaces went back to find the king of the Assyrians before Lobna, hearing that he had raised the siege of Lachis. News had come that Taracha, king of the Ethiopians, was on his way to do battle with him. And the king, when he heard the report, despatched messengers to Ezechias; Give this warning, he said, to Ezechias, king of Juda. Do not let the God in whom thou puttest such confidence deceive thee with false hopes, telling thee that Jerusalem will never be allowed to fall into the hands of the Assyrian king. What, hast thou not heard what the kings of Assyria have done to the nations everywhere, destroying them utterly? And what hope hast thou of deliverance? What saving power had the gods of those old peoples my fathers overthrew, Gozam, and Haram, and Repheth, and the race of Eden who lived in Thalassar? Where are they, the kings of Emath, and Arphad, the kings who governed the city of Sepharvaim, and Ana, and Ava?

These despatches were handed by the messengers to Ezechias, and when he had read them, he went up into the house of the Lord, and held them out open in the

¹ *vv.* 1-38. See IV Kg. 19.

² Literally, 'times of reproof and of blasphemy'.

15 Lord's presence. And this was the prayer
 16 which Ezechias made to the Lord: Lord
 of hosts, God of Israel, who hast thy throne
 above the cherubim, thou alone art God
 over all the kingdoms of the world, heaven
 17 and earth are of thy fashioning. Give ear,
 Lord, and listen; open thy eyes, Lord, and
 see; do not let Sennacherib's words go
 unheared, these blasphemies he has uttered
 18 against the living God. It is true, Lord,
 that the kings of Assyria have brought ruin
 on whole nations, and the lands they lived
 19 in, and thrown their gods into the fire; but
 these were in truth no gods; men had made
 them, of wood or stone, and men could
 20 break them. Now it is for thee, O Lord our
 God, to rescue us from the invader, and
 shew all the kingdoms of the world there
 is no other Lord, save thee.

21 Then Isaias, son of Amos, sent word to
 Ezechias, A message to thee from the
 Lord, the God of Israel, in answer to the
 prayer thou hast made to him about Sen-
 22 nacherib, king of the Assyrians. This is
 what the Lord has to say of him: See how
 she mocks thee, flouts thee, Sion, the
 virgin city! Jerusalem, proud maiden, fol-
 23 lows thee with her eyes and tosses her head
 in scorn. So thou wouldst hurl insults, and
 blaspheme, and talk boastfully, and brave
 it out with disdainful looks, against whom?
 24 Against the Holy One of Israel. In thy
 name, these servants of thine have hurled
 insults at the Lord. It was thy dream that
 thou hadst scaled, with those chariots of
 thine, the mountain heights, the slopes of
 Lebanon; and now thou wouldst cut down
 its tall cedars, its noble fir-trees, till thou
 couldst reach the very summit of the
 ascent, the garden its woods enclosed.
 25 Thou wouldst dig wells and drink wherever
 it pleased thee, thou wouldst dry up, in thy
 march, the banked channels of the Nile.¹
 26 - What, hast thou not heard how I dealt
 with this people in time past? This present
 design, too, is one I have formed long
 since, and am now carrying out; such a
 design as signs with it ruin for the
 mountain-fastnesses, the walled cities that
 27 fight against thee. Sure enough, they were
 overawed and discomfited, the puny gar-

risoners that held them; frail as meadow
 grass or mountain pasturage, or the stalks
 that grow on the house-top, withering
 before they can ripen. But I am watching
 28 thee where thou dwellest, thy comings and
 goings, thy raving talk against me. Yes,
 29 I have listened to the ravings of thy pride
 against me, and now a ring for thy nose, a
 twitch of the bridle in thy mouth, and back
 thou goest by the way thou didst come.

Here is a test for thee, Ezechias, of the
 30 truth of my prophecy; this year thou must
 be content to eat the aftergrowth, and next
 year wild things shall be thy food; in the
 third year you may sow and reap, plant
 vineyards and eat the fruit of them.²
 A remnant of Juda's race will be saved, and
 31 this remnant will strike root deep in earth,
 bear fruit high in air; yes, it is from Jeru-
 salem the remnant will come, from mount
 Sion that we shall win salvation; so tenderly
 he loves us, the Lord of hosts. This,
 32 then, is what the Lord has to tell thee about
 the king of the Assyrians; he shall never
 enter this city, or shoot an arrow into it;
 no shield-protected host shall storm it, no
 earthworks shall be cast up around it. He
 34 will go back the way he came, and never
 enter into this city, the Lord says; I will
 keep guard over this city and deliver it, for
 my own honour and for the honour of my
 servant David.

It was after this that an angel of the Lord
 36 went out on his errand, and smote down
 a hundred and eighty-five thousand men
 in the Assyrian camp; when morning
 came, and men were astir, nothing was to
 be seen but the corpses of the dead. So
 37 Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, broke
 up camp, and took the road, and was gone;
 nor did he leave Ninive again. And one
 38 day, when he was at worship in the temple
 of his god Nosroch, two sons of his,
 Adramelech and Sarasar, drew their
 swords on him, and so escaped into the
 land of Ararat; and the kingdom passed to
 his son Asarhaddon.

38 And now Ezechias fell sick, and
 was at death's door;³ indeed, the
 prophet Isaias, son of Amos, visited him

¹ Literally, 'the channels of earthworks', but see 19. 6, and note there. ² Some think that this prophecy was made three years before the events described in 5. 36. Sennacherib having been engaged meanwhile in an attack on Egypt. But the exact bearing of the 'sign' is not certain. ³ *vv.* 1-8. See IV Kg. 20. 1-11.

with this message from the Lord, Put thy affairs in order; it is death that awaits thee, not recovery. At this Ezechias turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord thus: Remember, Lord, I entreat thee, a life that has kept true to thee, an innocent heart; how I did ever what was thy will. And Ezechias wept bitterly. And thereupon the word of the Lord came to Isaias, Go and tell Ezechias, Here is a message to thee from the Lord, the God of thy father David. I have listened to thy prayer, and marked thy tears; be it so, I will add fifteen years to thy life. And I will save thee and thy city from the power of the Assyrian king; I will be its protector. This sign, too, the Lord gives thee, in proof that he will make his promise good; see how low the shadow has fallen, with sun-down, where the dial of Achaz marks the hours! I will make it go ten hours back. And with that the sun retraced ten hours of its descent.

9 These are the words Ezechias king of Juda wrote, upon falling sick and recovering of his illness. It seemed as if I must go down to the gates of the world beneath, in the noontide of my years; the remnant of life that I hoped for, hoped for in vain. No more (thought I) to lift up my eyes to the Lord God in this land of the living, to see men's faces, and quiet homes, no more!¹

12 This familiar world² taken away from me, folded up like a shepherd's tent, my life cut short like the weaver's thread! And he had cut me off while the web was still in the making; before the day reached its evening, he would make an end of me. All night long I lay still, as if he had been a lion that had broken all my bones; before the day reached its evening he would make an end of me. My voice was as feeble as the voice of a nestling swallow or murmuring dove; my eyes wearied out with ever straining upwards. Lord, I am in hard

straits; win my release for me! And yet, what words can I use, what answer can I expect, when it is he himself that has brought this upon me? With bitter heart I pass all my years in review.³ Lord, so frail a thing is life; on so little does my mortal breath depend! Thou canst chastise me, thou canst make me live.⁴ Bitter, bitter the discipline that brings me peace!

And now thou hast saved the life that was in peril, thrusting away all my sins out of thy sight. Thou hast no praise in the world beneath, death cannot honour thee; those who go down into the grave have no promise of thine to hope for; it is living men, as I am a living man to-day, that give thee thanks, pass on from father to son the story of thy faithfulness. Lord, be my saviour still; so, all day long, the Lord's house shall ring with the music of our psalms.

Note that Isaias bade them take a lump of figs, and make a plaster of it for the king's ulcer, and this is how he was healed. And note that Ezechias had asked what sign should be given him, in proof that he would set foot in the Lord's house again.⁵

39 And now, hearing of his sickness and recovery, the king of Babylon, Merodach Baladan, son of Baladan, sent a letter and gifts to Ezechias.⁶ Ezechias was delighted at the coming of these envoys, and shewed them his scented treasure-house,⁷ with its silver and gold and spices and rich ointments; the rooms where his ornaments were kept; all the wealth of his store-house. There was nothing in palace or domain but he showed it to them.

Then the prophet Isaias gained audience of king Ezechias, and asked him, What message did these men bring, and whence had they come? They came to see me, said Ezechias, from a country that is far away, from Babylon. And when Isaias asked

¹ Literally, 'I shall no more see man, nor the dweller in quiet'. The reference seems to be to the years of peace promised after the failure of Sennacherib's invasion. But some, by a slight change in the Hebrew text, would read 'the world' instead of 'quiet'; others interpret the Hebrew text as meaning, 'I shall be deprived of the sight of man, as those who dwell in quiet (that is, in the grave) are'.

² The Hebrew word here used may mean 'my contemporaries', or 'my dwelling', or perhaps simply 'my life'.

³ The Hebrew text appears to mean, 'I will walk as if in procession all my years in the bitterness of my soul'.

⁴ Literally, 'Lord, if it is thus men live, and the breath of my life is such, thou wilt correct me and make me live'. The Hebrew text has 'grant me recovery' instead of 'correct me'.

⁵ We should expect verses 21 and 22 to occur between verse 6 and verse 7 above (as they do in IV Kg. 20: 6-8). It seems probable that they dropped out by accident, and were replaced here as a footnote to the story.

⁶ See IV Kg. 20: 12-19.

⁷ Literally, 'his house of perfumes', according to the Latin version. The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'his house of treasures'. The word translated 'ornaments' probably means, according to the Hebrew text, 'armour'.

what they had seen in his palace, he told him, They saw everything in my palace; I have no treasures I did not shew them. And at that Isaiah said to Ezechias, I have a message for thy hearing from the Lord of hosts. Behold, a time is coming when all that is in thy house, all the treasures which thy fathers have amassed there in times past, will be taken away to Babylon; nothing shall be left of it, the Lord says. And sons of thine, men of thy own line, of thy own stock, shall be carried off to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Why then, Ezechias said to Isaiah, welcome be the word the Lord has spoken! In my time at least, he said, may there be peace, may the promise hold good.

40 Take heart again, my people, says your God, take heart again. Speak Jerusalem fair, cry aloud to her that her woes are at an end, her guilt is pardoned; double toll the Lord has taken for all her sins. A cry, there, out in the wilderness, Make way for the Lord's coming; a straight road for our God through the desert! Bridged every valley must be, every mountain and hill levelled; windings cut straight, and the rough paths paved; the Lord's glory is to be revealed for all mankind to witness; it is his own decree.¹ A voice came, bidding me cry aloud; asked I in what words, in these: Mortal things are but grass, the glory of them is but grass in flower; grass that withers, a flower that fades, when the Lord's breath blows upon it. The whole people, what is it but grass? Grass that withers, a flower that fades; but the word of our Lord stands for ever. Good news for Sion, take thy stand, herald, on some high mountain; good news for Jerusalem, proclaim it, herald, aloud; louder still, no cause now for fear;² tell the cities of Juda, See, your God comes! See, the Lord God is coming, revealed in power, with his own strong arm for warrant; and see, they come with him, they walk before him, the reward of his labour, the achievement of his task,³ his own flock! Like a shepherd he tends them, gathers up the lambs and carries them in his bosom,

helps the ewes in milk forward on their way.

Who was it measured out the waters in his open hand, heaven balanced on his palm, earth's mass poised on three of his fingers? Who tried yonder mountains in the scale, weighed out the hills?

No aid, then, had the spirit of the Lord to help him, no counsellor stood by to admonish him. None other was there, to lend his skill; guide to point out the way, pilot to warn him of danger. What are the nations to him but a drop of water in a bucket, a make-weight on the scales? What are the islands but a handful of dust? His altar-hearth Lebanon itself could not feed, victims could not yield enough for his burnt-sacrifice. All the nations of the world shrink, in his presence, to nothing, emptiness, a very void, beside him. And will you find a likeness for God, set up a form to resemble him? What avails image the metal-worker casts, for goldsmith to line with gold, silversmith plate with silver? What avails yonder wood, hard of fibre, proof against decay; the craftsman's care, that his statue should stand immovable?⁴

What ignorance is this? Has no rumour reached you, no tradition from the beginning of time, that you should not understand earth's origin? There is One sits so high above its orb, those who live on it seem tiny as locusts; One who has spread out the heavens like gossamer, as he were pitching a tent to dwell in. The men who can read mysteries, how he confounds them, the men who judge on earth, what empty things he makes of them! Saplings never truly planted, or laid out, or grounded in the soil, see how they wither at his sudden blast, how the storm-wind carries them away like stubble! What likeness, then, can you find to match me with? asks the Holy One. Lift up your eyes, and look at the heavens; who was it that made them? Who is it that marshals the full muster of their starry host, calling each by its name, not one of them missing from the ranks? Such strength, such vigour, such spirit is his.

¹ Cf. Lk. 3. 4. ² In the Hebrew text, it is Sion (or Jerusalem) itself that is represented as the bringer of good news, according to the most probable interpretation. ³ Literally, 'his reward is with him, and his task (or perhaps, the wages of his task) is before him'. It seems likely that the Israelites returning from exile are here compared to the flocks and herds with which Jacob returned from Mesopotamia (Gen. 31. 18).

⁴ The Hebrew text differs here, but its sense is obscure, and perhaps corrupt.

27 What, then, is this thought of thine, Jacob, what is this complaint of thine, Israel, that the Lord does not see how it fares with thee, that thy God passes over thy wrongs? What ignorance is this? Has not the rumour of it reached thee? This Lord of ours, who fashioned the remotest bounds of earth, is God eternally; he does not weaken or grow weary; he is wise beyond all our thinking. Rather, it is he who gives the weary fresh spirit, who fosters strength and vigour where strength and vigour is none. Youth itself may weaken, 30 the warrior faint and flag, but those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength, like eagles new-fledged; hasten, and never grow weary of hastening, march on, and never weaken on the march.

41 Let the islands cease their clamour, and come to me, let the peoples of the world take heart afresh;¹ and so let them come and plead their cause; we will submit the question to an arbiter, they and I. Tell me, who was it summoned his faithful servant² from the east, beckoned him to follow? The nations should be at his mercy, kings be subdued at his coming; flying like dust before his sword, scattered like chaff in the wind at the threat of his bow. He should rout them in battle, and pass through their country unmolested, leaving not a footprint behind him. Who was the author, the doer of all this, but I, the Lord, who summon all the ages into being? Before all, and at the end of all, I am. The islands have seen it, and trembled at the sight; the remotest parts of the world have been smitten with dismay; they draw near, and obey the summons. 6 (And still each abets his neighbour; 7 Courage, says one to another. The metal-worker, plying the hammer, encourages his fellow that is smiting the anvil; all goes well, he says, with the soldering. And he fastens it with nails, immovable.)³

But thou, Israel, my servant, thou, Jacob, on whom my choice has fallen, art sprung from that Abraham, who was my friend; in his person, I led thee by the hand from the ends of the earth, beckoning thee from far away, and still I whispered to thee, My servant thou art, chosen, not rejected. Have no fear, I am with thee; do not hesitate, am I not thy God? I am here to strengthen and protect thee; faithful the right hand that holds thee up. Thou shalt see all thy enemies disappointed and put to the blush; what are they? A very nothing, those adversaries of thine; they must vanish away; thou wilt look in vain for the men who troubled thee, fought against thee; thy search is for a very nothing, a memory of the past. It is I, the Lord thy God, that hold thee by the hand and whisper to thee, Do not be afraid. I am here to help thee.

Jacob, poor worm, poor ghost of Israel, do not be afraid; I am here, says the Lord, to help thee; I am here, says the Holy One of Israel, to ransom thee. I mean to go a-threshing, and thou my sledge, newly made; teeth like saws to thresh the mountains and crush them down, turn the hills into chaff; ay, and winnow them, till wind carries them away and storm scatters them! Thou shalt yet make thy boast of the Lord, triumph in the Holy One of Israel. Poor vagrants that long for water, where water is none, how dry their tongues with thirst! And shall I, the Lord, refuse them a hearing, I, the Holy One of Israel, leave them forsaken? I will open springs on the hill-slopes, wells in the open plain, turn the wilderness into pools, the trackless desert into running streams. I will plant those wastes with cedar and acacia, myrtle and olive; rear, in that desert soil, fir and elm and box besides; proof for all to see and recognize, for all to mark and to consider, that the Lord's hand was there; who but he, the Holy One of Israel, creates?

¹ 'Take heart afresh'; the same words are used for 'renew their strength' in 40. 31 above, and some think they have been written in here by an error, since they are not clearly suitable to the context. ² Literally, 'a just man'. The Hebrew text has 'justice', and some modern scholars would interpret: 'Who summoned from the east (a certain person whom) justice (that is, victory) meets (that is, attends) at his heels?' It is a matter of much disagreement, who is the person so referred to. St Jerome and others think it is the Messiah; but the context seems to suggest that the event lies in the past, not in the future. It may perhaps be Cyrus, king of Persia, who is described as God's chosen emissary in 44. 28, 45. 1. But it can also be understood of Abraham and his descendants, taken in conjunction, verse 2 referring to Abraham himself and verse 3 to the Exodus. The text of verse 9 below seems to favour this last interpretation. ³ Verses 6 and 7 are generally understood as referring to the making of idols; but their connexion with the context is so obscure that some think they have been misplaced, and stood originally after verse 20 of the foregoing chapter.

21 Come then, says the Lord, your plead-
 22 ings! Let the King of Jacob hear your
 contentions; let them come forward, these
 other gods, and tell us the future.¹ So read
 the past for us, that the study of it may
 disclose what needs must follow; coming
 23 events make known. Foretell you what is
 yet to be, we shall know you are gods
 indeed. Then, if you have the power, grant
 good or ill fortune to mankind; confer we,
 24 and pass judgement on it! Why, you are
 all empty air, a nothing that nothing can
 effect; he courts his own shame, that makes
 choice of you.

25 I summoned one from the north coun-
 try; from the east his coming should be,
 and ever he should invoke my name.²
 Princes he should harry to and fro, lightly
 26 as potter treads out his clay. Which of you
 foretold this from the first? Let us recog-
 nize it. Which of you knew it from the
 beginning? We must needs say, His plea
 is just. But no, none gave tidings of it,
 none foretold it; there was no word came
 27 from you. Who will be the first³ to tell
 Sion, Here, here they are? He shall carry
 28 my good news to Jerusalem. But when I
 looked, there was none of them that could
 offer counsel, or give a word in answer
 29 when I questioned him. None of them has
 right on his side; all their doings are
 nothingness; no better than empty air the
 images men make of them.

42 And now, here is my servant,⁴ to
 whom I grant protection, the man
 of my choice, greatly beloved. My spirit
 rests upon him, and he will proclaim right
 2 order among the Gentiles. He will not be
 contentious or a lover of faction; none shall

hear his voice in the streets. He will not
 3 snap the staff that is already crushed, or
 put out the wick that still smoulders; but
 at last he will establish right order un-
 4 failingly.⁵ Not with sternness, not with
 violence; to set up right order on earth,
 that is his mission. He has a law to give;
 in the far-off islands men wait for it eagerly.
 Thus says the Lord God, he who created
 5 the heavens and spread them out, crafts-
 man of the world and all the world affords,
 he who gives being and breath to all that
 lives and moves on it: True to my purpose,
 6 I, the Lord, have summoned thee, taking
 thee by the hand and protecting thee, to
 make, through thee, a covenant with my
 own people, to shed, through thee, light
 over the Gentiles: to give sight to blinded
 7 eyes, to set the prisoner free from his cap-
 tivity, from the dungeon where he lies in
 darkness. I am the Lord, whose name tells
 8 of power; I will not let the boast that is
 mine pass to another, or share my renown
 with graven gods. What I told you long
 9 since,⁶ has proved true under your eyes;
 I tell you now what is still to be; you shall
 hear of it before ever it comes to light.

Sing the Lord a new song; let his praise
 10 sound from end to end of the earth. Praise
 him from the sea, all men that sail on it,
 and all creatures the sea contains; the
 islands and the island-dwellers. Let the
 11 wilderness, now, lift up its head,⁷ and the
 desert cities; the men of Cedar shall have
 villages to dwell in.⁸ Give praise, then,
 rock-dwellers; the mountain-tops shall
 ring with their cries. All shall give God his
 12 praise, till the renown of him reaches the
 islands far away.

Like a giant the Lord shall go out to 13

¹ The words 'these other gods' are not expressed in the original, but are inserted for the sake of
 clearness, being easily deducible from the context.

² There is the same uncertainty here about the person alluded to, as in verse 2 above. ³ In the Hebrew text, the verb is not expressed, and it is
 generally understood as meaning, 'I will be the first'. In that case, the following clause should read, 'and
 I will send a messenger with good news to Jerusalem'.

⁴ The servant of the Lord, frequently mentioned in these later chapters of the prophecy, is beyond doubt a type of our Lord (cf. Mt. 12, 18).
 It is not clear whether the prophet was also referring to events nearer his own time; and, if so, who was
 meant by 'the servant'. Some think the Servant means primarily the people of Israel, or at any rate that
 portion of it which returned from the exile at Babylon (cf. verse 19 below). Others would identify him
 with some individual figure, as king Ezechias, Zorobabel (who brought back the exiles), or Cyrus king
 of Persia; many other names have been suggested. Meanwhile, it is to be observed that there are numerous
 quotations in the New Testament from this part of the prophet's writings; e.g. Mt. 12, 18 (from the
 present passage), Phil. 2, 19 (from 45, 24), Acts 13, 27 (from 49, 6), Rom. 15, 21 (from 52, 15), Mt. 8, 17
 (from 53, 4), Acts 8, 33 (from 53, 7), 1 Pet. 2, 22 (from 53, 9), Mk. 15, 28 (from 53, 12), Acts 13, 34
 (from 55, 3), Rom. 11, 26 (from 59, 20) Rom. 10, 20 (from 65, 1). ⁵ Cf. Mt. 12, 18, where the text
 differs considerably from the text here. 'A lover of faction'; literally, 'an accepter of persons'; the
 Hebrew text here is obscure, but it is generally taken to mean 'lift up his voice' (as in St. Matthew).

⁶ Literally, 'the things which were first', but the context makes the meaning clear. ⁷ The Hebrew
 text probably implies 'its voice', as in verse 2 above. ⁸ According to the Hebrew text, 'and those,
 too, who dwell in the settlements of Cedar'.

battle, like a warrior that stirs up his own rage, with hue and cry, flouting his enemies.¹ Too long I have been dumb, eaten my heart out, held myself in like a woman in labour;² now I will have my say, I will destroy, and as I destroy, devour! I will turn mountain and hill into a waste, withering all their verdure, make barren islands of the rivers, dry up the marshes; and I will lead men blindfold by unfamiliar ways, guide their steps by paths unknown to them; I will make the darkness light, and the winding ways straight for them. Such was my promise to them, and were they disappointed of it? See how they are routed, how they blush and blench, the men who trust in graven images, and say to the idols they have cast, You are gods of ours!

Listen now, you that are deaf; look up, blind eyes, and see. Who so blind as my servant, who so deaf as he, to whom my messengers were sent?³ Who so blind, as he that has forfeited his liberty? Who so blind, as the Lord's servant is?⁴ Eyes that have seen so much, must they be still unheeding; ears open to every rumour, will they never hear? It was ever the Lord's will to sanctify him; so great, so glorious the law he gave him; yet here is a people robbed and spoiled, caught by warriors that have hidden it away in dungeons, a prey there is none to deliver, spoil none bids them restore. Which of you will listen to this, and mark it, and give a hearing to prophecy? Who was it that made Jacob a spoil, gave Israel up into the hands of the conqueror? It was that Lord, against whom we have sinned. Because his ways lay untrodden, his laws went unheeded, he poured out on Israel his angry retribution, war without mercy; and they? The flames burned round them, and they could not read the lesson, scorched them, and still they could not understand.

43 And now, here is a message from the Lord to Jacob, his creature, to

the Israel he fashioned: Do not be afraid, I have bought thee for myself, and given thee the name thou bearest: thou belongest to me. Pass through water, and I will be with thee, so that the flood shall not drown thee; walk amid the flames, and thou shalt not be burnt, the fire shall have no power to catch thee. I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy deliverer; I have bartered away Egypt to win thee, Ethiopia and Saba for thy ransom. So prized, so honoured, so dearly loved, that I am ready to give up mankind in thy place, a world to save thee. Do not be afraid, I am with thee; I will restore thy sons from the east, the west shall hear the calling of their muster-roll; I will say to the north wind, Give them back; to the south wind, Restrain them no more; bring back these sons of mine from far away, these daughters of mine from the world's end. Whoever owns my name⁵ is my creature, made and fashioned for my glory.

Bring them out, then, into the light of day, this people of mine that have eyes, and still cannot see, have ears, and cannot hear. Round about us, all the nations of the world are gathered, all its tribes assemble. And now, which among you can make this claim, give us an account of events foretold long ago?⁶ Let them produce witnesses to justify their claim, so that all may listen and say, It is the truth. I call you to witness, the Lord says, you and this servant of mine, on whom my choice has fallen; will you not recognize the truth, and believe me? Will you not learn to understand that I am the God you seek?⁷ None ever came into being before me, or will after me. It is I, I, the Lord; no other can bring deliverance. It was I who promised that deliverance, I who bought it; I told you of it, when there was no alien god worshipped among you; you are my witnesses to that, the Lord says. I am God, and what I was, I am;⁸ from my power there is no escaping;

¹ Some think that verses 13-17 allude to the events of the Exodus (see verses 15, 16); if so, they should probably be enclosed in inverted commas, as a quotation, as far as the words, 'such was my promise'.

² It is not certain whether the words 'like a woman in labour' should be taken with the verb which precedes, or with the verb which follows them. The second part of the sentence, according to the Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning, 'I will cry out, and gasp, and pant, all at once'; but the verbs used are rare, and their meaning is somewhat doubtful.

³ According to the Hebrew text, 'he whom I sent as a messenger'.

⁴ Literally, 'calls upon my name'; in the Hebrew text, 'is called by my name'.

⁵ Literally, 'the first things'; cf. note on 42. 9 above.

⁶ Literally, 'I am he', as in verse 10, but here the predominant sense is perhaps I am the same God who brought you out of Egypt', cf. verses 16, 17.

when I execute my designs, none can avert them.

14 Thus says the Lord, your ransom, the Holy One of Israel, If I send my emissaries to Babylon, casting down all its barriers,¹ casting down the Chaldeans, with all the pride of their navies, it is for your sakes.

15 I, the Lord, am your Holy One, I, the maker of Israel, am your king. A message to you from that same Lord, who could once lead you through the sea, make a passage for you through the foaming waters; could bring out chariots and horses, rank and file and chieftain together in pursuit, to fall there and never to rise again, crushed like a wick, and their light quenched. Do not remember those old things, he says, as if you had eyes for nothing but what happened long ago; I mean to perform new wonders; even now they are coming to the birth; surely you will understand at last? I mean to make a causeway over the desert, with streams flowing beside it in the waste.

20 The wild things will do me honour, the serpents and the ostriches, for thus giving them water in the desert, streams in the waste; but it was for my people's sake that I did it, to give drink to my chosen people. 21 I made them for myself, surely they too will have praise to give me!

22 Alas, Jacob, that my name should be forgotten, alas, Israel, that thou shouldst have troubled thyself about me so little! 23 No ram of thine offered in burnt-sacrifice to me, no victims of thine to do me honour; little burden have my offerings been to thee, little trouble my need of incense!

24 Scented cane² thou wouldst not buy to burn for me, nor think to cheer me with the fat of sacrifice; rather, it was I that was burdened, burdened with thy sins; I that was troubled, troubled with thy faithlessness. It was I, ever I, that must be blotting out thy offences, for my own honour's sake, 26 effacing the memory of thy sins. Time, now, thou shouldst remember me; come, let us settle the matter by arbitration, thou and I; tell me what plea thou hast to bring for-

ward. For the guilt of thy first father, for the rebellions of thy own spokesmen against me,³ I brought thy inviolable princes to dishonour, gave up Jacob to destruction, Israel to the scorn of his enemies.

44 Listen, then, Jacob, my servant, Israel, the people of my choice. Here is a message to thee from the Lord that made and fashioned thee in the womb, thy protector: do not be afraid, my servant, Jacob, my true, my chosen people. I will pour out water on the thirsty plain, streams over the land that once was dry; I will pour out my spirit upon thy race, my blessing on all thy line, and where the grass springs up they shall spring up too, like willows by running water. Now, a man will say openly, The Lord's servant I; make his boast of Jacob's name; write with his own hand,⁴ Dedicated to the Lord, and lay claim to the title of Israelite. Thus says the Lord, Israel's king and ransom, the Lord of hosts: I am before all; there is no other God but I. What other is like me? Let him proclaim it, tell us of it; let him expound the history of the past, ever since I established the primal race of man; then let him make known the future that is yet to come.⁵ Do not be afraid, or bewildered; you can bear me witness that from the first I proclaimed it in your hearing, there is no other God but I, no other Powers to rival me.

What empty minds be theirs, that idols fashion! What help found any of them yet in his own darling inventions? Confess they, and to their shame, that these have neither sight nor thought. Who was it framed this god, moulded this image that nothing avails? What can they do, yonder whole conspiracy, but stand there blushing? They are but craftsmen with human power. See them met there in a body, all struck dumb, every one abashed as his neighbour! Here is blacksmith that works away with his file, beats out image with

¹ The word in the Hebrew text which the Latin translates 'barriers' is understood by some as meaning fugitives; it is also possible, in the Hebrew text, to interpret what follows as meaning, 'I cast down the Chaldeans into the ships which are their pride'.
² The scented cane was used in making holy oils for the service of the Temple, cf. Ex. 30. 23.

³ Since Adam was the first father of the whole human race, not merely of the Jews, the reference here is probably to one of the later patriarchs; the 'spokesmen' may be Moses and Aaron (cf. Num. 20. 12), or the false prophets of a later time.
⁴ Or possibly 'on his own hand', as if branding himself with the mark of the divine service.

⁵ The text of this verse seems confused, and it seems possible that the heathen gods are once more being challenged to produce proofs of successful prophecies; cf. 42. 9; 43. 9 above.

furnace and hammer, his strong arm the whole author of it; faints he, like other men, if he be hungry, tires at his task if
 13 water he have none to drink! Here is carpenter unfolding his rule; plane smooths the wood, square and compasses must do their work; and what has he made for you?

The figure of a man, that has but human beauty, a man that must have a roof to
 14 shelter him. For such ends, cedar must fall, ilex and oak be cut away from their place in the forest; for this, pine-tree was planted where rains should nourish it.

Logs yonder carpenter will cut, a human hearth to feed; some he brings in to warm himself, kindles more when the bread is a-baking; and the rest? With the rest he makes himself a god to worship, bows
 15 down before the thing his own hands have carved! Well enough that hearth and oven should claim a share, that he should brew

broth and fill his belly, that he should warm him, and boast of the warmth, at
 17 sight of his own chimney-corner. But that he should take the rest to make a god for himself! That he should fall down before

an image, worship it, cry out to it, Save me,
 18 thou art my god! Ignorance and folly, bleared eyes that cannot see, dull hearts

19 that cannot understand! Minds without reason, or sense, or thought, that cannot learn their lesson! Logs that fed the flame,

embers that baked for me; now that my dinner is cooked and eaten, shall I take the rest and make an idol of it, fall down before
 20 a stump of wood? Dust and ashes are his portion; the fool goes on worshipping, cannot free his own soul from bondage, nor ask if he shelters himself under a
 21 lie.¹

Remember it, Jacob, remember it, my servant Israel; it was I, Israel, that made thee; thou art my servant, and wilt thou
 22 forget me? The cloud of thy guilt, the haze of thy sinfulness, I have swept away; come

23 back to me, thy ransom. The Lord has been merciful; you heavens, sing your praises; depths of the earth, rejoice; echo the song of praise, mountain and forest and every forest tree; the Lord has ransomed

Jacob, Israel shall make his boast in him.
 24 Thus says the Lord, thy ransom, he who fashioned thee in the womb: I am the

Lord, the author of all things; alone I spread out heaven's canopy, looked for no help when I laid the floor of the earth. Mine to disappoint the soothsayers of their prophecies, and bewilder the diviner's wits, send the wise men back to school. their wisdom all exposed as folly, vindicate
 my own servant, and justify the counsel my own messengers have given. It is my voice that bids Jerusalem grow populous, and the cities of Juda rise again, while I restore their ruins; my voice that bids the deep turn into a desert, and threatens to dry up all its floods; my voice that says to
 Cyrus, I give thee a shepherd's part to play; it is for thee to carry out my whole purpose. And to Jerusalem it says, Thou shalt be built up; and to the Temple, Thou shalt be founded again.

45 A message from the Lord to the king he has anointed, to Cyrus. I have caught him by his right hand, ready to subdue nations at his coming, put kings to flight, open every gateway before him, so that no door can keep him out. And now (says the Lord) I will still lead thee on thy way, bending the pride of earth low before thee; I will break open gates of bronze, and cleave through bars of iron; their hidden treasures, their most secret hoards, I will hand over to thee. Know by this that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who am calling upon thee by thy name; and that I do it for love of my servant Jacob, of Israel, my chosen people. Yes, I have called thee by thy name; I have found a title for thee,² when thou of me hadst no knowledge as yet. It is the Lord that speaks, and there is no other to rival me, no God but I; I, still unknown to thee, was fain to make thee strong, to what end? Because I would proclaim it from east to west that there is no other God. It is the Lord that speaks, and there is no other to rival me; I, the fashioner of darkness, the creator of light, I, the maker of peace, the author of calamity. I, the Lord, am the doer of all this.

(You heavens, send dew from above, you skies, pour down upon us the rain we long for, him, the Just One; may he, the Saviour, spring from the closed womb of

¹ Literally, 'if there is a lie at his right hand'; it was the right side that was exposed in ancient warfare.

² Literally, 'a comparison for thee', i.e. in describing Cyrus as his shepherd (44. 28).

earth, and with him let right order take its being.¹)

9 I, the Lord, have made my servant what he is. At his peril does man, poor shard of earthly clay, bandy words with his own Fashioner; shall the clay dare ask the potter who moulds it, What ails thee? Or tell
10 him he is no craftsman? Strange, if a man should be asked by his own son, why he begot him, or a woman, why she gave
11 birth!² Thus says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and Israel's maker, Of me you must learn, what times they be that are coming; trust me to do what I will with my
12 sons, with my own creatures. It was I framed the earth, and created man to dwell in it; it was my hands that spread out the heavens, my voice that marshalled the
13 starry host; I, too, have summoned this man to perform my designs faithfully; go he where he will, my guidance shall be his. He shall build up my own city, he shall let my captives go free, without bribe or ransom, says the Lord of hosts.

14 This, too, the Lord says: all the toil of Egypt, all the merchandise of Ethiopia, and tall slaves from Sabaea shall come into thy power and be thine; they shall walk behind thee, their hands manacled as they go, paying thee reverence, and crying out, God is with thee, with thee only; there is no God where thou art not.³

15 Truly, God of Israel, our Saviour, thou
16 art a God of hidden ways! All the makers of false gods must needs be disappointed,
17 must go away ashamed and abashed. Israel has found deliverance in the Lord, eternal deliverance; while ages last, no shame, no
18 disappointment for you. The Lord has pronounced it; the Lord who made the heavens, and the whole frame and fashion of earth, moulded to his will. He did not create it to lie idle, he shaped it to be man's home. And he says, It is the Lord that
19 speaks, there is no other to rival me; it was

not in secret, not in some dark recess of earth, that my word was spoken. Not in vain I bade the sons of Jacob search for me; I am the Lord, faithful to my promises, truthful in all I proclaim. Gather your-
20 selves and come near, flock together to my side, heathen men that have found deliverance; who still, in your ignorance, set up wooden images of your own fashioning, and pray to a god that cannot save. Tell us
21 your thoughts, come, take counsel among yourselves; who was it that proclaimed this from the first, prophesied it long ago? Was it not I, the Lord? There is no God where I am not. Was it not I, the faithful God? There is no other that can save. Turn back
22 to me, and win deliverance, all you that dwell in the remotest corners of the earth; I am God, there is no other. By my own honour I have sworn it, nor shall it echo in vain, this faithful promise I have made, that every knee shall bow before me, and
24 every tongue swear by my name. Then
25 shall men say of the Lord, that redress and dominion come from him;⁴ all those who rebelled against him shall appear in his presence abashed. Through the Lord, the
26 whole race of Israel shall be righted and brought to honour.

46 Here is Bel fallen in pieces, Nabo shattered;⁵ their idols a gazing-stock for wild beasts and cattle! Heavy enough the burden you had to carry; these
2 must be left to moulder in a common ruin; comfort they had none for their toiling worshippers,⁶ living souls that have gone off into captivity. Listen to me, sons of
3 Jacob, and all the rest of Israel's race, you whose weight has ever been my burden, like an unborn child, a babe in the womb. You grow old, but I am still the same; you
4 the grey hairs come, but I ever uphold you; I must carry you, I that created you, I must bear you away to safety. What comparison,
5

¹ The Hebrew text has, not 'the Just One', but 'justice' (that is, God's faithful mercies to his people, or their acquittal from sin); not 'the Saviour', but 'salvation'. This verse seems to interrupt the thread of the argument; unless indeed it is put in the mouths of those Jews who would not expect deliverance from the king of Persia, but only from a Messias. Some would include the first sentence of verse 9 within the parenthesis.

² 'Why he begot him', 'why she gave birth'; it is equally possible to translate, both from the Hebrew and from the Latin, 'what he has begotten' and 'to what she has given birth'.

³ It is not certain whether this promise relates to the people of Israel or to king Cyrus.

⁴ The Latin version is here somewhat confused, and reads, 'Therefore in the Lord he shall say mine are deeds of justice and empire'; but the sense intended is probably that given above; the Hebrew text, also, is obscure. The verbs used in the Hebrew text do not bear any stronger sense than that of 'fall down', or even 'stoop down'. Some would interpret this verse as meaning that the idols of Babylon have been loaded on pack-animals, but proved too heavy to carry away.

⁵ Literally, 'for him who was carrying'; in the Hebrew text, 'for the burden'.

what match will you find for me, what likeness to resemble me? Fools that fetch gold out of a sack, weigh silver in the balance, bid some craftsman make a god they should fall down and worship!

7 Shoulder-high it must be borne, set down on its pedestal; there it stands, powerless to move from its place, deaf to their cry, and in their need bringing no deliverance.

8 This, for your confusion, call to mind;

9 think well on it, unbelieving hearts. Remember the lesson of times long since, that I am God, and there is no other, none to rival me; did I not tell you from the first the events of latter days, from the beginning what had not yet come to be? My purpose, I promised, should not fail, my whole will must needs be done. See where I have summoned a bird of prey from the east, a man from a distant country, to do this will of mine! I, that spoke, will make my word good; I, that purposed it, my purpose will accomplish. Redress far off?

13 Nay, faithless hearts, listen to me; here is redress I bring you, close at hand. Distance there is none to be travelled, nor lingers deliverance on the way. Delivered Sion's mountain shall be, Jerusalem have sight of my glory.

47 Come down, sit in the dust, poor maid of Babylon; the ground thy seat shall be; no throne any longer for that queen of the Chaldean folk we knew once, so dainty, so delicate. Get thee to the mill-stones and grind there, ready to expose thy nakedness; off with thy veil, here are streams to be crossed bare of leg. Thou shalt be exposed to shame, thy naked form uncovered; I mean to take vengeance on thee, and no man shall stay my hand.

4 (But we have one to ransom us; who but the Lord of hosts, the Holy One of Israel?!)¹

5 Sit dumb, bury thyself in darkness, lady of Chaldea; thou shalt rule the nations no longer. Angry with my people, turned enemy against the land of my choice, I gave them into thy power; and thou, what mercy didst thou shew them? Heavy the yoke thou didst lay on aged shoulders.

7 Thou wouldst surely be a queen for ever; thou didst it light-heartedly, not recking

what the end should be. And now, here is a word for those delicate ears, lady of the careless heart, who sittest there telling thyself, I am Babylon, the unrivalled; no lonely widowhood, no childless lot for me. These two things shall fall on thee suddenly in a single day, childlessness and widowhood; fall upon thee in full measure, so blind amid all thy sorceries, through the crass folly of thy wizards so blind.

Such was thy trust in these wicked arts of thine, thou hadst no fear of discovery; thy very wisdom, thy very knowledge were a snare; I am Babylon, thy heart told thee, rival I have none. And now comes ruin unforeseen, comes doom no sacrifice can avert; sudden and strange thy encounter with sorrow. All that multitude of wizards, and wilt thou not persevere with thy enchantments, the hard-earned lore of thy youth? Maybe it will turn to thy advantage; thou shalt be formidable yet! But no, thou art wearied of those many consultations. Let them come to thy side now and save thee if they can, diviners that gaze up at the stars, count days of the month, to tell thy future for thee! Like stubble burn they one and all; their own lives they cannot rescue from the flame. Here is no brazier to warm them, no ingle-nook to sit by! And this is the end of all thy long study; trusted counsellors of thy youth, all have gone astray in their reckoning; deliverance for thee is none.

48 A message for you, sons of Jacob, heirs of Israel's name, sprung from the stock of Juda, that take oath in the Lord's name, of Israel's God the memory preserve, but not in faith, but not in loyalty! Townsfolk they are still reckoned of a holy city; still on Israel's God, the Lord of hosts, lean they for support. What happened in times past, I had foretold long before; warning was uttered, and in the public ear; then, suddenly, I would set to work, and the prophecy was fulfilled. I knew well what an untamed creature thou art, neck stubborn as an iron hawser, forehead intractable as bronze; I would warn thee from the first, tell thee what was coming before it came; never shouldst

¹ It is difficult to see either what is the relevance of this verse in its present context; or how it could have strayed into that context from elsewhere. As it stands, it appears to be a triumphant refrain sung by the Israelites, interrupting God's message to the Babylonians.

1 thou say this was the work of thy false gods,
the will of idols thou didst carve and cast.
2 Consider closely the things I warned thee
of, was there any foretelling them? Ever
I reveal to thee, long before, things kept
3 secret from thy knowledge; events that are
coming about now, unheard of then.¹
When they are yet beyond knowledge,
I reveal them; not thee to boast, it was no
4 news to thee. And still thou wouldst not
listen, thou wouldst be ignorant still; when
I prophesied to thee in times past, I could
get no hearing; what hope from the traitor
but of treason? I know thee a rebel from
5 thy birth. If I relieve thee from my ven-
geance, it is my own honour demands it;
curb thee I must, for my own sake, or
6 wouldst thou rush to thy doom. I have
tested thee, but not as silver is tested; even
in the furnace of affliction, thou wast
7 already my choice. Honour, my own
honour demands it; how should I suffer
my name to be reviled, or the worship that
belongs to me given to another?
8 Listen then, Jacob; listen to me, thou
Israel to whom my call was sent. I am still
the same; before all, and at the end of all,
9 I am. My hand fashioned the heavens, my
fingers measured the span of earth; it is
my command holds them in their place.
10 Assemble, all you nations, and listen to
me; tell me which of your gods has pro-
phesied it;² The Lord, in his great love for
Israel,³ means to subdue Babylon to his
will, to bare his arm among the Chaldeans?
11 But I did, I foretold it; it was I that
brought the conqueror on his way, so that
it lay smooth before him.
12 Gather round me and listen; from the
first I have been telling you this openly
enough; was I not there among you long
since, before it happened? And now that
it is happening, it is the Lord God, it is the
spirit of the Lord God, that sends me to
13 you.⁴ Here is a message from the Lord,
thy ransom, the Holy One of Israel:

I am the Lord thy God, ever ready to teach
thee what it concerns thee to know, guide
thee on the path thou treadest. If thou
14 hadst but heeded my warnings! Then had
a flowing stream of peace been with thee,
a full tide of the Lord's favour; thy own
15 race, thy own stock, should have been
numberless as the sand or the pebbles on
the sea-beach; the remembrance of thee
should never have been cut off from my
merciful regard.⁵ Away from Babylon,
16 have done with Chaldea, let this be your
triumphant watchword; make it heard
everywhere, publish it to the ends of the
earth, tell them the Lord has ransomed his
servant Jacob; they did not go thirsty when
17 he led them through the desert; he could
bring water out of the rock for them, cleave
the hard rock and make the water flow.
But for the rebellious, the Lord says, there
18 is no peace.

49 Listen, remote islands; pay heed
to me, nations from far away. Ere
ever I was born, the Lord sent me his
summons, kept me in mind already, when
I lay in my mother's womb.⁶ Word of
1 mine is sword of his, ready sharpened,
under cover of his hand; arrow he has
chosen out carefully, hidden yet in his
quiver. Thou art my servant, he whispers,
2 thou art the Israel I claim for my own.⁷
To me, all my labour seemed useless, my
strength worn out in vain; his to judge me,
3 he, my God, must reward my work as he
would. But now a new message he sends
me; I am his servant, appointed ever since
I lay in the womb, to bring Jacob back to
4 him. What if Israel will not answer the
summons? None the less, the Lord des-
tines me to honour; none the less, he, my
God, protects me. Use thee I will, he
5 promises, nor with thy service be content,
when the tribes of Jacob thou hast sum-
moned, brought back the poor remnant of
Israel; nay, I have appointed thee to be the
6

¹ The exact sense of verses 6 and 7 is doubtful; both the Hebrew text and the Latin version, which differs from it considerably, give 'then' instead of 'now' as the time when the 'things kept secret' were revealed.

² Or perhaps, 'assemble, all you Israelites, and listen to me, tell me which of the heathen gods'. The context makes it clear that one sense or the other is intended by the original text, which gives simply, 'assemble, all of you, and listen to me, tell me which of them'.³ In the original, simply 'him'.⁴ It is presumably the prophet who speaks here in his own person.

⁵ In the Latin version, these sentences express regret for the past; in the Hebrew text, they might express a hope for the future.

⁶ It is not certain whether the speaker here is the prophet himself, or the servant of the Lord referred to in 42. 1 and elsewhere.⁷ Perhaps in the sense that this one man is all the Israel left, at a time of general apostasy. The sentence may also be rendered, 'Thou, Israel, art my servant'; but verse 6 below seems to indicate that the person addressed is a messenger sent to Israel, not the people itself.

light of the Gentiles, in thee I will send out my salvation to the furthest corners of the earth.

- 7 A message from the Lord, Israel's ransom, Israel's Holy One, to the despised one, to the nation that is abhorred,¹ to the slave of tyrants: Kings, when they see this, shall rise up from their thrones, princes too, and fall down to worship, in honour of the Lord, that keeps his promise so faithfully, the Holy One of Israel, that claims thee still.
- 8 Thus says the Lord, Here is a time of pardon, when prayer of thine shall be answered, a day of salvation, when I will bring thee aid. I have kept thee in readiness, to make, by thy means, a covenant with my people.² Thine to revive a ruined country, to parcel out the forfeited lands
- 9 anew, men that are bound in darkness restoring to freedom and to the light. There shall be pasture for my flock by the wayside, feeding-grounds they shall have
- 10 on all the barren uplands; they will hunger and thirst no more, noonday heat nor sun overpower them; theirs is a merciful shepherd, that will lead them to welling fountains and give them drink. And I will turn
- 11 all these mountains of mine into a highroad for you; safe through the uplands my path
- 12 shall lead. See how they come from far away! Exiles from north and west, exiles
- 13 from the south country return. Ring out, heaven, with praise; let earth keep holiday, and its mountains echo that praise again; the Lord brings consolation to his people, takes pity on their need.
- 14 Did Sion complain, the Lord has forsaken me, my own Master gives me never
- 15 a thought? What, can a woman forget her child that is still unweaned, pity no longer the son she bore in her womb? Let her
- 16 forget; I will not be forgetful of thee. Why, I have cut thy image on the palms of my hands; those walls of thine dwell before
- 17 my eyes continually. Here are craftsmen ready to build thee again; vanished, now,
- 18 the spoilers that plundered thee. Look about thee, and see thy children met together, coming back to thee; As I am living God, the Lord says, all these shall be a robe

to deck thee, shall ring thee round like a bride's jewels; the silent homes, the lonely places of a ruined country-side, shall have no room, now, for thy many inhabitants, when all that robbed thee of thy lands have fled far away. Sons born to thee in the days of thy barrenness shall cry out, Here all is confined, give me room to live! Who has begotten me these? thou wilt ask. Barren days of exile, when I could not give birth; who has reared me these, when I was left solitary? Where were these all the while? Even now, says the Lord God, I will beckon to the nations, lift up a signal for all the world to see; son and daughter of thine shall be nursed in their arms, carried on their shoulders. Thou shalt have kings to foster them, queens to nurse them for thee; kings and queens shall bow to earth before thee, kissing the dust thy feet have trodden. And thou shalt know at last what a Lord I am, a Lord none ever trusted in vain.

Shall the strong be robbed of his spoil? Who shall deliver the captives from a warrior's hand?³ Captives of the strong, the Lord says, shall be taken away from him, the valiant warrior shall lose his spoil. I will pass judgement on the men who have been thy judges, and thy own children shall escape. I will feed thy enemies on their own flesh, give them their own blood to make them drunk, and all mankind shall know that I, the Lord, have delivered thee, that I, the Prince of Israel, have brought thee rescue.

50 Thus says the Lord, Who can shew writ of separation your mother had from me when I sent her away? Was I in debt, that I must needs sell you as slaves? Nay, if I sold you, it was for your disobedience; it was wanton wife I thrust out of doors. And now must I come to you, and find none to greet me,⁴ call you, and hear no answer to my call? What, has arm of mine grown shrunk and shrivelled, lost its power to save? Have I strength no longer to set men free? Nay, with a word I can yet turn sea into desert, dry up rivers, till the fish lie rotting on the

¹ In the Hebrew text, the probable meaning is 'to him that is abhorred by the nation'. This would mean that the promise is made to the Servant of the nation. Whatever explanation be given, it is not easy what precedes it or with what follows it. ² Cf. II Cor. 6. 2. ³ Cf. Mt. 12. 29. ⁴ 'I find none to greet me'; literally, 'there was not a man'.

3 banks, dead of thirst; I can yet cover the heavens with darkness, and give them mourning weeds to wear.
 4 Ever the Lord schools my tongue to utterance that shall refresh the weary; awakes my dull ears, morning after morning, their Master's bidding to heed. An
 5 attentive ear the Lord has given me; not mine to withstand him; not mine to shrink
 6 from the task. I offered my body defenceless to the men who would smite me, my cheeks to all who plucked at my beard; I did not turn away my face when they
 7 reviled me and spat upon me. The Lord God is my helper; and that help cannot play me false; meet them I will, and with a face unmoved as flint; not mine to suffer
 8 the shame of defeat; here is One stands by to see right done me. Come, who pleads?
 9 Meet me, and try the issue; let him come forward who will, and accuse me. Here is the Lord God ready to aid me; who dares pass sentence on me now? One and all they shall be brought to nothing, like garment the moth has eaten!
 10 Who is here that fears the Lord, listens to his servant's message? Who would make his way through dark places, with no glimmer of light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God.
 11 For you others, with brand at girdle, that your own fire would make, with fire your own brands have kindled light the path if you can; this is all the gift I have for you, a bed of anguish.¹

51 Listen to me, then, you who follow the true path, you that have recourse to the Lord. Think of the rock you were quarried from, of the hidden depths
 2 whence you came, of Abraham that begot you, of Sara that was your mother; he was a childless man when I called him, and blessed him, and granted him a posterity.
 3 And has the Lord no pity for Sion, left desolate, no pity on her ruined state? Doubt not he will turn that wilderness into a garden of delight, that loneliness into a paradise; in her, too, mirth and gladness shall be found, there shall be thanksgiving

and songs of praise. People of mine, men
 4 of a chosen race, give heed and hearing! Henceforth, my law shall be promulgated, my decrees be ratified, for a whole world's
 5 enlightening. Soon, now, my faithful servant will come, even now he is on his way to deliver you; these arms of mine shall
 6 execute judgement on the nations; the remote islands are waiting for me, are looking for my aid. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, cast them down to earth again; those
 7 heavens shall vanish like smoke, that earth be fretted away like a garment, and all who dwell on it share the same destruction; my
 8 saving power is eternal, my faithfulness inexhaustible. Listen to me, you that can discern the right, my own people, with my
 9 law written in your hearts; not yours to be afraid of men's taunts, shrink from them when they revile you; crumble away they
 10 must, like garment the worms have eaten, like wool fretted by the moth; my saving power is eternal, my faithfulness lives on from age to age.

Up, up, arm of the Lord, array thyself
 9 in strength; up, as in the days that are past, long ages since. What other power was it that smote our insolent enemy,² wounded the dragon; what other power dried up the
 10 sea, with its deep rolling waters, made the sea's caverns a highway, for a ransomed people to cross? Now, too, men the Lord
 11 has ransomed will come home again to Sion, praising him as they go. Eternal happiness crowns them, joy and happiness in their grasp now, sorrow and sighing fled far away.

It is I, still it is I, that will bring thee
 12 consolation. And it is thou that art afraid of mortal man, of earth-born things that die like grass? Is it thou that dost forget
 13 the Lord, thy maker, who spread out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth? What, go in fear all day long of yonder angry tyrant, sworn to undo thee? What of the tyrant's anger now? Comes
 14 he³ with hurried step to release his prisoner, persecuted to the death no longer, nor suffered to starve for want of bread!
 15 I am the Lord thy God, the same power

¹ The meaning of this verse is very obscure, and is variously explained. The context is perhaps best suited if we understand it of such Jews as were plotting rebellion against the governing powers, instead of waiting confidently for God's help, like those referred to in the previous verse. ² Literally, 'the proud one', but the word used in the Hebrew text is probably a proper name, Rahab. This is used as a title for Egypt, as in Ps. 88. 11; and 'the dragon' is no doubt another symbol of the Egyptian power, as perhaps in Ps. 73. 14. ³ Or possibly 'One is coming'.

that stirs up the sea till waves rise high on it; the Lord of hosts is the name I bear. To thy lips I have entrusted my message, kept thee under cover of my hand, to replant heaven and refund earth, to tell Sion, 'Thou art my people.'

17 Up, up, Jerusalem, bestir thyself! It was a draught of his vengeance the Lord gave thee to drink; ay, thou hast drunk deep of a cup that numbs the senses, drained it to the dregs. So many children she has borne and reared, and none to give her support, none to take her by the hand!

19 Who is to mourn for thee, the sport of a double calamity, by want and war dismantled and unmanned? Who is here to console thee? They are left to lie at every street corner, those sons of thine, dazed as wild bull caught in a net, brought down by the Lord's anger, by the punishment he, thy God, has sent them. Listen thou, the unbefriended, thy wits bemused with sorrow, not with wine, here is the message thy master has for thee, thy Lord and God, ready to fight in his people's cause! I am taking it away from thy hand, this draught that numbs the senses, the dregs of the vengeance I had poured out for thee; thou shalt drink it no longer. Cruel oppressors that bade thee lie down and let them walk over thee, dust under their feet, a pathway for them to tread, shall find the cup has passed from thy hand to theirs.

52 Up, up, array thyself, Sion, in all thy strength; clothe thyself as befits thy new glory, Jerusalem, city of the Holy One! The uncircumcised, the unclean, shall enter thee no more. Shake the dust from thee, Jerusalem, rise up and take thy throne; rid thy neck of the chains that bound it, Sion, once captive queen! This is the Lord's promise, 'You were bartered away for nothing, and you shall be ransomed without cost.' Time was, the Lord God says, long ago, when my people went

down into Egypt and dwelt among strangers there; time was, since then, they were oppressed, beyond all reason, by the Assyrians; what needs it, the Lord says, then or now, my people should be carried off thus wantonly into exile? Their new masters sin defiantly, bring my name continually into reproach. The day comes when my own people my own name will recognize, nor doubt that I, who promised to be with them, am with them now.

Welcome, welcome on the mountain heights the messenger that cries, 'All is well! Good news brings he, deliverance cries he, telling Sion, Thy God has claimed his throne! A shout goes up from the watchmen; they are crying out all at once, all at once echoing their praise; their own eyes shall witness it, when the Lord brings Sion deliverance. Rejoice, echo all at once with rejoicing, ruined homes of Jerusalem: comfort from the Lord for the Lord's people, Jerusalem redeemed! The Lord bares his holy arm for all the nations to see it; to the remotest corners of earth he, our God, makes known his saving power. Return, return; no more of Babylon; touch nothing defiled as you come out from the heart of her, keep yourselves unsullied, you that have the vessels of the Lord's worship in your charge. No need for confusion at the time of your going; this shall be no hasty flight, with the Lord himself to march before you, the God of Israel to rally you.

See, here is my servant, one who will be prudent in all his dealings. To what height he shall be raised, how exalted, how extolled! So many there be that stand gazing in horror; was ever a human form so mis-handled, human beauty ever so defaced? Yet this is he that will purify a multitude of nations; kings shall stand dumb in his presence; seen, now, where men had no tidings of him, made known to such as never heard his name.⁴

¹ From this verse it appears that the dialogue, verses 9-16, is either between the Lord and his prophet, or between the Lord and his servant, cf. 49. 2.

² The sense is probably, 'I gained nothing in return when I sent you into exile at Babylon' (cf. 50. 1 above, Ps. 43. 13); 'I did not engage the gratitude of the Chaldeans, who remain idolaters; I am free therefore, to remit your sentence of exile whenever I will'. The interpretation, 'You were sent into exile for no fault of your own, and you shall be reprieved for no merits of your own' is neither probable in itself nor suited to the context.

³ 'What needs it, then or now?' Literally, 'And now, what is to me here?'—though this is less accurate as a rendering of the Hebrew text. The idiomatic sense which this phrase commonly has (cf. 22. 16 above, and many other passages) would be 'And what business have I to interfere here?' But this is evidently inappropriate, and it is best to take the words literally, as in Gen. 19. 12. Cf. note on verse 3.

⁴ 'Purity'; literally, 'sprinkle', but wherever this word occurs elsewhere, the thing, not the person, is its object (i.e. you sprinkle something on a person), and various attempts have been made to amend the Hebrew text, e.g.

53 What credence for such news as ours? Whom reaches it, this new revelation of the Lord's strength?¹ He will watch this servant of his appear among us, unregarded as² brushwood shoot, as a plant in waterless soil; no stateliness here, no majesty, no beauty, as we gaze upon him, to win our hearts. Nay, here is one despised, left out of all human reckoning; bowed with misery, and no stranger to weakness; how should we recognize that face?³ How should we take any account of him, a man so despised? Our weakness, and it was he who carried the weight of it, our miseries, and it was he who bore them.⁴ A leper, so we thought of him, a man God had smitten and brought low; and all the while it was for our sins he was wounded, it was guilt of ours crushed him down; on him the punishment fell that brought us peace, by his bruises we were healed. Strayed sheep all of us, each following his own path; and God laid on his shoulders our guilt, the guilt of us all. A victim? Yet he himself bows to the stroke; no word comes from him. Sheep led away to the slaughter-house, lamb that stands dumb while it is shorn; no word from him. Imprisoned, brought to judgement, and carried off, he, whose birth is beyond our knowing; numbered among the living no more! Be sure it is for my people's guilt I have smitten him.⁶ Takes he leave of the rich, the godless, to win but a grave, to win but the gift of death;⁷ he, that wrong did never, nor had treason on his lips! Ay, the Lord's will it was, overwhelmed he should be with trouble. His life laid down for guilt's atoning, he shall yet be rewarded; father of a long posterity, instrument of the divine purpose; for all

his heart's anguish, rewarded in full. The Just One, my servant; many shall he claim for his own, win their acquittal, on his shoulders bearing their guilt. So many lives ransomed, foes so violent baulked of their spoil! Such is his due, that gave himself up to death, and would be counted among the wrong-doers; bore those many sins, and made intercession for the guilty.

54 Sing with praise, barren city that art childless still; echo thy praise, cry aloud, wife that wast never brought to bed; forsaken, she is to have more children now, the Lord says, than wife whose husband remains with her.² Make more room for thy tent, stretch wide—what hinders thee?—the curtains of thy dwelling-place; long be the ropes, and firm the pegs that fasten them. Right and left thou shalt spread, till thy race dispossesses the heathen, peoples the ruined cities. Not thine to fear disappointment, not thine to blush for hopes unfulfilled; forget, henceforward, the shame of younger days, the reproach of thy widowed state; think upon it no more. Husband now thou hast, and the name of him is the Lord of hosts, thy creator; he, the Holy One of Israel, that will now be called God of the whole earth, makes thee his own. The Lord calls thee back, a woman forsaken and forlorn, the wife of his youth, long cast away; thy God sends thee word, If I abandoned thee, it was but for a little moment, and now, in my great compassion, I bring thee home again. Hid I my face from thee, it was for a short while, till my anger should be spent; love that takes pity on thee shall be eternal, says the Lord, thy ransom. The days of Noe have come again; I swore to

¹ 'startle'. The end of this verse, in the Hebrew text, will equally well yield the sense, 'they shall see that of which they had no tidings, that which they had never heard shall be made known to them'. But the other sense, which is given by the Latin version, is clearly assumed by St Paul in Rom. 15. 21.

² Cf. Rom. 10. 16. ³ 'Unregarded as'; in the original, simply 'like', but this sense appears most probable, in view of what follows. The second part of the verse may also be interpreted as meaning, 'there is no stateliness, no majesty here to catch our eyes, no beauty to win our hearts'. ⁴ Literally, 'his face was as it were hidden'. In the Hebrew text, it is not clear whether the face of the Servant is hidden from the onlookers, or theirs (in disgust) from him. ⁵ Mt. 8. 17. ⁶ Literally, according to the Latin version, 'He has been offered up because he himself willed it'. The meaning of the Hebrew text seems to be rather, 'he has been cruelly treated, and all the while he abased himself'.

⁷ The beginning of this verse in the Hebrew text runs literally, 'He was taken away from the restraint and from judgement, and his generation—who will meditate?' The meaning usually given to the passage uses almost every word in a strange sense, and it seems probable that there has been a corruption in the text; cf. the Septuagint Greek version, quoted in Ac. 8. 33. ⁸ The Hebrew text here yields a more simple translation, 'He (God) gave him burial with the wicked, and with the rich (man) in his death'; but the bearing of the phrase is difficult to determine. The Latin can only be interpreted (on the lines of verse 3 above) as meaning that the Servant renounced all fellowship with the wicked and the rich in order to win himself a felon's grave.

⁹ Gal. 4. 27.

Noe that I would bring no more floods on the earth such as his; thou, too, hast my oath for it, I will be angry with thee no more, rebuke thee no more. Let the mountains be moved, the hills shake; my compassion towards thee stands immovable, my promise still unshaken, says the Lord, thy comforter.

11 Thou, the friendless, the storm-beaten, the inconsolable, shalt have a pavement of patterned stones, and thy foundations shall be of sapphire; thou shalt have turrets of jasper, and gates of carved gems, and all thy boundary stones shall be jewels. All thy children, then, shall be disciples of the Lord; thy children, blessed how abundantly with peace! Justice shall be thy sure foundation; far from thy thoughts be all oppression, now thou hast nothing to fear, all tumult of the mind,¹ when peril is none to threaten thee. Aliens that had no part with me shall come to thy side; strangers shall throw in their lot with thee.² See where the smith blows the coals at his forge, fashioning each weapon according to its use! Who but I made him? And who but I made the slayer that goes out to destroy? No weapon that is forged against thee shall go true; no voice that is raised to condemn thee, but thou shalt give it the lie. Such their lot shall be that are the Lord's servants; such protection shall they have of me, says the Lord.

55 So many athirst; who will not come to the water? So many destitute; who will come and get him food, get wine and milk free, no price to be paid?
 2 What, always spending, and no bread to eat, always toiling, and never a full belly? Do but listen, here you shall find content; here are dainties shall ravish your hearts.
 3 To my summons give heed and hearing; so your spirits shall revive; a fresh covenant awaits you, this time eternal; gracious promise of mine to David shall be ratified now.
 4 Before all the world my witness thou, a prince and a ruler among the nations!⁴

Summons of thine shall go out to a nation thou never knewest; peoples that never heard of thee shall hasten to thy call; such the glory thy God, the Holy One of Israel, has bestowed on thee.⁵

To the Lord betake you, while he may yet be found; cry out, while he is close at hand to hear. Leave rebel his ill-doing, sinner his guilty thoughts, and come back to the Lord, sure of his mercy, our God, so rich in pardon. Not mine, the Lord says, to think as you think, deal as you deal; by the full height of heaven above earth, my dealings are higher than your dealings, my thoughts than your thoughts. Once fallen from the sky, does rain or snow return to it? Nay, it refreshes earth, soaking into it and making it fruitful, to provide the sower with fresh seed, the hungry mouths with bread. So it is with the word by these lips of mine once uttered; it will not come back, an empty echo, the way it went; all my will it carries out, speeds on its errand. Doubt not, then, yours shall be a happy departure, a peaceful return; doubt not mountain and hill shall escort you with their praises, and the woods echo their applause. Tall pine-trees shall grow where valerian grew, and myrtles spring from yonder nettle-beds; great glory the Lord shall win, such a blazon as eternity cannot efface.

56 Keep right order, the Lord says. Faithful to your duty still; ere long I will send deliverance, my own faithfulness shall be revealed. Blessed, every man that so lives, every mother's son that by this rule holds fast, keeps the sabbath holy, and his own hands clear of mischief. Proselyte let him be, of alien birth, will the Lord deny him citizenship? Eunuch let him be, is he no better than a barren trunk, cut down as worthless? Nay, for yonder eunuch the Lord has this message: Who keeps my sabbath? Who makes my will his choice, true to my covenant? A place he shall have in this house, within these walls

¹ 'Tumult of the mind'; the word in the Hebrew text means either 'dismay' or 'ruin'; neither seems a very good parallel for the word 'oppression', and some have suspected corruption in the text.

² The Latin version, probably through misunderstanding a word that is three times repeated, differs widely here from the Hebrew text, whose meaning seems to be 'Let men strive against thee as they will, it is with no sanction of mine; whoever strives against thee shall fall because of thee (or perhaps, shall be compelled to fall in with thee)'.
³ Cf. Ps. 88. 35-38; Ac. 13. 34.

⁴ This is ordinarily assumed to refer to David, but the description is not very suitable, and it seems possible that the prophet, with one of his sudden transitions, has gone back to the Lord's Servant here.
⁵ The person mentioned in verse 4 is more probably the subject of this address, than the people of Israel.

of mine a memorial; son nor daughter his name could so perpetuate; such a memorial I will grant him as time shall never efface.

6 And so it shall be with the alien born, will they but throw in their lot with the Lord's worshippers, that cherish the love of his name; the Lord's servants that keep the sabbath inviolate, and are true to his covenant. Free of the mountain that is my sanctuary, welcome guests in the house where men pray to me, not vainly to my altar they shall bring burnt-offering and sacrifice. Claimed my house shall be, for a house of prayer, by all the nations.¹ Such promise the Lord God makes, that now brings home the exiled sons of Israel: I have others to bring, that must yet rally to thy side.

9 Come, all you wild things, all you beasts
10 of the forest, your prey awaits you! Here are none but blind watchmen, all un-awares; here are dumb dogs that cannot bark, false seers that lie sleeping, in love
11 with their dreams; shameless dogs that cannot tell when they are gorged with food. The very shepherds have forgotten their craft; see them go their ways, each busy, first and last, with gorging his own
12 appetite: Fetch we wine, and drink ourselves drunk! To-morrow shall be as to-day was, and braver, braver yet!²

57 Alas, that none takes warning! See how good men die, how the friends of God are borne away from us; and none has the wit to see trouble is coming, and the good must be spared the sight of it!³
2 Peace be his lot, easy let him rest, that followed ever the straight path.

3 But you, come and answer for yourselves, brood of the sorceress, children of the adulterer and the harlot! Over whom would you make merry, with open mouth and hanging tongue? What are you but the
5 sons of shame, a bastard race? You, that dally with idols under the first spreading

tree, that sacrifice little children in the rock-caves among the glens?

Where the valleys part,⁴ there is thy part
6 and lot; to those thou wilt pour out libations, wilt offer sacrifice; and must I look
7 on unmoved? Thou hast set down thy bed on the peak of a high mountain; there thou
8 hast gone up to offer victims. Keepsake of mine must be put behind the door, where the posts should hide it, now thou wouldst
strip thee naked and let in a gallant in my place, make free with my marriage-bed!
With such as these thou didst exchange
9 vows, greedily thou didst buy their good will. A king's favour to win, with ointments
10 thou wouldst cover thee, wouldst spare no kind of perfume; on a far errand thy envoys went out, and ever thy pride
was humbled, low as hell itself. So wearied
11 with long journeying, and never didst thou cry, Enough; still obstinate, confess thy
need thou wouldst not. Alas, what anxious
12 fears were these, that to my service made thee false, of me no memory left thee, no
thought? And all because I nothing said, made as if I nothing saw, till at last thou
13 hadst forgotten me! Yet, wouldst thou have right, it is I that must declare it; thy
14 own striving is all in vain. Let them deliver thee, if they can, at thy summons, these new allies thou hast made! See how
they are carried away on the wind, how a
breath will scatter them! His the prize,
that in me has confidence; on my holy
mountain he shall find a resting-place.
Hark, how the cry goes up, A road, there,
15 a road; let them have free passage! These are my people; clear of every hindrance be
their path!

A message from the high God, the great
16 God, whose habitation is eternity, whose name is hallowed! He, dwelling in that high and holy place, dwells also among chastened and humbled souls, bidding the humble spirit, the chastened soul, rise and live! I will not be always claiming my due,
I will not cherish my anger eternally; what

¹ Mt. 21. 13.

² The denunciations in verses 9-12 would be suitable to Babylon on the eve of its capture by the Persians (Dan. 5); but they are usually regarded as continuous with the succeeding chapter, which seems to be addressed to unworthy rulers of God's own people.

³ There is no agreement among scholars, what is the situation here alluded to. Some think the prophecies are made against the half-heathen remnant of Israelites which occupied Samaria when the Jews returned from exile; others would identify the 'good man' of verses 1 and 2 as king Ezechias, and apply what follows to the idolatry of Manasses.

⁴ Some would interpret the Hebrew text as meaning 'in the smooth stones of the valleys', which lends more force to the play upon words.

⁵ The king is identified by some with the god Moloch (whose name means 'king'); by others with the king of Assyria. From the context, some reference to foreign alliances seems probable.

soul but takes its origin from me? Am I not the maker of all that breathes?¹
 17 Greedy wrong-doer that defies me I must needs smite down; hide my face from him in anger, let him follow the path his own
 18 erring will has chosen. Now to pity his plight, now to bring him remedy! Home-coming at last, consolation at last, for him and all that bemoan him! The harvest of men's thanks, it is I that bring it to the birth.² Peace, the Lord says, peace to those who are far away, and to those who are near at hand; I have brought him
 20 remedy. But rebellious hearts are like the tempestuous sea that can never find repose; its waters must ever be churning up mire and scum. For the rebellious, the
 21 Lord says, there is no peace.

58 Cry aloud, never ceasing, raise thy voice like a trumpet-call, and tell my people of their transgressions, call the sons of Jacob to account. Day after day they besiege me, arraign my dealings with them, a nation, you would think, ever dutiful, one that never swerved from the divine will. Proof they ask of my faithfulness, would fain bring a plea against their
 3 God.³ Why hadst thou no eyes for it, say they, when we fasted; why didst thou pass by unheeding, when we humbled ourselves before thee?

Fasting, when you follow your own whim, distract upon all your debtors!
 4 Naught comes of it but law-suit and quarrelling; angry blows profane it. A better fast you must keep than of old, ere plea
 5 yours makes itself heard above. With such fasting, with a day's penance, should I be content? Is it enough that a man should bow down to earth, make his bed on sack-cloth and ashes? Think you, by such a fasting-day, to win the Lord's favour?
 6 Nay, fast of mine is something other. The false claim learn to forgo, ease the insupportable burden, set free the over-driven;
 7 away with every yoke that galls! Share thy bread with the hungry, give the poor and

the vagrant a welcome to thy house; meet thou the naked, clothe him; from thy own flesh and blood turn not away. Then, sudden as the dawn, the welcome light shall break on thee, in a moment thy health shall find a new spring; divine favour shall lead thee on thy journey, brightness of the Lord's presence close thy ranks behind. Then the Lord will listen to thee when thou callest on him; cry out, and he will answer, I am here at thy side.

Banish from thy midst oppression, and the finger pointed scornfully, and the plotting of harm, spend thyself giving food to the hungry, relieving the afflicted; then shall light spring up for thee in the darkness, and thy dusk shall be noonday; the Lord will give thee rest⁴ continually, fill thy soul with comfort, thy body with ease.⁵ Not more secure the well-watered garden, the spring whose waters never fail. Rebuilt, in thy land, the immemorial ruins; restored, the foundations of long ago; this thy task shall be, to repair the broken walls, to reclaim the by-ways. Walk warily, keep
 13 my sabbath unprofaned. Here is a day I have sanctified, not for thy self-pleasing; a precious thing the Lord has made holy and honourable; and wilt thou dishonour it? Wilt thou go thy own way, use it for thy own pleasure, while it is in gossip? Thou shalt yet have joy in the Lord; I will carry thee aloft, high above the high places of the land, satisfy thy longing for Jacob's patrimony; the Lord's lips have promised it.

59 Doubt you the Lord's hand can reach far as ever, to bring deliverance? Think you his ear has grown deaf, that you cry out in vain? Nay, sin of yours has come between you and your God; guilt of yours has estranged him that he denies you audience; the bloodstained hands, the itching fingers, lying lips, and tongues that whisper of treachery. Who owns the claim of justice, who judges honourably? A lie their confidence, folly their watchword, they carry mischief in the

¹ The latter part of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is usually interpreted, 'for the (human) spirit would faint away, (and) the breathing souls which I have made'; but this rendering lacks the parallelism we should expect in Hebrew poetry. The Latin reads literally, 'a spirit shall go out from my face, and I will give breaths'; the interpretation offered above is that of St Jerome and other Fathers. ² Literally, 'I have created the fruit of the lips'; cf. Heb. 13. 15. ³ 'Bring a plea against', literally, 'approach', but the context shows that the verb is used in a legal sense, as in 57. 3 above and elsewhere. ⁴ The sense of the Hebrew text is, 'guide thee'. ⁵ Literally, 'he will fill thy soul with brightness and deliver thy bones'. But the Hebrew text means rather, 'he will satisfy thy desire in time of drought, and refresh thy bones'; though the authority for this last verb is uncertain.

5 womb, bring shame to birth. Eggs the
cockatrice may hatch, yet there is death in
the taste of them, a brood of basilisks;
6 deftly the spider weaves, yet web of hers
will never make cloth, none will be the
warmer for her toil; so it is with these; all
unprofitable their schemes, their doing all
7 undoing. Swift ministers of evil, hot-foot
they scent down the blood of innocence,¹
their aim ever to destroy, leave a trail of
8 havoc and ruin. Where peace should be
found they know not, nor ever set their
hearts on right; still stray by crooked paths
where safety is none.

9 What wonder if redress is still far from
us, if reprieve linger on its way? Crave we
light, and nothing see but darkness, hope
10 we for dawn, and walk in dusk. Blind men
that grope along a wall, hands, not eyes, to
shew the way, stumble we at noonday as
though benighted; we are dead men in a
11 world of shadows. No better than growling
bears, or doves that moan and mourn,
still we hope for the redress that never
comes, the deliverance that is far away.
12 Our guilt mounts up before thee, our sins
accuse us; shame ever at our side, we con-
13 fess the wrong done. Heinous our treason
against the Lord, that turn away from his
divine leading to plan cruelty and rebel-
lion; false thoughts we conceive in our
14 hearts that still find utterance. Redress is
withheld from us, because loyalty lies neg-
lected in our streets, and honour finds no
15 entrance; alas that loyalty should be for-
gotten, innocence marked down for spoil!

All this the Lord has seen, and shame he
16 thought it there should be no redress. Was
there no champion to come forward? None
found he, and his heart misgave him. And
so his own arm must bring the deliverance
he intended, his own faithfulness held him
17 to it.² That faithfulness is the breastplate
that arms him, that saving power the
helmet that guards his head; vengeance the
garment he wears, jealous love the mantle
18 that wraps him round.³ Doubt not he will
repay, wreak his anger upon the rebels,

give his enemies their due; no island so far
off but it shall have its punishment, till the
19 name of the Lord strikes terror into
western lands, and the east stands in awe
of his fame. Here is a river coming upon
them in full flood, driven on by the Lord's
breath; here is one that brings deliverance
20 to Sion, and to all Jacob's children that
turn away from their sins; the Lord has
promised it. This covenant I will make
21 with them, the Lord says: Spirit of mine
that dwells in thee, words of mine en-
trusted to thy lips, on thy lips shall dwell,
on the lips of thy children and thy chil-
dren's children, henceforth and for ever.

60 Rise up, Jerusalem, and shine
forth; thy dawn has come, breaks
the glory of the Lord upon thee! What
2 though darkness envelop the earth, though
all the nations lie in gloom? Upon thee the
Lord shall dawn, over thee his splendour
shall be revealed. Those rays of thine shall
3 light the Gentiles on their path; kings shall
walk in the splendour of thy sunrise. Lift
4 up thy eyes and look about thee; who are
these that come flocking to thee? Sons of
thine, daughters of thine, come from far
away, or rising up close at hand.⁴ Heart of
5 thee shall overflow with wonder and grate-
tude, to see all the riches of ocean, all the
treasure of the Gentiles pouring into thee!
A stream of camels thronging about thee,
6 dromedaries from Madian and Ephra-
im, bringing all the men of Saba⁵ with their
gifts of gold and incense, their cry of praise
to the Lord! Into thee all the herds of
7 Cedar shall be driven, the rams of Na-
bath shall be thy victims; gifts at my
altar accepted, to make the fame of my
temple more famous yet. Who are these
8 that come, swift as the cloud-wrack, as
doves flying home to the dove-cot? These,
9 too, are thy sons; long since, the islands
and the ocean-going ships have awaited
my signal, when I would bring them home
from far away, their silver and their gold
with them, for the honour of the Lord thy

¹ Rom. 3. 15.

² The second part of this verse reads literally, 'His own arm delivered him, and his own justice strengthened him'. The notion is that of Almighty God interfering in person to help men because they cannot help themselves; cf. 63. 5 below (where, however, 'indignation' takes the place of 'justice').

³ Eph. 6. 14, 17; I Thess. 5. 8.

⁴ The second part of this verse reads literally, 'Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall arise from the side'; it seems clear that St Jerome wrote, not 'arise', but 'suck', agreeing substantially with the Hebrew text, which has 'and thy daughters shall be carried at the side'. But this makes a weak parallel, and it is hard to see why infant daughters should come into the picture; it is possible that there was a corruption in the text.

⁵ 'All the men of Saba'; in the Hebrew text, 'All of them (i.e. the riders on the camels) from Saba'.

God, the Holy One of Israel, that has bestowed this glory on thee.

- 10 Strangers shall build up thy walls for thee, kings shall do thee service; great as my severity in chastising thee shall be my
11 favour when I pardon thee. Thy gates shall stand open continually, no need to shut them day or night;¹ make way for the wealth of the nations that shall flow into thee, for the kings with their escorts!
12 Every nation and kingdom that refuses thee homage shall vanish away, whole provinces empty and forlorn. All the beauty of Lebanon shall be brought to thee, fir-wood and box-wood and pine-wood mingled together to adorn this place, my sanctuary; I will have honour paid to this,
14 the resting-place of my feet. See how they come bending low before thee, the race of thy former oppressors, how the men that once despised thee worship the ground thou hast trodden, calling thee The City of the Lord, Zion, dear to the Holy One of
15 Israel! Thou, the desolate, thou, the unbefriended, a place unvisited by man, shalt be the pride of ages, the joy of succeeding generations; thou shalt have nations to suckle thee, kings to foster thee, and acknowledge at last that I, the Lord, am thy deliverer, the Lord that rules in Jacob has paid thy ransom.
17 I will exchange thy brass for gold, thy iron for silver, thy wood for brass, thy stone for iron; I will give thee peace itself to be thy government, justice itself to be thy magistracy; there shall be no more talk of wrong in that land of thine, no tidings of wreck and ruin within those frontiers; all thy walls shall be deliverance, and all
19 thy gates renown. No longer wilt thou have the sun to shine by day, or the moon's beam to enlighten thee; the Lord shall be thy everlasting light, thy God shall be all thy splendour.² No more, for thee, the setting of suns, the waning of moons, now that the Lord is thy everlasting light, and
21 the days of thy widowhood are over. Thy people, all guiltless now, shall inherit the land eternally, the flower I planted, the pride of my workmanship. The meanest of
22 them shall be ancestor to a thousand, the

least regarded, to a great nation; swift and sudden shall be the doing of it, when once the hour is come.

61 The Lord has anointed me, on me his spirit has fallen; he has sent me to bring good news to men that are humbled, to heal broken hearts, promising the release of captives, the opening of prison doors, proclaiming the year of the Lord's pardon, the day when he, our God, will give us redress. Comfort for every mourner; Zion's mourners, what decree should I make for them, what gift offer them? Heads shall be garlanded, that once were strewn with ashes; bright with oil, the faces that were marred with grief; gaily they shall be clad, that went sorrowing. Sturdy growths (men will say) that fulfil hope reposed in them,³ pride of the Lord's planting! Theirs to rebuild what long has lain desolate, repair the ruins of past days, restore the forsaken cities that were lost, we thought, for ever.

Strangers they shall be that tend your flocks for you, farm and vineyard alien hands shall till; for you, a higher name, a greater calling, priests and chosen ministers of the Lord our God. All the wealth of the nations shall be yours to enjoy, thy spoils shall be your boast; for double portion of shame and contempt, you shall be twice honoured now. Twice happy that home-coming, eternal that content;⁴ I am the Lord, that love to give each his due, resent the wrong, when men rob me of my sacrifice. Faithfully I will give them their recompense, bind myself, now, by an eternal covenant. Such a race shall spring from them, as all the nations of the world shall acknowledge; none that sees them but shall know them for a people the Lord has blessed.

Well may I rejoice in the Lord, well may this heart triumph in my God. The deliverance he sends is like a garment that wraps me about, his mercy like a cloak enfolding me; no bridegroom so proud of garland that crowns him, no bride of the necklace she wears. See how yonder earth gives promise of spring, how the garden

¹ Apoc. 21. 25.

² Apoc. 21, 23; 22. 5.

³ 'Sturdy growths that fulfil hope reposed in them'; or possibly, 'that tell of protecting care'. It is not easy to be certain whether the word 'justice' in the original implies, here, faithfulness on the part of man or faithfulness on the part of God.

⁴ The interpretation of this verse is obscure, whether in the Hebrew text or in the Latin.

seeds give promise of flower! And the Lord God will make good his promise for all the world to see; a spring-time of deliverance and renewal.

62 For love of Zion I will no more be silent, for love of Jerusalem I will never rest, until he, the Just One, is revealed to her like the dawn, until he, her deliverer, shines out like a flame. All the nations, all the kings of the nations, shall see him, the just, the glorious¹, and a new name shall be given thee by the Lord's own lips. The Lord upholds thee, his crown, his pride; thy God upholds thee, his royal diadem. No longer shall men call thee Forsaken, or thy land Desolate; thou shalt be called My Beloved, and thy land a Home, now the Lord takes delight in thee, now thy land is populous once again.² Gladly as a man takes home the maiden of his choice, thy sons shall come home to thee; gladly the Lord shall greet thee, as bridegroom his bride.

I have set watchmen, Jerusalem, upon thy walls, that shall never cease crying aloud, day or night; you that keep the Lord in remembrance,³ take no rest, nor let him rest neither, till he has restored Jerusalem, spread her fame over all the earth. The Lord has sworn by his own right hand, by that arm which makes known his power: Never again shall thy enemies eat the harvest of thy corn-fields, alien folk drink the wine thou hast toiled to win; harvester and waggoner, here in my precincts, shall eat and drink together, praising the Lord.

Out, out through the city gates! Give my people free passage; a road, there, a smooth road, away with the boulders on it! Raise a signal for all the nations to see. To the furthest corners of the earth the Lord proclaims it, A message to queen Zion: Look, where thy deliverer comes, look, how they come with him, the reward of his

labour, the achievement of his task!⁴ A holy people they shall be called, of the Lord's ransoming, and thou the city of his choice, no more forsaken.

63 Who is this, coming from Edom, coming on the road from Bosra, with garments deep-dyed? Who is this, so gaily clad, marching so valiantly?

I am one who is faithful to his promises, a champion bringing deliverance.⁵

And why are thy garments stained with red? Why dost thou go clad like the men who tread out the wine-press?

None other has trodden the wine-press but I only; out of all the nations, no champion came to stand at my side. I have been treading them down in my anger, trampling on them, full of vengeance; their blood has been sprinkled on the clothes about me; I come in garments deep-dyed. My heart told me the time had come for vengeance, this was my destined year of ransom; looked I all around, there was none to help me; vainly I called for aid. My own arm should bring the deliverance I intended; my own indignation uphold me.⁶ I have trampled the peoples down in my anger, stunned them⁷ with my fury, brought down their strength to the dust.

Listen, while I tell again the story of the Lord's mercies, what renown the Lord has won; all the Lord has done for us, all the wealth of blessings his pardoning love, his abounding pity has lavished on the race of Israel. They are my own people, he would say; my own children cannot be false to me; and with that, he delivered them. In all their straits, power of his was not straitened;⁸ his angel, token of his presence, brought them deliverance. In love and pity he ransomed them, lifted them in his arms and raised them up, all through the days gone by. Only when they rebelled against him, when they distressed the spirit of his chosen servant,⁹ he would turn their

¹ Instead of 'Just One', 'the just' and 'the glorious', the Hebrew text has 'justice' (i.e. redress, restoration), 'deliverance' and 'glory'.

² In the Hebrew text, the land is to be called not 'a Home', but 'a Wife', and it is to be 'espoused', not 'populous', nor 'again'.

³ Keep the Lord in remembrance: that is, according to the Latin version, remember him; according to the Hebrew text, remind him (of his promises).

⁴ See note on 40. 10 above.

⁵ The speaker here is probably the Lord himself; cf. 59. 16.

⁶ Cf. 59. 16, note.

⁷ Stunned them; literally, 'made them drunk'.

⁸ There is a doubt, here, in the Hebrew text, whether we should read 'he was not afflicted (constrained)' or 'he was afflicted'.

⁹ 'The spirit of his chosen servant'; literally, 'of his holy one', which may refer to Moses in verse 11, to other national heroes in this verse. But the Hebrew text has 'the spirit of his holiness', which in Hebrew idiom is nearly equivalent to 'his holy spirit'; and this is the translation given by the Septuagint Greek (cf. Eph. 4. 30).

11 enemy, and fight against them. And even yet he would bethink him of times past, of Moses and the people that once was his.

Where is he now, the God that led them through the sea, his flock with his own appointed shepherds; gave his holy spirit to the man of his choice?¹ Majestic power, that led Moses by the hand; that parted the sea at their coming, to win his name renowned. Through its waters they passed, sure of their foothold as horse that is led through the desert; carefully as driver on some treacherous hill-side, the Lord's spirit guided his people. Thus didst thou bring them home, and win thyself honour.

15 Bethink thee now, in heaven; look down from the palace where thou dwellest, holy and glorious. Where, now, is thy jealous love, where thy warrior's strength? Where is thy yearning of heart, thy compassion? For me, compassion is none.

16 Yet, who is our father, Lord, if not thou? Let Abraham disown us, Israel disclaim his own blood, we are thy sons still; is it not thy boast of old, thou hast paid a price for us? And now, Lord, wouldst thou drive us away from following thee, harden our hearts till worship we have none to give thee? For love of thy own servants, relent, for love of the land that by right is thine.

18 Is it nothing to thee, enemies of thy holy people should have the mastery, trample thy sanctuary down? Fared we worse in old days, before ever we called thee King, ever took thy holy name for our watchword?

64 Wouldst thou but part heaven asunder, and come down, the hills shrinking from thy presence, melting away as if burnt by fire; the waters, too, boiling with that fire! So should the fame of thee go abroad among thy enemies; a world should tremble at thy presence! Of thy marvellous

doing, we ourselves cannot bear the sight; so it was when thou camest down, and the hills shrank away before thee, long ago.²

Such things as were never known from the beginning, as ear never heard, eye never saw, save at thy command, thou, O God, hast made ready for all that await thy aid. Graciously thou goest out to meet them, loyal lovers of thine that keep thee ever in mind, ever follow thy bidding.³

And now thou art angry with us; we have sinned; so it has been a long while, and shall we find deliverance? We are men defiled; what are all our claims on thy mercy? No better than the clout a woman casts away; we are like fallen leaves, every one of us, by the wind of our own transgressions whirled along. There is none left that calls on thy name, that bestirs himself to lay hold of thee. Thou hidest thy face from us, broken men caught in the grip of their wrong-doing. Yet, Lord, thou art our father; we are but clay, and thou the craftsman who has fashioned us; wilt thou crush us, Lord, with thy anger, wilt thou keep our sins ever in mind? We are thy people, all of us. A desert, the city thy chosen servant knew, a desert, the Sion we love; Jerusalem lies forlorn. Given over to the flames, the house that was our sanctuary and our pride, the house in which our fathers praised thee; all that we loved lies in ruins; Lord, wilt thou have patience still? Wilt thou keep silent still, and overwhelm us with calamity?

65 So ready I to answer, and ask they will not; so easy to be found, and search for me is none! A people that will not call on my name; else my own voice should whisper, I am here, I am close at hand.⁴ Outstretched these hands of mine, all the day long, to a nation of rebels, stray-

¹ The second half of this verse is usually joined to the first, as if it were the thought in the mind of the person there mentioned. But, if so, we must understand 'Israel' as the subject of 'bethought himself', which is a very abrupt transition.

² The Hebrew text can be translated so as to make this verse part of the wish contained in verses 1 and 2; 'Oh that thou wouldst do marvellous things such as we do not expect, while the hills shrank away before thee'. But the verb does not mean 'expect'; it means 'hope for'. The use of the perfect tense, 'thou didst come down', in the Latin is difficult to account for, unless we suppose it to be a reference to mount Sinai (Ex. 20. 18, 19), suggested by the historical reminiscences of the foregoing chapter.

³ The meaning of verses 4 and 5 is obscure. The Hebrew text of verse 4 is usually taken to mean, 'No one has ever seen or heard of a God, other than thee, that acts on behalf of those who wait for him (literally, for thee)'. But the construction is awkward, and the passage was early taken in the sense which the Latin gives it; cf. I Cor. 2. 9. It seems likely there has been some corruption in the text. The end of verse 5 is very abrupt if we translate it as a statement, 'and we shall be delivered'.

⁴ This verse may be interpreted in either of two ways: (i) that the Lord offers mercy to the Gentiles, although they have not asked for it, or (ii) that he offers mercy to the Jews, and yet they do not accept it. The latter sense is probably foremost in the author's mind; St Paul gives the opposite side of the picture (Rom. 10. 20, 21).

ing this way and that as the mood takes
 3 them, openly defying me. Shrines hidden
 4 away in gardens, altars of brick! See how
 they lodge in tombs, pass the night in the
 precincts of strange gods;¹ eat swine's
 flesh, and stew themselves broth of for-
 5 bidden things! And all the while so scrup-
 ulous: Touch of thine would defile me!
 What marvel, if my indignation smoulders
 yet? Nay, fire it is that burns continually.
 6 See where the decree stands written in my
 presence, This shall not be passed over;
 I will take vengeance, pour it out into their
 7 laps. Sin of yours, the Lord says, sin of
 your fathers, that sacrificed on mountain-
 tops, worshipped on the hill-sides in def-
 iance of me; for all these I must repay due
 measure, poured out into the lap; that is
 my first task.

8 Thus says the Lord: If one sound grape
 is found in a cluster, the cry is, Do not
 destroy it, there is a blessing in it. And I,
 for the sake of my true servants, will not
 9 destroy root and branch; I will leave Jacob
 a stock to breed from, settlers enough in
 Judah for these mountains of mine; the men
 of my choice shall have their portion, my
 10 servant shall dwell there. Flocks there
 shall be, folded on the Plain,² and cattle
 resting in the valley of Achor; of my people
 none shall be disappointed that had re-
 11 course to me. But you that forsook the
 Lord, left his mountain sanctuary for-
 gotten, spread a table for the Powers of
 12 Fortune, and poured out wine at it,³ for-
 tune that awaits you is the sword, you shall
 bow down to death. My call unanswered,
 my voice unheard, you did ever what I
 13 forbade, chose ever what I hated. This,
 then, is the sentence the Lord God pro-
 nounces; you shall be hungry, while my
 servants have food, you shall be thirsty,
 14 while my servants drink, you shall be dis-
 appointed, while my servants are glad. My
 servants shall be light-hearted and sing,
 while you, with sad hearts, cry aloud, groan
 15 in the heaviness of your spirits. A name

you shall leave behind you to serve my
 chosen people as a curse; the Lord God
 takes full toll. For his own servants he will
 have a new name instead; By the God of
 16 truth shall be the blessing men invoke, By
 the God of truth shall be the oath men
 take, in this land of mine henceforward.⁴
 Forgotten, the sorrows of past days, hid-
 den away from my eyes.

See where I create new heavens and a
 17 new earth; old things shall be remembered
 no longer, have no place in men's thoughts.
 Joy of yours, pride of yours, this new
 18 creation shall be; joy of mine, pride of
 mine, Jerusalem and her folk, created
 anew. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, take
 19 pride in my people, and the sound of weep-
 ing and lament shall be heard among them
 no more. None shall die there unweaned
 20 from life; never an old man but lives out
 his full time; young he dies that dies a
 hundred years old; so brief a span, it shall
 be the curse pronounced on a sinner.⁵ Live
 21 they now to occupy the houses they built,
 enjoy the fruit of the vines they planted,
 that once built houses for others to occupy,
 22 planted what others should enjoy; my
 people shall live to the age of trees and see
 the work of their own hands wear out
 before them. Not in vain they shall toil,
 23 these, my chosen, nor beget children to see
 them overwhelmed by calamity; their race
 the Lord blesses, their children shall be
 spared to them. Answer shall come ere cry
 24 for help is uttered, prayer find audience
 while it is yet on their lips. Wolf and lamb
 25 shall feed together, lion and ox eat straw
 side by side, and the serpent be content
 with dust for its food; all over this moun-
 tain, my sanctuary, there shall be no hurt
 done, the Lord says, no life shall be forfeit.

66 Thus says the Lord, Heaven is my
 throne, earth the footstool under
 my feet. What home will you build for me,
 what place can be my resting-place?⁶
 Nothing you see about you but I fashioned

¹ It was one of the heathen methods of divination to sleep in some reputedly holy place and expect inspiration to be given by dreams. ² The Plain, that is, Saron. ³ In the Hebrew text, 'poured out wine to Destiny'.

⁴ The name of Israel will be used as a curse, cf. the formula in Jer. 29. 22. (Some think the words which follow, literally 'And the Lord shall slay thee', are meant as an abbreviation for some such formula as 'May the Lord slay thee as he slew Israel'.) The faithful remnant will be given a different name instead of Israel, and God himself will no longer be invoked under the familiar name, 'the God of Jacob', but as 'the God of truth' instead. The name, with its painful associations, must be forgotten.

⁵ Literally, 'There shall not be there (in the Hebrew text, from there) an unweaned child of days (or years), or an old man who does not fill up his span of life; for a young man of a hundred years shall die, and a sinner of a hundred years shall be cursed'.

⁶ Ac. 7. 49.

it, the Lord says; my hand gave it being. From whom, then, shall I accept an offering?¹ Patient he must be and humbled, one who stands in dread of my warnings. 3 To the rest it is all one; slaughter they an ox, or murder a human victim,² cut sheep's throat, or dash out a dog's brains, make offering of meal, or of swine's blood, in my honour burn incense, or bless the name of a false god. In all this, it is but caprice guides their choice, in all manner of abominations; trust me, at my own caprice 4 I will choose the terrors I bring down upon them.³ My call unanswered, my voice unheard, they did ever what I forbade, chose ever what I hated.

5 Listen to the word of the Lord, you that hold it in reverence! Foiled their hopes shall be, that hate and shun you because my name you bear; that say, Come, let us see the Lord reveal himself in majesty, let 6 us witness this triumph of yours! Hark, a stir of tumult in the city, a stir in the temple! It is the stir the Lord makes, as he brings retribution on his enemies!

7 Without travail, the mother has given birth; before her time a mother of men. 8 Never till now was such a tale heard, such a sight witnessed; should a nation's pangs come upon it in a day, a whole people be born at once? Such are the pangs of Sion, 9 such is the birth of her children. What, says the Lord thy God, shall I, that bring children to the birth, want power to bring them forth? Shall I, that give life to the 10 womb, want strength to open it? Lovers of Jerusalem, rejoice with her, be glad for her sake; make holiday with her, you that 11 mourned for her till now. So shall you be her foster-children, suckled plentifully with her consolations, drinking in, to your hearts' content, the abundant glory that is hers. Thus says the Lord, Peace shall flow 12 through her like a river, the wealth of the nations shall pour into her like a torrent in flood; this shall be the milk you drain, like children carried at the breast, fondled on a 13 mother's lap. I will console you then, like a mother caressing her son, and all your 14 consolation shall be in Jerusalem; your eyes

feasted with it, your hearts content, vigorous as the fresh grass your whole frame.

Thus to his servants the Lord makes known his power; his enemies shall have no quarter given them. See, where the 1: Lord comes with fire about him, with chariots that drive like the storm, angry his retribution, his vengeance like a scorching flame! Fire and sword shall be 1: the world's purging, till the Lord has taken full toll. Vainly they sought holiness, that would purify themselves in secret gardens, behind shut doors, and all the while ate 1: flesh of swine and field-mouse and other meats abominable; one end there shall be for all of them, the Lord says.⁴

Trust me, I will hold assize upon all such 1: deeds and devices of theirs; ay, upon all nations and races. All must come and see my glory revealed, and I will set a mark 1: upon each of them. What of those that find deliverance? I have an errand for them, to be my messengers across the sea; to Africa, and to Lydia where men draw the bow, to Italy, and to Greece, and to the Islands far away.⁵ They shall go out where men never heard of my name, never saw my glory yet, to reveal that glory among the nations. And out of all nations they shall bring your 2: brethren back, an offering to the Lord, with horse and chariot, with litter and mule and waggon, to Jerusalem, the Lord says, to this mountain, my sanctuary. A bloodless offering this, for the sons of Israel to bring, in its sanctified vessel, to the Lord's house! And some among these 2: newcomers, the Lord says, I will choose out to be priests and Levites.

This, too, he promises: Enduring your 2: race and name shall be as the new heavens, the new earth I fashion, to stand continually in my presence. Month after 2: month, sabbath after sabbath shall go by, and still all mankind shall come to bow 2: down before me, the Lord says. And ever as they leave the gates, mortal remains they shall see of the men that rebelled against me long since; a prey now, to worm undying, to fire unquenchable;⁶ none that sees it but shall turn with loathing from the sight.

¹ 'From whom shall I accept an offering?'; literally, 'to whom shall I have regard?' cf. Gen. 4. 4.

² Literally, 'he who slays an ox (is as) he who murders a man', etc. ³ 'At my own caprice I will

choose the terrors'; literally, 'I will choose the wanton outrages and the terrors'.

⁴ The Hebrew text of verses 17 and 18, which differs from the Latin version, is probably corrupt, and has called forth a variety of interpretations.

⁵ The geographical identifications found in the Latin text are by no means certain.

⁶ Mk. 9. 48.

THE PROPHECY OF JEREMIAS

THESE are the words of Jeremias, son of Helcias, one of the priests who dwelt at Anathoth, in the lands of Benjamin. The word of the Lord came to him during the reign of Josias, son of Amon, over Juda, in the thirteenth year of it; came to him during the reign of Josias' son, Joachim, and did not cease till the men of Jerusalem went into exile, when Sedecias, that was also son to Josias, had been reigning eleven years and five months.

The word of the Lord came to me, and his message was: I claimed thee for my own before ever I fashioned thee in thy mother's womb; before ever thou camest to the birth, I set thee apart for myself; I have a prophet's errand for thee among the nations. Alas, alas, Lord God (said I), I am but a child that has never learned to speak. A child, sayest thou? the Lord answered. Nay, I have a mission for thee to undertake, a message to entrust to thee. Have no human fears; am I not at thy side, to protect thee from harm? the Lord says. And with that, the Lord put out his hand, and touched me on the mouth; See, he told me, I have inspired thy lips with utterance. Here and now I give thee authority over nations and kingdoms everywhere; with a word thou shalt root them up and pull them down, overthrow and lay them in ruins; with a word thou shalt build them up and plant them anew.

Then the Lord's word came to me, Tell me, Jeremias, what is this thou seest? A branch of a tree, I told him, with the eyes already open.¹ Well seen, he answered; and I too have my eyes open, watching for the opportunity to carry out the threats I utter. And again it came, Tell me, what is this thou seest? A boiling caldron, said I, that is coming from the north. And it is from the north, the Lord told me, that calamity is brewing for all

thy fellow-countrymen. All the tribes the northern kings rule I mean to muster, the Lord says; hither they will march, and each will set up his throne where gate of Jerusalem stands, or encircling wall, or fortified city of Juda. And there I will plead my cause against the men of Juda, charging them with their rebellion in forsaking me; in offering libation to gods not theirs, and worshipping idols of their own making.

Up, then, gird thee like a man, and speak out all the message I give thee. Meet them undaunted, and they shall have no power to daunt thee. Strong I mean to make thee this day as fortified city, or pillar of iron, or wall of bronze, to meet king, prince, priest of Juda, and common folk all the country through; impregnable thou shalt be to their attack; am I not at thy side, the Lord says, to deliver thee?

Then the Lord's word came to me: Go and cry out so that all Jerusalem may hear, with this message from the Lord: What memories I have of thee, gracious memories of thy youth, of the love that plighted troth between us, when I led thee through the desert; alone in the barren wastes, thou and I! Israel was set apart for the Lord, first-fruits vowed to be his revenue; he lay under a ban that plucked them, and must rue his rashness, the Lord says.

Listen, then, to the Lord's word, men of Jacob; listen, every clan that bears the name of Israel, to the Lord's message: What fault did they find in me, those fathers of yours, that they should keep their distance from me, and court false gods, false as themselves? And never a thought to ask where I, the Lord, was, that rescued them from Egypt, and led them on their way through the desert, wild and solitary, parched and dead, far from haunt

¹ 'Eyes'; that is, buds. In the Hebrew text, there is a play upon the similarity of the word 'to watch' and the word 'almond-tree', which is derived from it. This is perhaps because the almond is the first tree to awake from its winter sleep.

7 of traveller and the homes of men! Into a land of plenty I brought you, to enjoy the fruits and the blessings of it; and you had no sooner entered it than you must needs defile it, my own land, turn my chosen home into a place abominable. Never a priest to ask where I, the Lord, was; never a man of law but made a stranger of me, never a ruler but played me false, never a prophet but took Baal for his oracle, and had recourse to powers that were impotent. Against you, the Lord says, my appeal still lies, and with your children I will yet be at issue.

10 Sail the seas till you reach the isles of Cethim; send envoys out to the wilds of Cedar; look for yourselves and make earnest enquiry, to know if the like was ever heard! What nation ever changed its gods, though gods indeed they were not? And should my people barter away the glory that dwelt among them, for powers that power have none? In horror and dismay witness, you heavens, the sight; crumble in ruins!¹ Two wrongs this people of mine committed; me they forsook, the fountain of living water, and thereupon they dug cisterns of their own, leaking cisterns, that water had none to give them.

14 What, is the race of Israel a slave, a chattel, that it should pass from hand to hand as the prize of war? Roaring lions have claimed it for their prey; the land lies waste, the cities burnt and desolate. Even the Egyptians have come from Memphis and Taphne, to strip thee bare; tell me, Israel, how came this? Was it not because thou hadst forsaken the Lord thy God, that till then had led thee?²

18 What, wouldst thou turn to Egypt, to Assyria, and slake thy thirst with Nile or Euphrates?³ Here is the very proof of thy wickedness, the measure of thy unfaithfulness; see how ill it has gone with thee, says the Lord, the God of hosts, ever since thou didst forsake the Lord thy God, ever

since thou didst banish the fear of me! It is an old tale, now, how thou didst break in pieces the yoke of my dominion, didst sever all the bonds between us, crying out, I will serve no more! Thou wast off to play the wanton, the nearest hill-top or secret forest for thy bower. Alas, vineyard of mine, that I planted with such care, never a worthless shoot! How is it thou hast played me false, and art no vineyard of mine?

Ay, use nitre for thy cleansing, spread potash as thou mayst, foul with guilt I shall still find thee, says the Lord God. Nay, never boast that thou art undefiled, to countryside gods hast no recourse; be-think thee of thy traffickings in Ben-Ennom valley, and read there the story of thy doings. Camel never found its way so lightly; wild ass in its familiar desert, scenting its mate, never obeyed the fire in its blood more uncontrollably! Little search it needs to find thy haunts, as its mate in spring-time.⁴ Reckless of unshod feet, of parching throat, thou criest out despairingly, Return I cannot; to alien gods all my heart is vowed, and I must follow still!

Thief caught in the act has less cause to blush than the men of Israel, king and prince, priest and prophet, with the rest. Stock of wood and block of stone they hailed as the father that had begotten them; on me they turned their backs, and gave me never a glance. And now, in their distress, it is Up, Lord, and bring us rescue! Where are those other gods thou madest for thyself? Bid them rise up and aid thee in the hour of peril; gods thou hadst a many; no city of thine, Juda, but must have its own! And would you still implead me? Nay, says the Lord, you have forsaken me, one and all. In vain I have smitten them, all those sons of yours; still you turned your swords against the prophets, bloodthirsty as lions.

Out upon this age! Here is the Lord's

¹ There is some doubt whether the text of this verse has been rightly preserved; the meaning of the Hebrew text is given above, since the Latin has an improbable sentence: 'Be dismayed, ye heavens, over this, and crumble in ruins, ye gates of it'.

² *vs.* 14-17. Some think these verses have been misplaced. If they refer to the times of Josias, they must be understood as addressed, not to the kingdom of Juda, but to that Northern country which, since the Ten Tribes went into exile, had been debatable ground between the empires of Assyria and Egypt.

³ This verse is addressed to Juda, and refers to attempts made at the time to secure foreign alliances; cf. *verse* 36 below. For 'Nile' the Latin version gives 'turbid water', translating instead of transliterating. ⁴ The last part of the verse is not easy to interpret. It runs, literally, 'Those who look for her will have no laborious search; they will find her in her month (according to the Latin, her monthly times)'.

message, give good heed to it. Have I shewn myself unfriendly to Israel, like a desert, like a land overcast by shadows, that my own people has resolved to keep its distance, and come my way no more?

32 What, should maid forget her jewels, bride her stomacher? And my own people, all these long days, has forgotten me! 33 What avails it to justify thyself, in hope of winning back my love, when thou thyself dost blazon so openly thy doings, thy foul misdoings? There is blood on thy hands, 34 the blood of friendless folk and innocent. It is not thieves I have found, but men 35 guilty of such crimes as these.¹ And still thou declarest thyself innocent of any fault, still thou biddest me withhold my vengeance! Come, let me answer thy plea of innocence.

36 How light a woman thou art, ever at thy old ways! Not less than thy hopes of Assyria, thy hopes of Egypt shall be disappointed; thence, too, thou shalt come away wringing thy hands; all the confidence thou hast the Lord means to destroy; thou shalt make no shift with Egypt.

3 What is the law of common life? Let wife that has been put away by her husband marry a second, can she afterwards return to the first? That were shame and defilement.² And thou with many lovers hast played the wanton; yet come back to me, the Lord says, and thou shalt find welcome. Lift up thy eyes to the bare hills, and tell me, which of them has not been the scene of thy shame? Like a high-way robber thou didst lurk by the roadside, waiting for thy lovers; by thy heartless wantonness the whole land was defiled. 3 I called thee to account for it; heaven's dews were stanch'd, and the late rains did not fall, and still never a blush on thy harlot's brow! Little wonder thou shouldst have been crying out to me, since then, calling me father, calling me the loved friend of thy girlhood's days; was there no quenching my anger? Would it smoulder

on for ever? Ay, all this thou saidst, but still wouldst go on sinning, still wouldst have thy way.

It was in the days of king Josias the Lord said to me: Israel's apostasy thou hast seen, how she ever betook herself to the nearest high hill or leafy wood, to play the wanton there; and how, when I called her back to me in spite of it, she would not come. Now mark the treachery of her sister Juda. She too had seen it all, how I had bidden apostate Israel begone, and given her a writ of separation; and now treacherous Juda, unabashed, went off in her turn to play the wanton. So wayward, so wanton, she defiled all that land of hers, giving herself to lovers made of wood and stone! After all the warnings I had given, Juda, the treacherous, would never come back to me in good earnest, only with lying professions, the Lord says.

And the Lord told me: Better than Juda's treachery, the apostasy of Israel deserves to be acquitted. Carry this message of mine to the north country: Come back to me, apostate Israel, the Lord says, and there shall be no frown of mine awaiting you; I am merciful, the Lord says, and vengeance shall not last for ever. Only acknowledge thy fault, he tells thee, in deserting the Lord thy God and betaking thyself to the bowers of strange lovers, deaf to my call. Wandering hearts, the Lord bids you come back to him, and renew your troth; by ones and twos, from this city or that, from this clan or that, he will claim you for his own and bring you back to Sion; and you shall have shepherds of his own choice to guide you well and prudently. After that, the Lord says, when all is growth and fertility, no longer shall you have the Ark of the Lord's Covenant for your rallying-cry; from thought and memory it will have passed away, nor any care shall be bestowed on the fashioning of it. It is Jerusalem men will speak of as the Lord's throne; there at Jerusalem all the nations of the world will meet in the Lord's name, the false aims of their

¹ *vs.* 33, 34. There is probably corruption in the text. In the Latin version it reads literally: 'Why dost thou strive to shew that thy way is good, in order to seek love, who moreover hast taught thy wickedness thy ways; and the blood of poor and innocent souls is found on thy wings? I have not found them in ditches, but over all the things which I have mentioned above'. In the Hebrew text, 'wings' means 'skirts'; and the word translated 'ditches' means housebreaking (*Ex.* 22. 1). The translation given assumes a reference to verse 26 above.

² To the woman herself, according to the Latin version; to the whole country, according to the Hebrew text (*cf.* *Deut.* 24. 4).

18 perverse hearts forgotten. When that time comes, Juda and Israel will be united; together they will come back from the north country to the land I gave your fathers for their home.

19 Must I ever be offering thee sonship, and a land so fair that all the peoples of the world might envy thee its possession? Must I ever be pleading with thee to acknowledge me as thy father, and forsake my guidance no more? Hitherto, the Lord says, nothing could I win from Israel but a false jade's contempt. Now, from yonder hill-passes, another cry is heard; a cry of mourning and lament from the sons of Israel, over the wrong path they have chosen in forgetting the Lord their God.

22 Wandering hearts, come back to me, and all your rebel acts shall be pardoned.

23 See, we come to thee; art thou not the Lord our God? The many gods of hill-side and mountain-side have played us false; we know it now; we know now that Israel must look to the Lord our God for deliverance. Ever since the days of our youth all the hopes our fathers had, of flock and herd, of son and daughter, are lost; the worship of shame has cheated us.¹ Lie we down with shame for our bed, and let reproach be all our covering; sinners from our youth upwards, we and our fathers before us, against the Lord our God; the Lord our God, and we would not listen to his voice!

4 Do but retrace thy steps, Israel, and return to me, do but cast away the abominations that offend my sight, and in that mind persist; let but thy oath, As the Lord is a living God! be a true oath, in loyal duty uttered; then shall all the nations learn to bless and to praise him.

3 And to the men of Juda, to Jerusalem, this is the Lord's message: Yours to drive a new furrow, nor sow any longer among the briers. You must be circumcised afresh, men of Juda; citizens of Jerusalem, of heart's defilement rid yourselves, if you would not see my vengeance burst into

flame unquenchable, as your scheming malice has deserved.

News for Juda, news that shall echo through Jerusalem; tell it out, sound the trumpet over the country-side! Loud be the cry raised, for all to muster and to man the fortified cities! Raise the standard in Sion, and rally to it with all haste! Here is peril I am bringing upon you from the north country, here is great calamity. Roused is the lion from his lair; he is astir, ready to prey on the nations; he is marching out to make earth a desert, and thy cities too shall be laid waste, and stand there untenanted. Well may you gird yourselves with sackcloth, well may you beat the breast and cry aloud; fire of the Lord's vengeance has not passed us by. When that day comes, the Lord says, heart of king and heart of prince shall be dismayed; dumb-stricken the priest, the prophet unmanned.

Alas, alas, Lord God, said I,² can it be that thou hast deceived thy people, deceived Jerusalem, by telling them they should have peace, and here is the sword threatening our very lives?

When that time comes, verdict shall be passed on this people of mine, and on Jerusalem: My people's wanton ways are like the hot wind³ that blows from the desert slopes, that will neither winnow nor sift. And in return, I will summon to my side a wind that blows full, and so I will plead my cause against them. An overshadowing cloud the invader shall be, his chariots outspread like the storm-wrack, his horses swifter than eagles. Alas the day, we are ruined!

Now, Jerusalem, as thy life thou lovest, rid thy heart of guile; wilt thou never cease to harbour those false thoughts of thine? Here is news cried from Dan, here are monstrous tidings⁴ from the hill-country of Ephraim; tell it far and wide, Jerusalem has heard the bruit of her besiegers coming from a distant land, that even now raise their battle-cry among the cities of Juda; even now they keep watch over the country-side about her, the Lord says, and all

¹ Literally, 'Ever since the days of our youth shame has devoured the earnings of our fathers, their flocks and herds, sons and daughters'. But it is most probable that the word 'shame' stands here as a pious substitute for the name of the god Baal.

² According to some manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek, the true reading is 'said they'. This would evidently improve the run of the context.

³ The Hebrew text may also be interpreted as meaning 'A hot wind is coming in the direction of the daughter of my people'. But the use of language is in any case forced, and it may be doubted whether the true text of verses 11 and 12 has been preserved to us.

⁴ Literally, 'the making known of an idol'; according to the Hebrew text, 'the making known of distress'.

18 because she defied my vengeance. Ill deeds
and ill counsel of thine have brought all
this upon thee; the due reward of thy
wickedness, how bitter the taste of it, how
19 it wrings thy heart! Deep, deep rankles
the wound; my very heart-strings echo
lament; no rest is mine, since my ear
caught bray of trumpet and cry of battle.
20 Tale upon tale of ruin; a whole land laid
waste, no cabin or hovel spared, suddenly,
21 all in a moment! Always the sight of men
fleeing, always the sound of the trumpet
in my ears!

22 Ah, reckless people of mine, that would
not acknowledge me; blind fools, for mis-
chief so shrewd, in well-doing so un-
tutored!

23 Earthward I looked, and all was void and
empty; heavenward, and in heaven no
light shone; looked at mountain and hill-
side, and saw them stir and tremble;
25 looked for some sign of man, and in vain;
the very birds in heaven had all taken
26 flight. It was a garden I looked at, but a
garden untenanted; no city in it but had
perished at the Lord's glance, before the
27 frown of his vengeance. For it was so the
Lord's sentence ran; the whole country-
side should be abandoned, and still he will
28 not have taken full toll. At his sentence,
earth should mourn and heaven grow dark
with sorrow, yet of his decree there should
be no repenting; he would not go back
29 from it. Everywhere, at the noise of archer
and horseman, the townsfolk flee away,
take to the hills² and climb their high
rocks; never a town but is left deserted of
30 its inhabitants. And thou, Jerusalem,
when thy turn comes to be despoiled, what
shift wilt thou make? Vain was it to dress
in scarlet, and deck thyself with chains of
gold, and with antimony darken thy eyes;
vain were those arts, thy lovers are weary
31 of thee now, and thy life is forfeit. Cries
of anguish I hear, as from a woman in the
throes of travail; it is queen Sion, gasping
out her life, and crying with hands out-
spread, Woe is me, I swoon away, here in
the slaughter-house!

5 Go the rounds of Jerusalem, search
the streets of it with hue and cry; and
if you find one man there that faithfully

does his duty, and keeps troth, then the
city shall be pardoned. Nay, though they
2 call on the living God to be their wit-
ness, they forswear themselves none the
less.

On faithfulness, Lord, thy eyes are set.
3 And these, when thou smitest them, are
unrepentant still; when thou crushest
them to earth, will not heed reproof; brows
are theirs unyielding as rock, and return
they will not. But indeed, thought I, per-
4 haps they are poor men and foolish, that
have never learnt the divine command, or
what their God requires of them. I will go
5 and have speech with the men of rank;
what the divine command is, what their
God requires of them, these will surely
know. And these I found conspiring, as
none other, to throw off the yoke, to break
through their bonds. What wonder if they
6 are attacked and despoiled by robbers, that
leave the woods at night-time, stealthily as
lion or wolf or prowling leopard, to be-
leaguer their towns and catch all who
venture forth? So many their rebellions,
so obstinate their defiance!

For all this, how should I pardon thee?
7 Thy sons have deserted me, by gods that
are no gods their vows are taken; full-fed
with my bounty, they left their wedded
troth, to wanton in the bower of a mistress;
bold in their adultery as stallion at grass
8 neighing for its mate. What, shall I let all
9 this pass me by, the Lord says; shall I not
take my fill of vengeance against such a
nation as this? Scale those ramparts, and
10 fall to pillage, not taking full toll even yet;
root out the slips of yonder vine, the Lord
will not claim them. Obstinately they have
11 defied me, the Lord says, Israel and Juda
both; they disown me; Nay, they tell one
12 another, this is none of his doing, harm
shall never befall us, we shall have neither
slaughter nor famine here; the prophets
13 did but waste breath, no word of revela-
tion made to them; on their own heads
be it!

Vain words; but not vainly the Lord,
14 the God of hosts, has spoken; flaming
words of his he has entrusted to my lips,
and fuel this people shall be for their de-
vouring. A nation from far away I am
15 summoning, even now, Israel, to the

¹ The sudden introduction of Almighty God as the speaker in this verse mars the unity of the passage, and some attribute it to textual error.

² In the Hebrew text, 'thickets'.

attack; a warlike nation, of ancient lineage, whose very tongue shall be strange to thee, no word of it well understood; greedily as the tomb their quivers gape, and they are warriors all. They shall rob thee of harvest and of food, rob thee of son and daughter, rob thee of flock and herd, rob thee of vine and fig-tree; and all the strongholds, wherein thy hope lies, at the sword's point shall be overthrown. Yet even then, the Lord says, I will not take full toll of thee. Ask you why the Lord has so much misused you, this is to be my answer: Did you not forsake me, to worship alien gods in your own land? Alien gods you shall worship in an alien land, for your punishment.

To Israel's race proclaim it, for all Juda to hear, Listen, foolish folk and unperceiving, with sightless eyes, ears that had as well been deaf! Have you no fear of me, the Lord says, will you stand unmoved in my presence? Was it not I gave the sea its frontier of sand, by my eternal decree inviolate? Vainly the waves boil and toss, they cannot pass beyond it. A faithless heart, a rebellious heart this people of mine has; in a moment they swerve aside from the path, and are gone; never a thought of reverence for the Lord their God, who gives them autumn and spring rains when the time comes, and secures them a full harvest. It is your wrong-doing that has altered their course; to guilt such as yours, blessings are denied.

Godless men there are among my people that lie in wait like any fowler, but noose and trap of theirs is set to catch men. Never was cage so full of birds, as their homes of wealth ill gotten; men of power and riches, pampered and sleek, they defy my will past all bearing; redress they deny to the widow, right to the orphan, justice to the poor. What, shall I let all this pass me by, the Lord says, shall I not take my fill of vengeance against such a nation as this? A wonder this land has seen beyond all belief; here are prophets that utter a lying message, priests that clap their hands in applause, and this people of mine is well content. And what shift will you make when the end comes?

Rally, tribesmen of Benjamin that live in the midst of Jerusalem; at Thecua sound the trumpet, raise the standard on Bethacarem; it is from the north peril may be seen coming, peril of great calamity.¹ Poor Sion, all too fair she seems, all too delicate! Alas, what strange shepherds are these, what troops that follow them? See how they pitch their tents about her! See how many each has at his back, and there must be pasture for them all! Sound we the attack on the city; to move now were best, and march up under the light of noon! Plague upon it, the day is already spent, the shadows of evening lengthen already; up, then, march we on by night, by night plunder their houses!

Down with yonder trees, the Lord of hosts says, and build siege-works about Jerusalem; here is a city must be called to account for all the oppression that is harboured there. Never cistern kept its waters so fresh, as she her store of wickedness; no news from her but of wrong and waste, no sight I see there but distress and violence. Jerusalem, be warned in time; else my love thou shalt forfeit, and I will make a ruin of thee, a land uninhabited.

Israel, says the Lord of hosts, is a vineyard for the gleaning; no cluster shall be left; back with thee, vintager, to the baskets! Vain appeal, whom shall I cite for witness of it? Oh that it should fall on ears uncircumcised, oh that God's word should be slighted, and find no welcome! Nay, but the divine anger burns within me, I can forbear no longer. I must blurt out my message to all, children playing in the streets, no less than warriors met in council; none shall be spared, husband or wife, greybeard or man of many summers. Homes, lands and wedded wives, all must pass into other hands; none that dwells in Juda, the Lord says, but shall feel my vengeance. High and low, ill-gotten gains they cover; treacherous the ways alike of prophet and of priest; here lies my people grievously hurt, and they tend her unconcernedly; All's well, they say, all's well, when in truth all goes amiss. Shamed they needs must be, that did so detestably; shamed, but never ashamed, for indeed

¹ The Latin version does not make clear, what is evidently intended, that the men of Benjamin (to whose country the prophet belonged) are invited to escape from Jerusalem, and hold their own in the hill-country of the south.

they have lost the power to blush;¹ theirs to fall amid the common ruin, crushed to earth, the Lord says, when I call all to account.

- 16 The Lord's message was, Halt at the cross-roads, look well, and ask yourselves which path it was that stood you in good stead long ago. That path follow, and you shall find rest for your souls. But follow which they would not; and next, I would set watchmen on the heights; let them only listen, when these sounded the trumpet; but listen they would not. To the nations, then, I proclaim it; let my doom be pronounced in the public ear; all earth shall hear it. I mean to bring upon this people of mine the punishment their scheming wickedness has earned, so deaf to my calls, so of my law so defiant. What avails it to offer me incense from Saba, and the fragrant calamus that grows far away? Unwelcome to me your burnt-sacrifice, undesired your victims. This doom the Lord pronounces; I mean so to entangle this people of mine that they shall stumble to their undoing all of them, father and son together, neighbour with neighbour, friend with friend.
- 22 Here is a people marching from the north country, the Lord says, a great nation from the world's end. Arrow and shield² they ply, and their hard hearts pity none; loud their battle-cry as the roaring of the sea. So they ride on, as warriors ride, poor Sion, thy enemies. Unnerved our hands droop at the very rumour of it; grief overmasters us, sharp as the pangs of travail; forbidden is the country-side, the high roads untravelled; the drawn sword threatens, and peril is all about us. Juda, poor widowed queen, put sackcloth about thee and strew thyself with ashes; as for an only son make loud lament; without warning the spoiler will be upon us.
- 27 I have a task for thee to perform among my people; thou shalt be my trusty assayer, putting the quality of their lives to the test.
- 28 These faithless rulers that go about on their slanderous errands, what are they but copper and iron, base metal all? Bellows

have done their work, the lead streams away in the fire, carrying nothing with it; vain, smelter, thy toil, the dross remains unpurged. Refuse-silver they shall be called; has not the Lord refused them?³

- 7 A message came from the Lord to Jeremias, bidding him take his stand at the temple gate, and there proclaim aloud: Listen to this word of the Lord, men of Juda, that make your way in through these gates to worship him. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your lives and your likings, if you would have me dwell here among you. Trust never in the false assurances that proclaim this place The Lord's temple, The Lord's temple, The Lord's temple.⁴ Will you but amend your lives and your likings, giving one man redress against another, not oppressing the alien, the orphan, the widow, nor in these precincts putting innocent men to death, nor courting, to your ruin, the gods of other nations, then indeed I will make my dwelling here among you, in the land which was my gift to your fathers from the beginning to the end of time. You put your trust in flattering hopes, which can nothing avail you; theft, murder, adultery, the false oath, libations to Baal, the courting of alien gods that are no gods of yours, nothing comes amiss, if only you can come and stand in my presence, here in this house, the shrine of my name, and tell yourselves you have made amends for all these your detestable doings! What, does this house, the shrine of such a name, count for no more than a den of thieves, in eyes like yours? Think you, the Lord says, that eternal God has no eyes to see it?⁵ Go and visit that sanctuary of mine at Silo, where of old my power rested; look well, what havoc I have made of it, to punish the misdeeds of Israel, that was my people too. Because of so much done amiss, the Lord says; because you would not listen when I cried early at your doors, or answer any call of mine; this house, shrine of my name and

¹ The text here apparently says, 'They are confounded, because they have done abominably; or rather they are not confounded, they do not know how to blush'. Probably the verb 'to be confounded' is used in two different senses, (i) to be ignominiously disappointed of one's aim, (ii) to express shame, own oneself in the wrong.

² According to the Hebrew text, 'bow and javelin'.
³ This verse becomes more easily intelligible if we suppose that the prophet's audience were within sight of written notices, or within earshot of Temple officials, calling attention to the sanctity of the various buildings around them.

⁴ Literally, in the Latin version, 'I, I am, I have seen, the Lord says'. The Hebrew text has merely, 'Behold, I also have seen it, the Lord says'.

centre of your hopes, this home I gave to you and to your fathers, shall fare as Silo fared. All those brethren of yours, the whole stock of Ephraim, I banished from my presence, and you shall be banished in your turn.

Nor do thou, Jeremias,¹ think to plead for this people of mine, or take up in their name the burden of praise and prayer; thwart my will, thou shalt have no hearing. Canst thou not see for thyself what ill deeds are done in the townships of Juda, in the very streets of Jerusalem? See the children gathering sticks, the father lighting a fire, the mother kneading dough, and all to make cakes for the queen of heaven! See how they offer libation to alien gods, to despite me! Yet not to me they do despite, the Lord says, rather to themselves; every hope of theirs shall fail them. This warning, then, the Lord God sends them: Fury and indignation of mine are brewing against this place, man and beast, woodland tree and growing crop; and when that fire is lit, there shall be no quenching it.

A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: No more be at pains to distinguish between burnt-sacrifice and offering; use for your own eating the flesh of all alike! Burnt-sacrifices, offerings, not of these was my theme when I gave commandments to your fathers at the time of their deliverance from Egypt;² my word of command to them was, Obey my bidding, if I am to be your God, you my people; follow the path I have marked out for you, as you hope to prosper. And did they listen? Hearing they gave me none; their own whim, the false aim of their corrupt hearts was all the rule they lived by; still turned their backs on me, and refused to look my way; so it has been since your fathers left Egypt, so it is yet. No day dawned but I was at work betimes, sending my servants to prophesy to them, but still they would not listen, still hearing they gave me none; stubborn under my yoke, they outdid their own fathers in wickedness. All this thou shalt say to them, but

they will not listen to thee; thy call shall go unheeded. Then tell them, Here is a people who will not listen to the voice of their own God, or accept reproof from him; loyalty is dead, the word is on their lips no more.

Cut off, Jerusalem,³ those locks of thine, and cast them away from thee; loud let the hills echo with thy lament; on a guilty age, the Lord has pronounced sentence of banishment and rejection. The men of Juda have defied my will, the Lord says; foul idols they have set up in the house that is the sanctuary of my name, and utterly profaned it; in the valley of Ben-Ennom stands the hill-shrine of Topheth, where they sacrifice their own sons and daughters in the furnace, a rite not of my bidding, not of my imagining. And now, the Lord says, a time is coming when no more will be heard of Topheth or Ben-Ennom; it will be called The Valley of the Slain; men will be finding room for their dead in Topheth, because other burying-ground is none. Nay, Juda shall be carrion for birds that fly in air, for beasts that roam the earth; and never a man left to drive them away. In the townships of Juda, in the streets of Jerusalem, cries of joy and mirth shall be heard no more, voice of bridegroom and of bride shall be heard no more; the whole land will have turned into a wilderness.

8 All the tombs in Jerusalem will be rifled, the Lord says, when that day comes, tomb of king and prince of Juda's line, tomb of priest and prophet, tomb of common citizen; naked their bones shall lie, with sun and moon and all the starry host to witness it, their gods aforesaid: gods so loved, so well served, so hailed, so courted, so adored! Those bones there shall be none to gather, none to bury; they shall lie like dung on the bare ground. And the living shall envy the dead; so poor a home shall be left, the Lord of hosts says, to the remnant of a guilty race, in the far lands to which I have banished them.

Give them this message from the Lord: A man falls but to rise, errs but to retrieve

¹ The word 'Jeremias' is not expressed in the original. ² *et.* 21-23. The burnt-sacrifice was offered to God whole, unlike the other sacrifices (e.g. the welcome-offering) in which the victim was shared between God and his worshipper. Here, the prophet ironically suggests that ceremonial distinctions of this kind may well be abandoned, since the sins of Juda have in any case made their offerings unacceptable. Verses 22 and 23 should probably be understood as implying, not that the moral law was anterior in time to the ceremonial precepts, but that it wholly overshadowed them in importance. ³ The name is not expressed in the original.

5 his path; how is it that this rebellious
people of mine at Jerusalem has rebelled
so obstinately? They cling to their illu-
6 sion, and return no more. Listen I never
so attentively, wholesome word I hear
none; never a man that repents of his sin,
asks himself what his life has been. No,
each one follows his own bent, reckless as
7 war-horse charging into battle. Yet the
kite, circling in air, knows its time; turtle-
dove can guess, and swallow, and stork,
when they should return;¹ only for my
people the divine appointment passes un-
8 observed. What, still boasting that you are
wise, that the Lord's law finds its home
among you? Nay, but the scribes, with
their false penmanship, have construed all
9 amiss. In all their wisdom, how disap-
pointed, how bewildered, how entrapped!
God's word they cast away, and wisdom
10 left them. Alien lords their wives shall
have, alien masters their lands; (high and
low, ill-gotten gains they covet; trea-
cherous the ways alike of prophet and of
11 priest; here lies my people grievously hurt,
and they tend her unconcernedly; All's
well, they say, all's well, when in truth all
12 goes amiss. Shamed they needs must be,
that did so detestably; shamed, but never
ashamed, for indeed they have lost the
power to blush; theirs to fall in the com-
mon ruin, crushed to earth, the Lord says,
13 when I call all to account).² I will make
an end of them once for all, the Lord says;
never a grape on the vine, or a fig on the
fig-tree, every leaf withered; and I have
given them... what has passed them by.³
14 Why do we linger here? Muster we, and
man the stronghold, and wait there un-
complaining; silence the Lord our God
has imposed on us, given us a draught to
dull the senses; the Lord, whom our sins
15 have offended.⁴ How we long for better
times, and no relief comes to us; for
remedy at last, and danger still threatens!
16 All the way from Dan the noise of horses
reaches us, gallant chargers neighing in
their pride, till earth trembles with the

echoes of it; on they come, bearing ruin to
field and crop, to city and citizen! With
17 such a brood of deadly serpents I am
plaguuing you, the Lord says, charm is none
shall rid you of its bite.

Grief beyond all grief, that bows down
18 my heart within me! So cries my own
people in its distress from a country far
away. Does the Lord dwell in Sion no
19 longer? Is she forsaken by her king?

And she? What of the idols, what of the
alien gods that turned me into her enemy?

Harvest-time is over, summer is gone,
20 and still no deliverance has come to us.
Wounded she lies, my own people, and is
not her wound mine? Shall I not go
mourning, bewildered by grief? Grows the
21 balm in Galaad no more, is the healer's art
lost there, that the people I love should lie
wounded, and the wound will not close?

9 Well-head were this head of mine,
eyes of a fountain these eyes,⁵ day nor
night should serve me to weep enough for
my country's dead. Oh that some lodging-
2 place in the wilderness for me were
dwelling-place, far from the haunts of my
own people, that are faithless lovers, rebel
subjects all!

Deceitful tongues, treacherous as the
3 hidden archer's bow, hearts that lord it
over their fellow-countrymen, wrong lead-
ing to wrong, and my claims forgotten! the
Lord says. Neighbour of neighbour be-
4 ware, kinsman let kinsman never trust;
none goes about to overthrow thee more
craftily than brother of thine or friend.
None but will overreach his fellow with
5 lies; all their schooling is in falsehood, all
their striving for ill-gotten gain. In what
6 a nest of treason thou dwellest! And such
treason, the Lord says, as will acknowl-
edge no claim of mine. This warning,
then, he utters, the Lord of hosts: The fire
7 for them! They must be tried in the cru-
cible; what other choice has my faithless
people left me? Tongues that would like
8 an arrow, with deceit for poison, ever the

¹ The birds cannot be certainly identified; some would alter 'kite' to 'stork', and 'stork' to 'crane'.
² vv. 10-12. The repetition of 6. 13-15 may be intentional, but is more probably due to a copyist's error; they are wanting here in some Greek manuscripts.

³ The last clause of this verse does not yield any natural sense, either in the Hebrew or in the Latin, and it seems likely that the text as we have it is defective. ⁴ 'Uncomplaining' and 'silence' represent a Hebrew verb which normally has that sense, but is interpreted by some, here and in a few other passages, as meaning 'to die'. 'A draught to dull the senses'; literally, 'waters of a root'; the potion so described in Hebrew is probably the 'gall' offered to our Lord at his Crucifixion (Mt. 27. 34). ⁵ 'Eyes' of a fountain, in the sense of openings. The Hebrew words for 'head' and 'eye' are also used for springs of water.

smooth word of friend laying snare for friend; what shall I let all this pass me by, the Lord says; shall I not take my fill of vengeance against such a nation as this?

10 Sad dirge be made for the hills, lament for all the wide pasture-lands, that are scorched bare, and left untravellered; silent the herdsman's call; birds that nested there, cattle that grazed there, fled and gone.

11 I mean to turn Jerusalem into a heap of dust, the lair of serpents;¹ the cities of Judah shall stand desolate, with none to inhabit them. Come now, who is wise enough to read the riddle, to what spokesman shall the Lord's proclamation be entrusted, when he tells us why the land lies ruined, burnt up like the wilderness, and never a passer-by? It is because they forsook the commandment I gave them, the Lord says, would not heed my call or follow it; because they had recourse to ill devices of their own, and to the gods of the country-side, whose worship their fathers taught them. This doom, then, the Lord of hosts pronounces, the God of Israel: On wormwood I will feed this people of mine, gall shall be the drink I give them; far away I will scatter them, in countries never they, never their fathers knew; and the sword shall follow close behind, to exterminate them.

17 This too the Lord of hosts says, the God of Israel: Search all about, and find mourners, mistresses of their craft, and such as will answer your summons with all haste; no time let them lose in making dole for us; weep every eye, be every eyelid blubbered with tears. Listen to Sion's lament: Alas, what scathe, alas, what shame! Our land lies deserted, our homes in ruins! To you, women, the Lord's word comes; this is matter for your hearing. To daughters of yours, neighbours of yours, teach the sad melody of yonder lament; here is death looking in at our

windows, finding its way into our palaces, and soon there will be no children playing out of doors, nor grown men passing to and fro in the streets. A message from the Lord: Like dung they shall lie on the ground, the corpses of the dead, like the sheaf left after reaping is done, that none is at pains to gather.

This, too, is the Lord's message: Never boast, if thou art wise, of thy wisdom, if thou art strong, of thy strength, if thou art rich, of thy riches; boast is none worth having, save that insight which gives knowledge of me; in all my dealings with mankind so merciful a Lord, the Lord says, so just, so faithful, and a lover of such dealings where they are found.²

A time of reckoning there shall be, the Lord says, for all the nations that practice circumcision, Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab; ay, and the desert folk that clip their foreheads bare. The whole world is uncircumcised; all have hearts uncircumcised, and Israel with the rest.³

10 Listen, men of Israel, to the Lord's utterance concerning you.⁴ Thus says the Lord: Do not learn to follow Gentile ways, or be dismayed by portents in the heavens, as the Gentiles are. How empty the observances the heathen use! What is the stuff upon which the carver works but a trunk of wood, felled by an axe out in the forest? Only he has tricked it out with gold and silver, hammer and nail must do their work, lest it should fall to pieces. Idols cunningly plated as palm-trees,⁵ yet dumb as they, and men must carry them to and fro, for movement they have none! To these give no reverence; they can neither mar nor make thee.

No, Lord, thou hast no rival; so great thou art, so great is the sovereignty of thy name. King of all nations, how should we not fear thee in that majesty of thine? Boast the world as it will of wisdom or of empire, none can rival thee. Ah, folly and

¹ The word in the Hebrew text here represented by 'serpents' is generally translated 'jackals' by modern commentators. ² This paragraph is thought by some to have been accidentally misplaced: it has little apparent connexion with its present context. ³ *vs.* 25, 26. This appears to be the sense intended by a passage of considerable obscurity. ⁴ *vs.* 1-25. It may be doubted whether this chapter is more than a collection of certain isolated utterances made by the prophet. Verses 2-16, for instance, read as if they were addressed to men already in exile, not to men threatened with exile as a punishment for their own idolatries.

⁵ 'Cunningly-plated as palm-trees'; literally, 'fashioned into the similitude of a palm-tree'; the plates of metal in which the wooden core of the idol was sheathed may have suggested the figure of a palm-trunk. But some understand the Hebrew text as meaning 'like a scare-crow in a garden of melons'; cf. Bar. 6. 69.

blindness, ah, fond teaching, lifeless as
 9 wood itself! Ay, bring plates of silver from
 Tharsis, gold from Ophaz, it is all man's
 work, fresh from the smithy; bring robes
 of blue and purple, they are man's work
 10 still! But the Lord is God in good earnest,
 a God that lives, that has eternal dominion,
 and can make earth tremble with his
 frown, strike the nations powerless when
 he threatens them.

11 No place on earth or under heaven, you
 must tell the nations, for gods that could
 fashion neither heaven nor earth.¹

12 Power that made the earth, wisdom that
 orders nature, foresight that spread out the
 13 heavens! At the sound of his voice, what
 mustering of the waters overhead! He
 summons up the cloud-wrack from the
 world's end, turns the lightning into a
 rain-storm, brings the winds out of his
 14 store-house;² how puny, then, is man's
 skill, how sorry a thing is the carver's
 workmanship; after all his pains, only a
 15 lifeless counterfeit! Fond imaginations,
 fantastic figures, when the time comes for
 reckoning, they will be heard of no more.
 16 Not such the worship that is the heirloom
 of Jacob's line; their God is the God who
 made all things, Israel his patrimony, the
 Lord of hosts his name.

17 Take up from the ground, poor be-
 18 sieged one, thy load of shame.³ This time,
 the Lord says, I mean to hurl them far
 away, the dwellers in this land, and great
 distress shall be theirs, that they may be
 found...⁴

19 Alas, for my wounding, for the grievous
 hurt that is mine! Hitherto I had thought
 20 to bear my sickness, if this were all; but
 now what am I? A tent broken down, all
 its ropes severed: all my citizens have de-
 serted me, and are no more to be found;
 who shall raise the pole, who shall stretch
 21 the curtains now? And the cause of it?
 Unskilful shepherds that would have no
 recourse to the Lord; see how their art has
 failed them, and all the flock is scattered
 22 far and wide! A sound comes to me that
 brings tidings with it, a great stir from the

north country; all Juda is to become a
 desert, a lair for serpents⁵ now.

Lord, I know it well enough, it is not for
 man to choose his lot; not human wisdom
 guides our steps aright. Chasten me,²⁴
 Lord, but with due measure kept; not as
 thy anger demands, or thou wilt grind me
 to dust. Pour out this indignation of thine
 25 upon the nations that do not acknowledge
 thee, on the tribes that never invoke thy
 name; by whom Jacob is devoured, de-
 voured and devastated, and all his pride
 scattered to the winds.⁶

11 Here is a message which came from
 the Lord to Jeremias about the
 covenant: Listen well to the terms of it,²
 and be the spokesmen of it to all the race
 of Juda, all the citizens of Jerusalem.⁷ This
 3 warning thou shalt give them from the
 Lord God of Israel: Cursed be the man
 who will not obey the terms of this cove-
 nant, the commandment which I enjoined
 4 on your fathers when I rescued them from
 Egypt's furnace of iron. Give heed to my
 call, I told them, and do as I bid you; then
 you shall be my people, and I will be your
 God. So would I fulfil the promise made
 5 on oath to their fathers before them; the
 promise of a land all milk and honey, that
 land which is yours to-day.

So be it, Lord, said I; and he bade me
 6 cry the message aloud all through the
 townships of Juda, all through the streets
 of Jerusalem: Listen to the terms of this
 covenant, and keep them well; ever since
 7 I rescued them from Egypt I have been
 adjuring those fathers of yours, day in, day
 out, to listen to me, and listen they would
 not. No hearing would they give me, but
 8 went each his own way, perverse as ever,
 till at last I must carry out the threats con-
 tained in this covenant, still proclaimed
 and still defied.

Why, the Lord said to me, here is a
 9 conspiracy among Juda's folk, Jerusalem's
 folk! They have gone back to the old
 10 guilty ways of their rebellious fathers; they
 in their turn have betaken themselves to

¹ This verse is phrased, not in pure Hebrew, but in the Aramaic dialect, as if it were written under the influence of the Captivity. ² For the later part of this verse cf. Ps. 134. 7. ³ In the Hebrew text simply 'thy load'.

⁴ It seems clear that there must be some omission at the end of this verse, whether we read 'that they may be found', or (as in the Hebrew text), 'that they may find'. ⁵ Or perhaps 'jackals' as in 9. 11 above. ⁶ Cf. Ps. 78. 6, 7. ⁷ 'The covenant'; this alludes, presumably, to the rediscovery of the Law under king Josias (IV Kg. 22. 8). 'Spokesmen' implies that the rulers are addressed; the Septuagint Greek gives 'spokesman'.

the worship of alien gods; my immemorial covenant with Israel and Juda is void; they have rescinded it! And now, the Lord says, I mean to visit them with punishment inevitable, punishment inexorable; let Juda and Jerusalem have recourse, if they will, to the gods they honour with their sacrifices, it will avail them nothing in their distress. No township of thine, Juda, but must have its own deity, no street in Jerusalem but thou wouldst set up there altars abominable, where sacrifice is offered to the gods of the country-side!

Nor do thou, Jeremias, think to intercede for this people of mine, or take up in their name the burden of praise and prayer; when they cry to me in their distress, hearing they shall have none. A people so well beloved, that so haunts my house, yet stained with crime! What, dost thou think the consecrated flesh will avail to rid thee of thy wanton guilt? An olive-tree, sturdy and fair and fruitful, so it was the Lord loved to think of thee; and now, at the sound of his majestic voice, fire breaks out in it, and all those shoots are burned away. Yes, it is the Lord of hosts, who once planted thee, that has now decreed the undoing of Israel and Juda, undoing for their own ill-doing, when they sacrificed to the gods of the country-side in defiance of me.

Thou, Lord, didst make it all known to me past doubt, warning me beforehand of their devices. Hitherto, I had been unsuspecting as a cade lamb that is led off to the slaughter-house; I knew nothing of the plots they were hatching against me, as they whispered, Let us give him a taste of the gallows-tree; let us rid the world of him, so that his very name will be forgotten! But thou, Lord of hosts, true judge that canst read the inmost thoughts of man's heart, let me live to see thee punish them; to thee I have made my plea

known. And now the Lord has a word for yonder men of Anathoth, who conspired to kill me, and would have stopped me prophesying in the Lord's name, on pain of my life. I will call them to account for it, says the Lord of hosts; by the sword their warriors shall perish, and their sons and daughters by famine. None shall be left; woe betide the men of Anathoth, when the year comes for my reckoning with them.

12 Lord, I know well that right is on thy side, if I plead against thee, yet remonstrate with thee I must; why is it that the affairs of the wicked prosper; never a traitor double-dyed but all goes well with him? Deep roots they strike, so firmly thou hast planted them, thrive and bear fruit; yet all the while their hearts keep thee at a distance, only their lips proclaim thee. Yet it is I, Lord, that hold thy warrant; with favour thou regardest me, hast proof of my heart's loyalty; wilt thou not herd them together like sheep, and mark them down for slaughter? How long must this land go in mourning, all the verdure of its fields be parched up, to avenge the ill-doing of its inhabitants? Neither beast nor bird left in it; and still their hope is, I shall not live to see their end come!

What, tired out so soon when thy rivals were on foot? And hast thou the mettle to challenge horsemen? Easy to keep thy confidence, here on safe ground; what shift wilt thou make in the fens of Jordan? Even by thy own clansmen, thy own father's kin, thou art betrayed; these too will join in the hue and cry after thee; never trust soft words of theirs.

Farewell, my home; I have done with my chosen people; the life that was so dear to me I have handed over to its enemies. My people grown strange to me, as lion snarling in its forest lair; what marvel if I

¹ The Hebrew text here is untranslatable, and evidently corrupt.

² 'His majestic voice'; in the Hebrew text, 'a great tempest'. ³ This is perhaps the best interpretation of the reading, adopted by the Vulgate and by the Septuagint Greek, 'let us put wood into his bread'. The Hebrew text gives, 'Let us destroy the tree in its bread'; that is, presumably, 'with its fruits', but such an expression finds no parallel elsewhere. ⁴ 'I shall not live to see their end come'; or possibly, 'God does not care what becomes of them'.

⁵ *ev.* 5, 6. This is apparently the divine answer to the prophet's impatience with the men of Anathoth; what he has experienced so far is nothing to the disappointments which await him at Jerusalem. The fens (literally, the 'Pride') of Jordan were a lair of wild beasts (49. 19); it is not clear whether peril from wild beasts or peril from flood is here envisaged. ⁶ The way in which Jeremias has been treated by his fellow-citizens resembles the way in which God has been treated as a stranger by his chosen people.

9 am weary of it? My people grown strange to me as carrion-bird, its mottled plumage all bathed in blood!¹

Gather here, beasts that roam the earth, 10 eager for your prey. Drovers a many have laid waste my vineyard, trampled down my lands; the land I loved so, turned into a 11 lonely wilderness! Desolate they have made it, and desolate it mourns for me now; a very picture of desolation, and all for the want of men with heeding hearts. 12 No track over the uplands but has seen the freebooters coming by; from end to end of the country the sword of divine vengeance must pass, leaving no peace for any living 13 thing; where wheat was sown, the harvest shall be of briars, where men hold lands, they shall get no advantage of it; all your harvests shall disappoint you, so fierce the Lord's anger burns.

14 And this message comes from the Lord to those ill neighbours of his, that encroach upon the domain he has granted to his people of Israel: I mean to uproot them from their homes, when I uproot the men of Judah from the land that lies between 15 them. Yet I will relent towards them, so uprooted, and have pity on them; to their scattered homes and countries they shall 16 all return. Then, if they will but learn the traditions of my own people, and take their oaths by the Lord, the living God, as they once taught my people to take oaths by Baal, their fortunes shall be founded anew 17 in the midst of Judah. But wherever my call goes unheeded, the Lord says, that people's uprooting shall be that people's undoing.

13 The Lord's word came to me: Go and buy a girdle of linen, and put it about thy loins, one that was never yet 2 soaked in water. Girdle I bought me as the Lord had bidden, and wore it; and now 3 the Lord spoke again: Is the girdle bought and worn? Up, take it with thee to Euphrates river, and hide it there in a 4 crevice of the rock. So I went obediently, 5 and hid it away in the Euphrates. Many

days afterwards, the Lord sent me on my travels again to the Euphrates, to recover the girdle hidden there at his command; so thither I went, and unearthed the girdle from its hiding-place, to find it all perished and useless. Whereupon the Lord's word 8 came to me, and this was his message: Not less the great pride of Judah, the great pride of Jerusalem, must perish. Here is a rebellious 9 people that will not listen to my call; they must needs take their own false path, courting alien gods and submitting to their worship. No better, then, than yonder 11 useless girdle; close as a man's girdle fits about his loins I had bound Israel and Judah to myself; my people they were to be, my renown and prize and pride; but no, they would not listen.²

Tell them this, too, from the Lord God 12 of Israel, Flagons must have wine to fill them. And when they answer, it is no news to them that flagons are for wine, give 13 them this message from the Lord: Ay, but the people of this land, king of David's line sitting on David's throne, priest and prophet and citizens of Jerusalem every one, are flagons waiting to be filled. I mean to 14 besume them, as with wine, and then shatter³ them; brother torn away from brother, and fathers from their children; ruth and respite none shall have, nor be spared in the common ruin.

Hear and heed and humble yourselves; 15 it is the Lord who speaks. Give God his due, ere the shadows fall, and your feet begin to stumble on the dark mountain-ways. For day you shall long, but he will have turned it into night; dark as death the lowering of the storm. Sirs, if you will not 17 listen now, give me leave to hide myself away and bemoan your proud hearts; weep I must and wail, and my eyes run down with tears, if the Lord's flock is doomed to captivity.

To king⁴ and queen-mother say this, 18 Come down and take your places with the rest, discredited of your royalty. Shut off 19 are the cities of the south, entry is none; dispeopled lies Judah, of all her sons

¹ The first half of verse 9 runs literally, 'Has my people become a speckled bird to me, a bird dyed all over?' The Hebrew text gives, 'Has my people become a speckled vulture to me? The (other) vultures around are against it'; the Septuagint Greek, 'Is my people a hyena's cave to me, or a cave round it?' Probably the true reading is lost.

² *vt.* 1-11. According to the opinion of St Jerome, the events here described happened only in a vision.

³ The Latin verb has rather the sense of 'scatter', but this loses the idea of the parable.

⁴ There can be no certainty which king is alluded to; if it was Joakim or Joachin, the 'cities of the south' may perhaps be the border-cities of Egypt (*cf.* IV Kg. 24. 7).

20 dispeopled. New-comers from the north country, look about you and see! . . .¹
 . . . Ah, Jerusalem, what has become of the flock once entrusted to thee, thy honourable care? What wilt thou say when thou art called to give account of it? Thy enemies are such as thou hast taught how to attack thee; thy schooling has recoiled on thy own head; sharper than travail-throws the anguish that shall overtake thee. And wilt thou find room for surmise, why this should have befallen thee? Doubt not it is thy own wrongdoing that has stripped thee naked, and plunged thy steps deep in defilement.
 23 Sooner may Ethiop turn white, leopard's hide unmarked, than Juda unlearn the lesson of ill-doing and amend. Far and wide I will scatter thy sons, like straws caught in the desert wind; such is the fortune sent thee, such thy retribution exactly awarded, because thou hast forgotten me, and in lying fables put thy trust. That is why I will pull thy skirts about thy ears and manifest thy shame; adulteries of thine, and lasciviousness, and all the guilt of thy debauchery, the foul deeds I have seen done on hill-tops, in the open country-side. Fie on thee, Jerusalem, that wilt not come back to me and be cleansed! Shall it last for ever?

14 How the Lord answered Jeremias in the matter of the drought.
 2 Lamentation in Juda, faint hearts and the dress of mourners in the market-place, loud the cry that goes up from Jerusalem!
 3 Master sends man to fetch water, but when cistern is reached, water is none; back go the pails empty, and disappointed vexation veils its head. Vexation, too, and veiled heads among the country folk, so languish the fields for lack of rain; hind forsakes its new-born young, out on the plain, because grass has failed it, and the wild ass on the hill-side gasps for air, crocodile-fashion,² eyes dim with the vain search for pasture.
 7 What though we have guilt to plead against us? For thy own honour, Lord, bring us

aid, rebels so often, yet confessing how we have wronged thee! Thou, Israel's hope, in time of calamity thy refuge still, wilt thou pass us by, like stranger in a land that is none of his, like some traveller that will ask for a night's lodging and be gone? Why dost thou hang back like a man irresolute, a warrior that has forgotten his strength? Lord, thy dwelling-place is among us; thy holy name we bear; wilt thou abandon us?

Hearts ever in love with wandering, never at rest, what answer will the Lord make them? That his favour is not for them; at this hour he keeps their guilt in memory, for all their misdoings calls them to account. Nay, the Lord said to me, do not pray for the welfare of such a people as this. Fast they, their prayers shall go unheard; offer they burnt-sacrifice and victim, I will have none of it; sword, and famine, and the pestilence shall wear them down. Alas, alas, Lord God, said I, here are their prophets telling them they shall never see sword drawn, famine shall be none among them; theirs shall be a land of lasting content. These are but false promises, the Lord said, that they utter in my name; warrant they never had from me, nor errand, nor message; of false visions they tell you, and soothsayings, and trickery, and their own hearts' inventions. Here is the Lord's sentence upon prophets not of his sending, who speak to you in his name of a land unhurt by sword or famine; by sword and famine those prophets shall be devoured. Slain by sword and famine, the common folk that listen to them shall lie in the streets of Jerusalem, with none to bury them; wives and sons and daughters shall die with them; their own misdoings shall be a flood to drown them.

This too thou shalt say to them. . .³
 . . . Weep, eyes, day and night, never resting, at the great hurt, the grievous wound she suffers, my people, inviolable till now! Nothing the country-side shews but massacre, nothing the city but faces pinched with famine; prophet and priest are gone, in a land of strangers they must

¹ In the Latin version, the new-comers from the north are addressed; the Hebrew text, which is evidently faulty, gives, 'Lift thou your eyes, and see thou the men coming from the north'. The connexion between the two halves of the verse is in any case obscure, and there may have been an omission. The word 'Jerusalem' is not expressed in the original until verse 27. ² Literally, 'as the dragons do'. Some would interpret, 'as the jackals do'. ³ It does not seem likely that the rubric 'This too thou shalt say to them' applies to the very human remonstrances which follow; an omission or a dislocation in the text is more probable.

19 ply their trade¹ now. Hast thou abandoned Juda once for all, art thou weary of Sion? Past all healing thou hast wounded us; how we long for better times, and no relief comes to us, for remedy at last, and
20 danger still threatens! Lord, we acknowledge our rebelliousness, acknowledge our fathers' guilt, confess that we have
21 wronged thee; for thy own honour, do not shame us, do not drag thy own royal glory in the dust; wilt thou forget, wilt thou
22 annul the covenant that binds thee? Grant rain they cannot, the false gods of the heathen, the dumbskies have no showers of their own to give; for these, his creatures, wait we patiently on the Lord our God.

15 But it was thus the Lord answered me: Though Moses himself and Samuel made intercession for them, neither love nor liking would I have for this people of mine; banish them from my
2 presence, to go where they will. If they ask whither, give them this message from the Lord: Whom the plague beckons, to the plague; whom the sword, to the sword; whom famine, to famine; whom exile, to
3 exile. Escort they shall have of four kinds, the Lord says; the sword to slay and the dogs to tear them, birds in air and beasts
4 on earth to devour and make an end of them. All the kingdoms of the world shall be in a ferment² over them; so will I punish the ill deeds done in Jerusalem by
5 Manasses, son of Ezechias, when he was king of Juda. Nay, Jerusalem, who shall pity or bemoan thee, who shall turn aside,
6 as he passes, to wish thee well? Thou hast forsaken me, the Lord says, and wouldst
7 journey with me no more; now my hand is raised to strike, and make an end of thee; I am weary of wooing thee. Over the
threshold of the land I blow my people away like chaff, bereaved, diminished, and

unrepentant still. Widows there be, count-
less as the sea-sand; where is now the warrior son? In broad daylight I send the roving spoiler to strike terror into their cities. Sick at heart and faint she lies, that
8 seven sons had borne; her noon is night, her hopes and her pride gone; and all that she has left, the Lord says, shall fall a prey to the sword in battle.

An ill day when thou, my own mother,
10 didst bring me into the world! A world where all for me is strife, all is hostility; neither creditor I nor debtor to any man, yet they curse my name!

But the Lord answered, I promise that
11 thou shalt leave behind thee good service done, and that in all distress and persecution I am coming to thy side, to save thee from thy enemies. What, should iron and
12 bronze be in league with the iron that comes from the north?³

... (All the riches and treasures of thy
13 land shall be despoiled, in punishment for all its guilt, and to no purpose; I am summoning enemies to attack thee from a land far away; it is your own persons that shall be burnt up in the fires of vengeance my
14 anger has kindled)⁴...

Thou art my witness, Lord; bethink
15 thee, and come to my defence against my persecutors; hold thy hand no longer, but claim me for thy own;⁵ if I have earned an ill name, it was in thy cause. When thy
16 words were found,⁶ how greedily I devoured them! Great joy and content those words gave to my heart, heart of a prophet that bears thy name. Not for me the company of the merry-makers, I would not share
17 in their boastfulness; under the threat of thy judgement I sat alone, filled with boding thoughts. Why are those sad thoughts still
18 with me? Is my hurt desperate, beyond all remedy? Did it cheat me, like some empty water-course, my hope in thee?⁷

¹ This is definitely implied by the verb used in the Hebrew text; the Latin version has obscured its significance.

² According to the Hebrew text, 'in consternation'. ³ *vv.* 11, 12. The sense of these two verses is doubtful, and the Latin does not agree well with the Hebrew text in some points. Verse 12 perhaps implies that Jeremias was accused of being hand in glove with the invaders (37. 17); how could the 'pillar of iron', the 'wall of bronze' (1. 18) be in league with the iron yoke (28. 14) of Babylon? ⁴ *vv.* 13, 14. These verses are repeated, in part, lower down (17. 3); they hardly seem to be in place here. The words 'to no purpose' perhaps refer to the tribute exacted by Egypt (1V Kg. 23. 35), which left the men of Juda with no means of buying off the Chaldeans. ⁵ This is the best that can be made of the obscure (and perhaps corrupt) phrase, 'Do not take me in thy long-suffering'. ⁶ 'When thy words were found'; this is usually taken as referring to prophetic inspiration; but no parallel is adduced for such a forced way of talking. It may be suggested that Jeremias is here referring to his feelings when the Book of the Law was rediscovered under king Josias. The Septuagint Greek reads 'from those who despise thy words' (connected with verse 15).

⁷ This is the sense of the Hebrew: the Latin asks 'Did my hurt cheat me?'

19 Draw¹ near to me, the Lord said, and I will draw thee to myself, to wait upon me. When thou hast learned to separate worth from dross, thou shalt be my true spokesman, and thou shalt draw others to thyself, 20 not let thyself be drawn to them. This people of mine shall find thee a stout wall of bronze, impregnable to their attack; am I not at thy side, the Lord says, to protect and deliver thee? Let the wicked be never so powerful, I will engage for thy safety.

2 **16** The Lord's word came to me: With such a land for thy dwelling-place, neither wife nor gender; for sons and daughters born in this land, for mothers who there gave them birth and fathers who begot them, the Lord has ill news to hear. Die they of the plague, they shall lie like dung on the ground, unwept, unburied; meet they their end by sword or famine, birds in air and beasts that roam the earth shall prey on the carrion of them. 3 Where they hold wake for the dead, such is the Lord's bidding, never enter thou, condole and console thou never; friendship of mine this people shall never have, 4 nor grace, nor mercy, the Lord says. Die rich, die poor in that country of theirs, burial and wake they shall have none; never a limb gashed or a head shaved to 5 honour them; none shall break bread with the mourner, nor give him a draught of wine for his comfort, though father or 6 mother he bewail. Nor enter thou where men feast, to sit at meat and drink with them; this doom he utters, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: You shall live to see the day when cries of joy and mirth, voice of bridegroom and of bride, in this land are heard no more.

10 This warning uttered, if they ask thee why the divine sentence is so stern, wherein their guilt lies, what wrong they 11 have done to the Lord their God, tell them this in his name: It is because your fathers have forsaken me, had recourse to alien gods, and submitted to the worship of them, my claim renounced, my laws defied. And you have out-done your fathers in malice, each of you following the ill bent of his own heart, and disobeying me.

Exiles far from home, in a land neither you 13 nor those fathers of yours ever saw, you shall spend day and night in the service of alien gods, without respite. (Ay, the Lord 14 says, a time is coming when the living Lord men swear by will no longer be the God who rescued Israel from Egypt; the 15 living God will be one who has rescued Israel from the north country, and all the places of exile that are now designed for you, restoring them to the home which was once his gift to their fathers.) Many 16 fishermen I have, the Lord says, to spread the nets for them; and after that many huntsmen, to hunt them down among mountains and hill-sides and rocky caverns. Good watch I keep on their doings, 17 never lose sight of them; no guilt of theirs can escape my scrutiny. Twice over they 18 shall pay for guilt of theirs, misdoing of theirs, the men that have profaned my own land with dead idols, spread pollution through all my domain.

Strength and stronghold, Lord, refuge 19 in time of peril, shall not the Gentiles themselves come to thee from the ends of the earth, confessing that all their patri- 20 mony is but a heritage of lies, that their idols cannot avail them? Shall men make gods for themselves, that gods in truth are none?

Ay, it is the very lesson I mean to teach 21 them now; that I act, and act with power; they shall learn to know the Lord's name at last.

17 Not more indelible were the guilt of Juda, if pen of steel or point of diamond had graven it with their hearts for tablet, or upon the rim of their altars; indelible, while there are sons of theirs to 2 remember where altar stood once and sacred tree, shrine in the thick forest, shrine on the high hills; to offer sacrifice even yet in the open country-side. All the riches and treasures of thy land shall be destroyed, all its hill-shrines,³ in punishment for all its guilt. Lost to thee, the home that once I gave thee; in a land thou knowest not thou shalt be the slave of thy enemies; the fire of anger thou hast kindled in me can never be quenched.

¹ Literally, 'turn', throughout this verse.

² *vs.* 14, 15. These verses are repeated later on 23, 7, 8), and some think they have been wrongly inserted here by accident.

³ The mention of the hill-shrines here is not borne out by 15. 13.

5 Cursed shall he be, the Lord says, that
 puts his trust in man, and will have flesh
 and blood to aid him, his thoughts far from
 6 God. Never shall the sight of better times
 greet him; forlorn as some bush of tamar-
 risk out in the desert, he dwells in a
 parched waste, the salt plains for all his
 7 company. Blessed shall he be that puts his
 trust in the Lord, makes the Lord his
 8 refuge. Not more favoured is tree planted
 by the water's edge, that pushes out its
 roots to catch the moisture, and defies the
 summer heat; its green leaves careless of
 the drought, its fruit unailing.

9 There is no riddle like the twists of the
 10 heart; who shall master them? ¹ Who but I,
 the Lord, that can see into man's heart, and
 read his inmost thoughts, to every life
 awarding what its doings have earned?
 11 Partridge that fosters a brood not its own
 is fit emblem for the man that wins riches
 unjustly; when life is but half done, he
 must take leave of them, a fool to the last.

12 Where from the first supreme majesty
 sits enthroned, there lies our sanctuary;
 13 thou, Lord, art Israel's hope; the men who
 forsake thee will be disappointed, the men
 who swerve from thy paths will be names
 written in sand; have they not forsaken
 that Lord who is the fountain of living
 14 water? If I am to be healed, it is thou,
 Lord, must heal me; if I am to find deli-
 verance, it is thou must deliver me; thou
 art all my boast. What has become of the
 15 Lord's threat? (so men taunt me), we are
 waiting to see it accomplished! But this
 was no hasty word of mine, I did but lead
 where thou leddest; it was no wish of mine
 that calamity should befall mankind; ² no
 word I uttered but had the warrant of thy
 17 scrutiny. Not for me thy terrors; the day
 of affliction is coming, but I shall find
 18 refuge in thee. They must be abashed, and
 I vindicated; they must cower, while I
 stand confident. It is on them the day of
 affliction will fall; reward them, then, with
 twofold hurt for the hurt they did.

19 The Lord bade me go and take my stand
 at the People's Gate, where the kings of
 20 Juda passed to and fro; and then, in turn,
 at the other gates of Jerusalem. This was

to be my message from the Lord to king
 and people of Juda, to every citizen of
 Jerusalem that used those gates: No more,
 21 on peril of your lives, shoulder those packs
 of yours and carry them through Jeru-
 salem gates on the sabbath day. Never a
 22 load must leave your houses, nor any work
 be done, on the sabbath; this was the com-
 mand I gave to your fathers, only they
 23 would not listen or pay heed, chafed under
 the yoke of discipline and refused to obey
 me. And you, the Lord says, will you
 24 obey? Rid these gateways of their sabbath
 burdens, keep the sabbath holy by resting
 from work, and your kings and princes,
 25 David's own heirs, shall still go riding
 through them, with horses and chariots,
 with their retinue of nobles, with the men
 of Juda and Jerusalem's citizens in their
 train. Evermore your city shall be popu-
 26 lous; from the townships of Juda, from
 your own country-side, from Benjamin,
 from plain and hill and the waste lands of
 the south, men shall come with burnt-
 sacrifice and victim and bloodless offering
 and incense to enrich the Lord's temple.
 Refuse to keep the sabbath holy, profane
 27 it with burdens borne and burdens ad-
 mitted through the gates, and I will set
 those gates in a blaze that shall burn down
 all Jerusalem ere you can quench it.

18 The Lord's word came to Jere-
 mias, bidding him betake himself
 to the potter's house; there a divine mes-
 2 s-age awaited him. So I went to the potter's
 3 house, and found him working at his
 wheel; just then, the thing of clay he was
 4 a-fashioning broke in his hands, and he,
 as the whim took him, turned it into an-
 other thing of clay. Then it was the Lord's
 5 word came to me: You are in my hands,
 6 men of Israel, as the clay in the potter's;
 why may I not do as the potter did? All
 7 at once to a nation here, a kingdom there,
 I pronounced my sentence, for the up-
 rooting and undoing of it, for its utter
 8 destruction. Let but that nation repent of
 the crimes I brought against it, I too will
 9 repent of the punishment I thought to
 exact. All at once to a nation here, a

¹ Literally, 'the heart of all men is perverse and inscrutable; who shall have knowledge of it?' The Hebrew text gives, 'the heart of man is perverse and diseased above all things; who shall have knowledge of it?'

² The word 'mankind' is not in the Hebrew text; its presence in the Latin seems due to a false interpretation.

kingdom there, I promise restoration of its
 10 fortunes and new life. Let but that nation
 defy my will, shut its ears to my claim,
 I too will repent of all the fair promises I
 made it.

11 Be this, then, thy message from the Lord
 to Juda's folk, to the citizens of Jerusalem:
 Ill days I have in store for you; all my plans
 are laid; time that each one of you should
 12 return from the false path, shape aims and
 thoughts anew. Ah no, they tell me, too
 late! Each one clings to his own course,
 13 follows his own bent still. Search the
 world over, the Lord says, where were
 ever such deeds heard of as this deed Israel,
 14 false maid, has most foully done? What,
 shall the snows of Lebanon melt from
 those wild peaks,¹ shall they be dried up
 at their source, those icy torrents that flow
 15 down from it? Not less strange that this
 people of mine should forget me, and
 resort to vain sacrifices; that they should
 find their own paths too rough for them,
 the tracks marked out so long ago, and
 16 journey on instead along by-paths untrou-
 den. Desolate their country shall lie,
 doomed to everlasting scorn; every passer-
 by will shudder at it, or toss his head in
 17 derision. I will sweep them away before
 the enemy's onset, as the east wind sweeps
 all before it; turn my back and never look
 their way in the hour of need.

18 Hereupon they summoned a conclave
 to plot against me, Jeremias; What, they
 said, would he have us believe we need no
 more priests to expound the law, no more
 wise men to counsel us, no more prophets
 to say their word? They thought to compass
 my death by their clamour; to all my
 19 warnings would pay heed no longer. Lord,
 give me audience; listen to these pratings
 20 of my enemies. Must they make such a
 return for my good will, laying a snare to
 take my life? Bethink thee, how I ever
 stood up before thee to plead for them, to
 21 avert thy anger from them. Henceforth
 leave their children to famish, or give them
 up to butchery; may their wives be child-
 less widows, their grown men die of pesti-
 lence, their young men by the sword-thrust
 22 in battle; let their homes ring with lamentation,
 a prey to the sudden onslaught
 of robbers! Cunning the snare they laid,

deep the pit they dug to entrap me; but
 23 there is no hiding from thee, Lord, the
 designs they have on my life. Do not for-
 give their malice, keep their guilt ever in
 thy sight; cast them down to earth at thy
 presence, and in thy anger make an end of
 them.

19 Up, the Lord said to me, and get
 thee a jar of earthenware; take it to
 2 the valley of Ben-Ennom, close to the
 Earthenware Gate, with elders of the
 people and some of the older priests for thy
 company; there prophesy as I bid thee. To
 3 the dynasty of Juda, to all the citizens of
 Jerusalem, give this message from the
 Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I mean to
 bring such calamity on this place, as shall
 ring in the ears of all that hear it. The place
 4 that once was mine, now alienated by the
 rebels that dwell there; to alien gods they
 never knew, no fathers of theirs, no kings
 of Juda ever knew, they have done sacrifice
 in this place, drenching it with the blood
 of the innocent. Here the gods of the
 5 country-side must have their hill-shrines,
 and children must be burnt as a sacrifice in
 their honour; a rite not of my prescribing,
 or enjoining, or imagining. And now, the
 6 Lord says, a time is coming when it will no
 more be called Topheth, or the Valley of
 Ben-Ennom; it will be called the Valley of
 the Slain. In this valley all the hopes of
 7 Juda and Jerusalem shall be poured away;
 at the sword's point they shall meet their
 enemy and fall into pitiless hands, and I
 will give leave to bird in air, beast on earth,
 to prey on the carrion of them. A thing of
 8 horror and scorn this city shall be; no
 passer-by but will shudder at it, or hiss
 derision at the memory of its sufferings.
 Nay, a pitiless enemy shall beleaguer them
 9 with so hard a siege, that I will leave them
 no food save the flesh of son and daughter;
 man shall eat man.

Then break that jar of thine, for all thy
 10 company to see, and give them this mes-
 11 sage from the Lord of hosts: Broken to
 pieces you shall be, nation and city, like
 yonder thing of clay that is past all re-
 pairing; men will be finding room for their
 dead in Topheth, because other burying-
 12 ground is none. Such, the Lord says, is

¹ Literally, 'before the rock of the field'. The text may be corrupt, and perhaps conceals a proper name.

the doom I have pronounced on city and citizens; Jerusalem itself shall be a Topheth, all the houses in it, and yonder palace where the kings of Juda reigned, as Topheth unclean; it was there, on the roof-tops, they sacrificed to all the host of heaven, and made offering to alien gods.

His errand at Topheth done, Jeremias took his stand in the temple courts, and gave the people this message from the Lord God of Israel: All these threats against Jerusalem and her daughter cities I mean to perform; the punishment of a yoke refused, a call unheeded.

20 When Jeremias uttered this prophecy, one of those who heard him was Phassur, son of Emmer, a priest who was entrusted with the care of the temple.

This Phassur gave Jeremias a beating, and put him in the stocks at the upper gate of Benjamin, in the temple precincts, but next day released him. A new name the Lord has for thee, Jeremias told him, instead of Phassur; he means to call thee Danger-Everywhere. Danger enough thou shalt have, the Lord says, thou and those friends of thine; with thy own eyes thou shalt see the enemy put them to the sword, when I make the king of Babylon master of Juda; to Babylon he will take them, and put them to the sword there. All the wealth of this city, all the fruits of its toil, all that is of price, all the treasury of Juda's kings, those enemies shall have in their power, to plunder and carry off and take back to Babylon with them. And thou, Phassur, with all thy household, shalt go into exile; to Babylon thou shalt go, in Babylon thou shalt die, and there find burial with all such friends of thine as listened to thy lying prophecy.

Lord, thou hast sent me on a fool's errand; if I played a fool's part, a strength greater than mine overmastered me; morn to night, what a laughing-stock am I, every man's nay-word! Long have I prophesied, and still I clamoured against men's wickedness, and still cried ruin; day in, day out, nothing it earns me, this divine spokesman, but reproach and mockery. Did I essay to put the Lord out of my thoughts, and speak no more in his name, all at once it seemed as though a raging fire were

locked in my bosom, pierced my whole frame, till I was worn out with it, and could bear no more. For me, danger everywhere; so many crying, Denounce him, and that contemptuous cry echoed by all the companions I trusted, ever at my side: Denounce him we will; he may be fooled yet! Then we can overmaster him, and take our vengeance! But the Lord stands at my side, a strong champion; fall and fail they must, my persecutors, and be disappointed of their hopes; fools, that cannot foresee shame eternal, shame indelible, awaiting them! But thou, Lord of hosts, true judge that canst read the inmost thoughts of man's heart, let me live to see thee punish them; to thee I have made my plea known.¹ Sing to the Lord yet, praise the Lord yet; he does not leave a defenceless life at the mercy of the wicked.

Cursed be the day of my birth! A time for cursing it was, not for blessing, when my mother brought me into the world. Cursed be the man who told my father a son had been born to him, and brought gladness, ay, gladness, into his heart! For that good news, be he rewarded with the noise of battle-cry at morn, dirge at noon, like some city the Lord overthrows in anger unrelenting! Why did he not slay me yet unborn, the womb for my tomb, and frustrate my mother's hope eternally? Why must I come out into the light of day, where only labour and sorrow greet me, and in disappointed striving all my life is spent?

21 And this was the answer Jeremias had from the Lord, when king Sedecias sent two envoys to consult him; their names were Phassur son of Melchias, and Sophonias son of Maasias, a priest. The king sought a divine oracle about the war then levied on him by Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon; would the Lord grant his people wondrous deliverance as of old? Would the siege be raised? And Jeremias sent them back to the royal presence, with this message from the Lord, the God of Israel: All the strength you have put into the field,² to meet the king of Babylon and your Chaldaean besiegers at a distance from the walls, I mean to force back into the city and coop it up within.

¹ A repetition of 11. 20 above.

² Literally, 'all the weapons you have in your hands'.

5 Then my arm shall be raised to strike, then my power shall be exerted, but against you; I will be all anger, all indignation, all
6 resentment, smiting the inhabitants of this city with a great pestilence that shall slay
7 both man and beast. But not king Sedecias; he shall be left alive, and some of his courtiers and his retinue, some of the citizens will be left alive, plague and war and famine notwithstanding. And these shall fall into the hands of Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, into the hands of a pitiless enemy, that will put them to the sword without ransom, or ruth, or respite.

8 And this warning the Lord gives to the common folk: Here is choice I offer you between life and death, take which course
9 you will. To remain in this city means death by sword, famine, or pestilence; leave it, and go over to the investing army of Chaldaeans, and you shall be spared,
10 glad enough to escape with your lives. For woe, not weal, I keep this city ever in regard; the king of Babylon shall be master of it, and burn it to the ground.

11 And for king and princes of Juda: Men of David's line, here is a message from the
12 Lord for your hearing. Learn betimes to make true award, and rob the oppressor of his prey, or my vengeance will blaze out against you for your ill-doings, like fire that still burns and will not be quenched.

13 Have at thee, proud city, the Lord says, the valley thy dwelling-place, rock-built guardian of the plain! Boast you, its townspeople, that on you no stroke shall
14 fall, none shall reach your lair? You shall be called to account, the Lord says, as your ill-doings have deserved; in this forest I will light such a fire as shall consume all around it.¹

22 A message from the Lord, I must betake myself to the royal palace, and make proclamation there; Listen to a divine warning, king of Juda though thou be, and heir to David's throne; it is for thee and thy courtiers and thy retinue, all that

claim entry here. Just sentence, the Lord says, and right award; rob the oppressor of his prey; to alien, orphan and widow do neither despite nor wrong; never, within these walls, be innocence condemned to death. This warning if you obey, through these palace gates the heirs of David and of David's throne, with horses and chariots, courtiers and retinue, shall yet pass to and fro. Disobey, the Lord says, and my own honour is engaged to make, of this palace, a ruin. On the royal house of Juda this is the Lord's sentence: Growth I found here once, generous as in Galaad or on Lebanon's height; now I have sworn to make a desert of it, no place for the haunts of men.² Who shall strike the blow, and with what arms, is decreed already: all those fair cedars shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.

Nations a many shall pass by those ruins; and when a man asks his neighbour what it meant, that the Lord should deal so hardly with a great city like this, the answer will be, It was because they forsook the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped alien gods, took alien gods for their masters.

Not for the dead your tears, not for him bow your heads; if weep you must, weep for him that must go and come again no more, never again see the land of his birth! Sellum,³ that followed his father Josias on the throne of Juda, is leaving Jerusalem. the Lord says, and will never come back to it; die he must in that country to which I have banished him, and see this land no more.

Alas, for the palace that is built with gains ill gotten, for halls founded only on wrong! Alas for the man that sets his fellow-man vainly drudging, and leaves his wages unpaid! A fine house I will make of it, says he, and wide rooms in it! Here he will throw out a window, there he will panel a wall with cedar, and paint it vermilion. Art thou hoping for a long reign, that thou shouldst challenge comparison with the cedar?⁴ Thy father was one that

¹ *vv.* 13, 14. These verses are generally understood as referring to Jerusalem; but the geographical description makes this uncertain.

² Literally, 'For the Lord says this about the house of the king of Juda: Galaad thou to me, the summit of Lebanon; I swear to make thee a desert, uninhabitable cities.'

³ Sellum (also mentioned in I Par. 3. 15) is usually identified with Joachaz (IV Kg. 23. 30).

⁴ The first half of this verse is generally interpreted as asking, 'Does Joachim think that competitiveness in the matter of cedar paneling will make more of a king of him?' The translation given above, which follows the Latin, perhaps demands less of the imagination. 'Ate and drank at his ease', i.e. took things as they came, instead of occupying himself with grandiose schemes: cf. Eccl. 2. 24 and *passim*.

ate and drank at his ease, gave every man
 16 his just due, and was content; well for him
 that he gave the friendless and the poor
 redress, as men will when they bethink
 17 themselves of me. Thou hast no eyes, no
 thoughts, but for gain; for innocent men's
 undoing, for oppression, for the reckless
 18 pursuit of mischief. This, then, is the
 Lord's sentence upon Joachim, son to
 Josias and king of Juda: For him no cry
 shall be made, Brother, what grief! Sister
 of mine, what grief!¹ For him no cry shall
 be made, Ah, what a master! Ah, what
 19 renown! An ass's burial he shall have, cast
 out, a stinking corpse, beyond the gates of
 Jerusalem.

20 Get thee gone, faithless people, to Le-
 banon, and cry out there; fill Basan with
 thy voice, and let Abarim² echo the cry
 again; ruin has overtaken all those lovers
 21 of thine. In the days of thy ease, I gave
 thee warning, but thou wouldst not listen;
 it was ever thus from thy girlhood's days,
 my voice went unheard. Drifting with the
 22 wind, the drovers thou once didst follow,
 captive all those that once held thy love!
 Be ashamed at last, and blush for all thy
 23 wickedness. High on Lebanon thy dwell-
 ing-place, high in the cedars that nest of
 thine, piteous shall be thy moan when
 pangs overtake thee, like the pangs of a
 woman in travail.

24 And of Joachim's son Jechonias, that is
 heir to the throne of Juda, the Lord says
 this: Were he the signet ring on my right
 hand, I would cast him off none the less.
 25 Thou hast sworn enemies to fear; Nabu-
 chodonosor king of Babylon, and his Chal-
 daeans, shall have the mastery of thee.
 26 Cast away, thyself and the queen-mother
 who bore thee, into an alien land, far from
 27 the land of your birth, to die there; ever
 longing for home, and home returning
 never. What, is he but a broken piece of
 28 earthenware, this Jechonias, a useless
 shard, that he should be thrown away, and
 his sons with him, cast out into a land
 29 unknown? Alas, my country, alas, alas,
 my country, bitter hearing the Lord sends
 30 thee: Write him down a barren trunk, a life

gone to waste; child of his race shall never
 mount David's throne, or govern this
 realm of Juda.

23 Out upon them, the Lord says, the
 shepherds who ravage and dis-
 perse my flock, sheep of my own pasturing!
 This is the Lord's word to the shepherds
 that guide his people: You are the men who
 have dispersed my flock, driven it to and
 fro, and made no account of it; account
 you must give it me, says the Lord, Israel's
 God, for all you have done amiss. Then
 will I reassemble all that is left of my flock,
 3 scattered over so many lands, and restore
 them to their old pasture-ground, to in-
 crease and grow numerous there; shep-
 4 herds I mean to give them that will do
 shepherd's work; fears and alarms shall be
 none to daunt them, and none shall be
 missing from their full count, the Lord
 says. Nay, a time is coming, the Lord says,
 5 when I will raise up, from the stock of
 David, a faithful scion at last. The land
 shall have a king to reign over it, and reign
 over it wisely, giving just sentence and due
 award. When that time comes, Juda shall
 6 find deliverance, none shall disturb Israel's
 rest; and the name given to this king shall
 be, The Lord vindicates us. In those days
 7 to come, says the divine message, the living
 Lord men swear by will no longer be the
 God who rescued Israel from Egypt; the
 8 living God will be one who rescued Israel
 and brought them home from the north
 country, and from all the places of exile he
 had once designed for them, to live in their
 own land again.³

A message to the prophets: Crushed is
 9 the heart in me, and my whole being
 trembles; my thoughts whirl like a drunken
 man's, bemused by a divine presence, by
 awe of a divine voice. The whole land is a
 10 nest of adulterers; their guilt it is that
 widows the countryside, parches the up-
 land meadows; reckless their pursuit of
 mischief, through the power they wield all
 goes amiss. Prophet and priest alike are
 11 impious; in my own house, the Lord says,
 those ill-doings of theirs are plain to view.

¹ The use of the word 'sister' would suggest that the mourners are represented as condoling with one another upon their common loss; the sense being 'Alas, O my sister', not 'Alas for my sister' (the common interpretation).

² For 'Abarim' the Latin version has 'the Passers-by', translating the word instead of transliterating it. ³ 'Lovers' is understood by some to mean the kings of Juda; others would understand it of foreign countries, like Egypt, with which Juda had formed entangling alliances.

³ *et.* 7, 8. See 16, 14, 15.

12 Perilously they shall fare as one that walks by night in slippery places; falter and fall they must; punishment awaits them, the
 13 Lord says, my audit-year is at hand. For the prophets of Samaria how was it I lost all liking?¹ Because they were the spokesmen of Baal, and did but lead Israel astray, that was my people. And now the same
 14 foul adultery I find in the prophets of Jerusalem, the same treacherous dealings; and the sinner is encouraged to go on in his evil ways, till city and citizens, for me, are
 15 one with Sodom and Gomorrha. A warning to you then, prophets, from the Lord God of hosts, that he will give you wormwood to eat, gall to drink; you, the fountain-head of that pollution which overflows all the land.

16 Do not listen, says the Lord of hosts, to the prophets who prophesy only to fool you; fancy of theirs, not word of mine, inspires the utterance. To my blasphemers they bring divine assurance that all shall go well with them; never a man so set on his own false aims but they will tell him,
 17 Harm shall never touch thee. Never a one of them privy to the Lord's designs, never one looked and learned, listened and heard his message.

19 Like a whirlwind it will suddenly appear, the Lord's vengeance; will break in storm over rebel heads. Nor shall the divine anger be appeased till the blow has been struck and the decree executed; what his design was, you shall know all too well, all too late.²

21 An errand these prophets ran, but none of mine; a message they gave, but not of my sending. Privy to my design had they been, ah, then they should have uttered my own warnings, and so I might have turned my people aside from false paths, and erring thoughts! God am I, the Lord
 23 says, only when I stand near, and not when I am far away? Where, he would know, will you hide so close that he is not watching you, he, the Lord, that fills heaven and earth? No word, he says, but reaches my ears when one of these prophets gives false

guidance in my name; I had a dream, he will tell you, I had a dream! Will they
 26 never have had enough of their lying divinations, their cheating fantasies? Dreams
 27 banded from mouth to mouth, for these would they have my people barter away the memory of me, as their fathers did for Baal? Nay, let the dreamer be content to
 28 tell his dreams, and the prophet to whom my word comes utter my word faithfully; chaff and grain must not be mingled. My
 29 word is a fire, the Lord says, a hammer to break rocks in pieces; out upon the prophets, I say, who proclaim divine utterances
 30 they have borrowed from their fellow men; out upon the prophets, I say, who
 31 let their tongues wag and then cry, Oracle. Out upon the prophets, I say, who dream
 32 all amiss and recount their dreams, leading my people astray with their lies and their mummeries; yet errand or warrant they had none from me, the Lord says, nor yet to this people of mine bring any advantage.

And if people, or prophet, or priest, should greet thee with the question, Pray, what burden⁴ is the Lord taking up to-day? thy answer shall be, You are the burden I bear, the Lord says, and I mean to cast you from my shoulders. Prophet,
 34 priest or simple citizen that asks thus about the Lord's burden does it at his own peril, and the peril of all his household; be content to ask friend or neighbour, What
 35 oracle, what message has the Lord given? Do not speak any more of his burden. If
 36 you do, you lay a heavy charge upon yourselves, by bandying words with the living God, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. Ask the prophet what the Lord's oracle,
 37 what the Lord's message is; if you ask after the Lord's burden, this warning I give you from him: For your disobedience to the
 38 message I sent, commanding you to use the word Burden no longer, I will make
 39 burden of you, and carry you away, and leave you abandoned, you and your city, my gift to you and to your fathers. You
 40 shall be a laughing-stock for ever, a by-

¹ 'I lost all liking'; the Latin here probably means not 'I found foolishness', but 'I found insipidity', which is an exact rendering of the Hebrew.

² *vs.* 19, 20. See 30, 23, 24, where the same words are repeated; some think they have been included by error in the present context. ³ Literally, 'Steal my words each man from his neighbour', but the context (*cf.* verse 22 above) makes it clear that there is no allusion to *genuine* messages from Almighty God.

⁴ *vs.* 33-40. The Hebrews used the same word for (i) a load or pack, (ii) the content of a divine revelation; see *Is.* 13, 1 and *passim*. The people of Jerusalem, weary of Jeremiah's continual pessimism, used to mock him by saying what was the Lord's 'burden' (much as we talk about the burden of a song, the burden of a complaint). This levity of theirs is here rebuked, and threatened with punishment.

word eternally; time shall never efface the memory of your shame.

24 After king Nabuchodonosor, of Babylon, had carried off the king of Juda, Jechonias the son of Joachim, and taken him away to Babylon with all his nobles, and all the carpenters and smiths in Jerusalem, the Lord shewed me a vision. I saw two baskets of figs, set down at the gate of the Lord's temple. The figs in one basket were of excellent nature, like those which first ripen; in the other, most foul, so foul there was no eating them. What seest thou, Jeremias? the Lord asked, and I told him, Figs, the good ones excellent good, the foul ones very foul, too foul for eating. Then the Lord's word came to me, A message from the Lord God of Israel: This meaning the good figs have, that good will of mine goes with the men of Juda I have banished from their homes, and sent away into the country of Chaldaea. I will smile on them once more, and bring them back home, and all will be building now, not pulling down, planting now, not uprooting. And I will give them a heart to know me, know me by my divine name; they my people, and I their God, once in good earnest they have retraced their steps, and come back to me. And this meaning the foul figs have, that could not be eaten, they were so foul. Doom like theirs I have in store for Sedecias, king of Juda, the Lord says, and for his nobles, and for all those other men of Jerusalem that have either stayed in the city or taken up their abode in Egypt. Trouble¹ and conflict their destiny shall be in every kingdom of the world; they shall be a laughing-stock and a warning, a by-word and a name to curse by, in all the countries I have appointed for their banishment. Sword and famine and pestilence I will let loose upon them, till none of them is left in this land, my gift to them and to their fathers.

25 Here is a message for the whole people of Juda, entrusted to Jeremias in the fourth year of Joakim's reign

(that was son to Josias) in Juda, the first of Nabuchodonosor's in Babylon. To all Juda, and to all the citizens of Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremias delivered it: These twenty-three years, ever since the thirteenth year of Josias' reign, that was son to Amon, the Lord's word has been coming to me, and ever I was early at your doors repeating it, but you would not listen. Early to your doors the Lord sent all those prophets that were servants of his, but hearing there was none, nor heeding. False aims, he warned you, lead you by false paths astray; come back to me, and you shall dwell yet in this land, my gift to you and to your fathers from the beginning to the end of time. Would you court slavery by worshipping alien gods, defy my vengeance with your ill-doings, till I plague you? But you would not listen to me, the Lord says; ill was done yet, and my vengeance was yet defied. And now, says the Lord of hosts, finding you disobedient still, I mean to summon all the nations of the north country, with Nabuchodonosor, that servant of mine that is king in Babylon; I, the Lord, will bid him march on this land and its citizens, and all its neighbours. I mean to make an end of them, and leave it a thing to provoke wonder and scorn, desolate for all time. Never again cries of joy and mirth, never again the voice of bridegroom and of bride, never a mill turning, never a lamp to shine. For seventy years this whole land shall be a desert and a portent, and the king of Babylon shall have all these peoples for his slaves.

Then, when seventy years have passed, I will call the king of Babylon to account, the Lord says, for all the wrongs he has done, with his people and with that Chaldaean country of his; that country in its turn I will leave desolate for ever. The sentence I have pronounced against it shall be executed in full, all the doom Jeremias has foretold in this book of prophecy against all the nations of the world. Great nations, proud kings, have held Israel enslaved; now for their own lives, their own deeds, they too must make amends.²

¹ According to the Hebrew text, 'a source of shuddering'. The same word occurs in 15. 4, where the Latin version translates 'ferment'.

² *vv.* 12-14. Some think that these verses are wrongly inserted in their present context. And indeed, the order of the text from this point onwards remains uncertain. The Latin version follows the Hebrew; but the Septuagint Greek preserves quite a different tradition. The chapters which are numbered 26 to 31 in our text appear much later in the Greek, between ch. 50 and ch. 51, nor do they appear in precisely the same order.

15 The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, bade me take the cup of vengeance that was in his hand, and give drink out of it to all
 16 the nations to which my errand lay; drink it they should, and reel to and fro, bemused by the threat of his sword let loose
 17 among them. So I took the cup from the Lord's hand; nor was there any of the nations the Lord had sent me to threaten
 18 but must drink of it. Jerusalem must drink, and the townships of Juda, kings and nobles with the rest; the land was doomed to become a desert, a thing of wonder and scorn, a name to be used in
 19 cursing, as it is at this day. Pharaoh king of Egypt and all his court and his nobles must drink, and all the mingled people of his realm. No king in the land of Hus but
 20 must drink of it, nor among the Philistine cities, Ascalon, Gaza, Accaron and Azotus, nor in Edom, Moab and Ammon, no king in Tyre, and the Sidonian country, and the
 21 islands that lie beyond the sea. Dedan must drink, and Thema, and Buz, and all the folk with shaven heads, all the kings of
 22 Arabia, and the western desert kings.¹ Nor any king in Zambri, Elam, and Media, nor any king in the north country, far or near, but must pledge his neighbour; all the kings of the earth must have their share, and Sesach² not till the last.

27 This message I was to give them from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Drink, besot yourselves, and then fall to vomiting; and topple over at last, never to rise again, so well shall my sword do its work
 28 among you! If they made to refuse the cup I offered them, this more I should add: Nay, but drink you must, says the Lord of
 29 hosts; here am I beginning my work of vengeance with that city which is the shrine of my name, and shall you be acquitted, you others, and go scot-free? That shall never be, says the Lord of hosts; to the sword if I appeal, it is for a whole world's punishment.

30 With such words as these thou shalt prophesy to them: From on high, from his holy dwelling-place, the Lord makes his voice heard, terrible as lion roaring; as roar of lion against sheep-fold, and that fold his

own! Loud echoes his vintage-cry as he treads down all the dwellers on earth; to the ends of the world it must echo; a whole world he calls to account, impleads the whole race of men; The sword's point for my adversaries, the Lord says. From nation to nation, says the Lord of hosts, calamity will spread, like a great whirlwind sprung up from the corners of the earth, and from end to end of it the bodies of the Lord's foes, unwept, ungathered, unburied, shall lie like dung on the ground. Cry out, make loud lament, shepherds of the nations, and you, the lordliest among their flocks, go strewn with ashes; your day is done, slain you must lie there, unvalued as some delicate vase broken to pieces. For shepherds, and the pride of the flock, no refuge now; hark how they lament, shepherds and pride of the flock, for pasture-grounds the Lord has laid waste! Silent they lie now, once happy fields, under ban of the Lord's vengeance. Lion springs not from his lair more suddenly; all their land lies waste, so pitiless the invader's onset, so pitiless the Lord's anger.

26 At the beginning of Joachim's reign in Juda, that was son to Josias, word came from the Lord, and this was his bidding: Go and stand in the temple porch, and there, to pilgrims from all the townships of Juda, deliver the message I have entrusted to thee; no word of it do thou retrench. It may be they will listen, and go astray no longer; then I will forgo the punishment I have devised for their ill-doings. This divine warning give them: Listen to me, and live by the law I have enjoined upon you, obeying the call of the prophets, those servants of mine whom I sent early to your doors, upon an errand that went unheeded; or this sanctuary, too, shall be deserted as Silo, and this city shall be an accursed name, all the world over.

Priests and prophets and townfolk heard it alike, this utterance of Jeremias in the temple; and when he had thus done the Lord's errand for all the people to hear, priests and prophets and townfolk laid

¹ For the Arab custom of cutting the hair back from the temples, cf. 9. 26. The meaning of the Hebrew text is probably 'the kings of the desert steppes' rather than 'the western desert kings'. ² 'Sesach' is a cabalistic way of referring to Babylon; cf. 51. 41. This item in the catalogue, like certain others, is absent from the Septuagint Greek. ³ For 'the invader' the Latin version has 'the dove', which is a possible translation of the Hebrew, but yields no satisfactory sense.

hands upon him, crying out, His life must
 9 pay for it! What, would he threaten in the
 Lord's name that this temple is to share
 Silo's doom, this city to be left forlorn,
 uninhabited? There, in the Lord's house,
 Jeremias must confront the anger of a
 10 whole people. When they heard of it, the
 nobles of Juda left palace for temple, and
 there held assize, at the approaches of the
 11 New Gate. Before these, and before the
 general assembly, priest and prophet called
 for the death penalty; here was a man who
 had foretold, in the public hearing, calamity
 12 for Jerusalem. To nobles and to people
 Jeremias had but one defence: Nothing
 have I said against temple or city but what
 13 the Lord's errand bade me. Come, do but
 amend your lives and your likings, and
 listen to the Lord your God; he will spare
 you the doom he has pronounced upon
 14 you. As for me, I am in your hands; do
 with me what you will, what you think
 15 right. Only be sure of this, if you kill me,
 you will bring the guilt of murder on your-
 selves, your city, and all that dwell there;
 no word you have heard from me but has
 the Lord's true warrant.

16 And this answer both nobles and towns-
 folk made to priest and prophet, There is
 no death sentence lies against this man; as
 the spokesman of the Lord our God he has
 17 given us his message. There were some of
 the older citizens that rose to defend him
 18 publicly; Remember the prophet Mi-
 chaeas of Morasthi, they said, in the days
 of king Ezechias, who told the people of
 Juda: Sion shall be no better than a
 ploughed field, says the Lord of hosts,
 Jerusalem but a heap of stones, the temple
 19 height only a hanging wood.¹ Did Eze-
 chias king of Juda, or his subjects, there-
 upon put him to death? Nay, they feared
 the Lord too well for that; went about to
 appease his anger, so that he spared them
 the punishment he had threatened. It
 were pity of our lives, did we so great a
 wrong!

20 Another prophet there was that came in
 the Lord's name, Urias, the son of Semei,
 a man of Cariathiarim, and used no gentler
 language about this city and country than
 21 Jeremias himself. King Joachim, and all

his chieftains and his nobles, were for
 making away with him when they heard
 such warnings; and though he took alarm
 at the rumour of it and fled to Egypt, royal
 22 pursuivants were sent there under Elna-
 than, son of Achobor, to bring him back;
 whereupon king Joachim put him to the
 sword, and cast his body away among the
 23 tombs of the common folk. But Jeremias
 had a friend in Ahicam, the son of Saphan,
 24 who would not let him be handed over to
 the people and put to death.

27 At the beginning of the new king's²
 reign in Juda, that was son to
 Josias, word came from the Lord to Jeremias
 after this fashion. The Lord bade me
 2 make myself a yoke, band and bar, and put
 it about my neck; let it be the answer, he
 3 said, given by Sedecias, king of Juda, to
 the envoys that have come to him from the
 kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and
 Sidon. This message thou shalt give them,
 4 for their masters, from the Lord of hosts,
 the God of Israel: My strength it was, the
 5 exertion of my power, that made earth,
 made man and beast to walk on it; and I
 give dominion over it to the man on whom
 my choice falls. And all these countries I
 6 have handed over to my servant Nabu-
 chodonosor, king of Babylon, making even
 the wild beasts subject to him; all the
 7 world must obey him, and his son and his
 grandson after him, until the time has run
 out, for him and for his land both; nations
 a many and great kings shall pay him their
 8 homage. Nation or people that will not be
 vassal to Nabuchodonosor, will not bow to
 Babylon's yoke, I will punish with sword
 and famine and pestilence, until the last of
 9 them is left at his mercy. Do not listen,
 then, to those prophets of yours, diviner
 and dreamer, soothsayer and sorcerer, who
 10 bid you resist the king of Babylon; whither
 will they bring you, these lying prophecies?
 To a land far from your home,
 to sentence of banishment, and your un-
 11 doing. But let a nation once bow to the
 king of Babylon's yoke, and become his
 vassal, to that nation, the Lord says, I will
 leave its own fields to till, its own home to
 dwell in.

¹ See Mic. 3. 12. ² The Hebrew text, and all the versions except the Syriac, give the name of the reigning monarch as Joachim. But it seems clear this must have been a scribe's error; cf. verses 3 and 12, where Sedecias is mentioned instead.

- 12 All this message I gave to Sedecias, king of Juda; Your lives shall be spared, I told him, if you will only bow your necks to the yoke, letting king and people of
- 13 Babylon be your masters; will you court death, king and people at once, from sword, famine, and pestilence, the Lord's threat against all who refuse submission?
- 14 To the prophets who declare you shall never be vassals of Babylon, give no heed;
- 15 they are cheating you with lies; warrant from me they have none, yet falsely claim to be my spokesmen, to your own casting away and undoing, and theirs moreover who so prophesy.
- 16 And this message I gave from the Lord to priests and people: Do not listen to those prophets of yours, who bid you expect the speedy return of the sacred treasures from Babylon. These are but lying prophecies;
- 17 do not let them deter you from submitting to the king of Babylon, your only hope of safety; shall this city become a desert?
- 18 Prophets if they be, spokesmen of the Lord if they be, let them rather plead with him, the Lord of hosts, that the treasures still left in temple and palace and city may not
- 19 find their way to Babylon too. Doom the Lord of hosts has decreed upon all of them, pillars and brazen basin and stands, and those other treasures that remained here
- 20 untouched, when Joachim's son Jechonias, that once reigned in Juda, was carried off to Nabuchodonosor's capital at Babylon, with all the notables of this city and realm.
- 21 This he would have you know, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, that all the
- 22 treasures left in temple, palace or city shall be carried away to Babylon in their turn. There they shall remain, the Lord says, till the time comes for demanding an account of them, for bringing them back and setting them up again where they stood before.

28 Sedecias had then but lately come to the throne of Juda; it was the fourth year of his reign. In the fifth month of that year a prophet from Gabao, Hananias son of Azur, came up to me in the temple, in full sight of priests and worshippers. A message, he said, from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: So much for the king of Babylon's yoke! I have

3 broken it to pieces. Two years must run their course, and then all shall come back

again here; all the temple treasures Nabuchodonosor took away with him to his capital at Babylon, and the king of Juda too, Jechonias son of Joachim, with all the exiles from Juda Babylon now holds. I will bring them back, the Lord says, and break the yoke of the king of Babylon to pieces.

But from Jeremias this prophet Hananias had a prophet's answer, there in the presence of the priests, and of all who stood by in the Lord's house; Amen to that! Well indeed it were if the Lord would grant this prophecy of thine fulfilment, would bring all the temple treasure home, and all the exiles at Babylon! Only, here is a word for thy hearing, and for the general hearing no less. So many prophets before thy day and mine, so many nations, such proud empires their theme, and all alike told of battle, of distress, of famine; here is one at last that brings good news! Why then, when his words come true, none will doubt that his errand was from the Lord. At that, Hananias took the band from Jeremias' neck and broke it, crying out before all the people, A message from the Lord! Thus, when two years have run their course, I will break the yoke which king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon has laid on the necks of all the nations! And Jeremias said no more, but passed on.

Thus did Hananias break the band on the neck of his fellow prophet; and thereupon came the word of the Lord to Jeremias, Go and give Hananias this message from the Lord: Wooden yoke break, iron yoke make! The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, tells thee that he is putting a yoke of iron on the necks of all the nations, subjecting them to Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon. His subjects they shall be; even over the wild beasts dominion is granted him. This, too, Jeremias said to his fellow prophet, Listen, Hananias; errand from the Lord thou hast none, thou art cheating yonder people with false hopes. And this doom the Lord has uttered: I mean to banish thee from this earth altogether: thou shalt die within the year, for this language of rebellion against the Lord. Hananias died that year, before seven months were over.

29 To those other elders, priests and prophets who had already gone

into exile, to all the citizens Nabuchodonosor had carried off with him to Babylon, the prophet Jeremias sent a message in writing. Among these were king Jechonias and the queen-mother, and the chamberlains, and all that were of note in realm or capital; nor were any carpenters or smiths left in Jerusalem. The new king of Juda, Sedecias, was sending Elasa, the son of Saphan, and Gamarias, the son of Helcias, on a mission to Nabuchodonosor at Babylon, and to their hands the letter of Jeremias was entrusted.

4 It ran thus: A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to the men of Jerusalem he has sent into exile at Babylon! I would have you build yourselves houses of your own to dwell in, plant yourselves gardens of your own to support you, 6 wive and gender, and of your sons and daughters wed man with maid, maid with man, to breed sons and daughters in their turn; grow numerous, that are now so few, 7 there in your land of exile. A new home I have given you; for the welfare of that realm be ever concerned, ever solicit the divine favour; its welfare is yours. And this warning he sends you, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Never allow prophet and soothsayer that are of your company to mislead you; his dreams let the 9 dreamer abandon; prophets there are, the Lord says, that claim falsely to be my spokesmen, and warrant from me have none. All but seventy years, he tells you, 10 must have run their course before Babylon's time is up; then I will come to relieve you, and make good the promise of your return.

11 I have not lost sight of my plan for you, the Lord says, and it is your welfare I have in mind, not your undoing; for you, too, 12 I have a destiny and a hope. Cry out to me then, and your suit shall prosper;¹ plead with me, and I will listen; look for me, and you shall find me, if you will but look for 13 me in good earnest. Find me you shall, the Lord says, and your sentence of exile shall be reversed; the same Lord who scattered them among alien folk and in far countries 14 will bring the exiles home. So much for

your claim that² the Lord has revived the gift of prophecy among you, there in Babylon.

As for the king who now sits on David's 16 throne, and the citizens who dwell here now, instead of sharing your exile, this is the divine sentence: I mean to plague 17 them, says the Lord of hosts, with sword and famine and pestilence; of no more account will I make them than a basket of foul figs, so foul there is no eating them. Sword and famine and pestilence shall 18 follow at their heels; bane they shall be to all the kingdoms of the world, a name to curse by, a thing of wonder and of scorn, a laughing-stock among all the countries I have appointed for their banishment. All 19 this, because they would not listen to any word of mine, the Lord says; early to their doors I sent the prophets that were servants of mine, I, your Lord, and could get no hearing.

Listen, then, to the Lord's decree, men 20 of Jerusalem I have sent into exile at Babylon. This doom the Lord has pronounced upon Achab, the son of Colias, 21 and Sedecias the son of Maasias, false prophets both of them, that speak to you as in my name; I mean to hand them over for punishment to Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, and that punishment you shall witness for yourselves. Wherever exiles 22 from Juda are found in the Chaldaean country, this shall be the curse they use: Such doom the Lord give thee as he gave to Sedecias and Achab, that the king of Babylon roasted over a fire! This is great 23 shame they have brought on Israel, bedding with their neighbours' wives, and uttering in my name counterfeit prophecies that had no warrant of mine; of these misdoings I am judge and witness both.

And another message must be given to 24 Semeias of Nehelam from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, about the letter 25 he sent to the citizens left in Jerusalem, and namely to the high priest Sophonias, the son of Maasias, and his fellow priests. This letter ran, If the Lord would have thee 26 follow Joiada in the high priesthood, it was to make thee master of his house, ready

¹ 'And your suit shall prosper'; literally, 'and you shall go'. The verb seems to be used as in Jg. 4. 24; the rendering 'and you shall go and plead with me and I will listen' breaks the run of the sentence.
² Literally, 'because you say that'. Some think the order of the text has become dislocated, and this verse ought to come between verses 20 and 21.

with stocks and gaol for any mad fellow
 27 that came a-prophesying. Why does Jeremias of Anathoth go unrebuked, and prophesy among you still? He has written to us here in Babylon for the very purpose of telling us our exile shall be long; we must build ourselves houses to dwell in, we must plant gardens to support us! This letter
 29 was read aloud to Jeremias by the high priest; and then it was that the Lord's
 30 word came to Jeremias, with a message he must send to the exiles: This doom the Lord utters against Semeias of Nehelam. Would he prophesy in my name, a man that has no warrant from me, and give you confidence in false hopes? I will call Semeias of Nehelam to account for it, the Lord says, and his children after him. Man of his race there shall be none surviving among this people of mine, the Lord says, to see my bounty bestowed on it. Against me, the Lord, he has used the language of rebellion.

32 **30** Word came to Jeremias from the Lord, the God of Israel, bidding him write down in a book the revelation made known to him. A time is coming, the Lord says, when I will reverse the sentence of exile against my people of Israel and
 33 Juda; I, the Lord, will restore them to possession of the land I gave to their fathers.

4 This is the divine promise made to Israel and Juda: A cry of terror, the Lord says, for all to hear! All is consternation, where
 5 all was peace. Why, here is a riddle and a wonder; can motherhood fall to the lot of men folk? Why is there none to be seen but goes by, hand on loins, cheeks blanched,
 6 like a woman in travail? Alas for pity, what a day is this, none like it; what a time of distress for Jacob's race! Yet it shall leave
 7 them unharmed. A promise they have from the Lord of hosts that he will break the yoke they bear, when that day comes, and part their chains asunder; no more shall they be at the mercy of alien masters,
 8 they shall obey the Lord their God only, and that David-king of theirs whom he will give them.

10 Have thou no fear, the Lord says, Jacob, that art my servant still; not for Israel is

danger brewing. From that far country of exile I mean to restore thee, restore those children of thine; Jacob shall return, and live at ease, every blessing shall enjoy, and enemies have none to fear; I am at thy side,
 11 the Lord says, to protect thee. Of all the lands in which I have dispersed thee I will take full toll, but not of thee; I would but chasten thee with due measure kept, lest thou shouldst hold thyself altogether acquitted. Poor Sion, thine is a wound past
 12 curing, a grievous hurt, the Lord says; no man brings thee redress or remedy, salve to heal thee thou hast none; thy old lovers
 13 think of thee no more, woo thee no more. A shrewd blow I struck thee, unsparring of correction; so many thy misdoings, thy guilt so inveterate. Misdoings a many, and
 14 guilt inveterate, these be the cause of thy hurt, and I the doer of it; and wouldst thou cry out upon a grief there is no remedying? Only be sure of this, the enemies that prey
 15 on thee shall themselves fall a prey to exile; spoiled thy spoilers shall be, and all that plunder thee I will give up to plunder. Then I will heal that scar of thine, the
 16 Lord says, cure thee of thy wounds; too soon they called thee a neglected bride, Sion the unwooded!

18 Nay, says the Lord, I mean to bring tent-dwelling Jacob home, have pity on those ruined walls, build the city anew on its height, set up the temple and its ordinances anew; here songs of praise shall
 19 echo once again, and cries of mirth. They shall increase, that hitherto had dwindled, be exalted, that once were brought low. Then, as in days of old, the full muster of
 20 the tribes shall have its place in my regard; who wrongs them shall be called to account for it. A prince of their own race they shall
 21 have, a home-born ruler, singled out by my own call to serve me; that office, the Lord says, none may take on himself unbidden. You shall be my own people, and
 22 I your own God.

23 Like a whirlwind it will suddenly appear, the Lord's vengeance; will break in storm, and light upon rebel heads. Nor shall the divine anger be appeased till the blow has been struck and the decree
 24 executed; what his design was, will be known all too well, all too late.¹

¹ *v.* 23, 24. These verses are repeated from 23, 19, 20, and some think they are wrongly inserted here, where the prophet is more concerned to reassure his fellow-countrymen than to threaten them.

31 No clan in Israel, the Lord says, but shall own me as its God when that day comes, and all of them shall be my people. Out there in the solitudes they have won pardon, those exiles the sword left untouched; Israel shall find a home, the Lord says, the Lord, making himself known from far away.¹ With unchanging love I love thee, and now in mercy I have drawn thee to myself. Israel, poor homeless maid, I will build thy fortunes anew; built anew they shall be, and thou shalt go forth once more, thy tambour hung about thee, among the choir of dancers. Once more thou shalt plant vineyards over the hill-country of Samaria; planted they shall be, and the men who planted them await the appointed time before they gather the vintage.² Watchmen there shall be, when that day comes, in the hill-country of Ephraim that will cry aloud, Up, to Sion go we, and there worship the Lord our God! Rejoice, the Lord says, at Jacob's triumph, the proudest of nations greet with a glad cry; ¹ loud echo your songs of praise, Deliverance, Lord, for thy people, for the remnant of Israel! From the north country, from the very ends of earth, I mean to gather them and bring them home; blind men and lame, pregnant women and women brought to bed, so great the muster at their home-coming. Weeping they shall come, and I, moved to pity, will bring them to their journey's end; from mountain stream to mountain stream I will lead them, by a straight road where there is no stumbling; I, Israel, thy father again, and thou, Ephraim, my first-born son.

10 Listen, Gentiles, to the Lord's promise; his word must go out to the islands that are far away; word that he who scattered Israel will gather Israel in, will guard it faithfully as a shepherd guards his flock. The Lord means to ransom Jacob, to grant deliverance from the tyrant's power. The exiles will return, greeting mount Sion with cries of gladness; thronging in to take possession

of the Lord's gifts, corn and oil and wine, increase of flock and herd. Revived their spirits shall be, like a garden when the stream flows full; they shall hunger no more. Glad the maidens shall dance, gladness there shall be for young and old alike; I will turn all their sorrow into joy, comfort and cheer their sad hearts. Full-fed my priests shall be with dainties; blessings my people shall have, the Lord says, till they ask no more.

Now, the Lord says, a voice is heard in Rama, of lamentation and bitter mourning; it is Rachel weeping for her children, and she will not be comforted, because none is left.⁴ But thus he reassures thee: Sad voice, lament, sad eyes, weep no more; I, the Lord, give thee promise of a reward for thy working-days, a return from the enemy's country. A hope is left for thee hereafter, the Lord says; to their own possessions thy sons shall return. Doubt not I heard it, the cry of Ephraim forlorn: Lord, it was thy task to chasten me, that must learn, like bullock untamed, to bear the yoke; grant me return, and I will return to thee; ⁵ thou art the Lord my God. Only when thou calledst me back to thyself did I repent; only when my lesson was learnt did I cry out upon my shame.⁶ How did I blush with confusion, bearing the disgrace the sins of my youth had earned! Why, what a favourite son is this Ephraim, what a spoiled child of mine, that I should pronounce my doom on him, and care for him none the less! In truth, my heart goes out to him; I will be merciful to him yet, the Lord says.

Way-marks leave behind thee, sad trophies ⁷ be raising as thou goest, to put thee in mind of the straight road thou hast trodden. Return thou must, poor Israel, return thou must to these, thy own cities; fickle maid, dally no longer. Here is a new order of things the Lord has established on earth; weak woman is to be the protectress of man's strength.⁸

¹ 'Making himself known'; according to the Latin, 'to me', which follows the Hebrew text; but the Septuagint Greek has 'to it', i.e. Israel. ² See Lev. 19. 23-25. ³ Literally, 'neigh against the head of the nations', a phrase which cannot be interpreted with certainty. ⁴ v. 15. Cf. Mt. 2. 18.

⁵ 'Grant me return', literally, 'turn me'; 'I will return to thee', literally, 'I will turn'; and in the next verse, 'when thou calledst me back to thyself', literally, 'at my turning'. The same verb is used in Hebrew, somewhat confusingly, to express turning away and turning back, whether in a literal or in a figurative sense. ⁶ Literally, 'did I smite the thigh', a Hebrew way of shewing humiliated regret.

⁷ Literally, 'biternesses', the same word as in verse 15. But modern scholars understand it here as meaning 'cairns', and derive it from a different root. ⁸ Literally, 'a female shall surround a male', a phrase much discussed but little elucidated by commentators.

23 A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: To town and country-side of Juda I will restore the exiled folk, and once again the greeting will be heard, A blessing on thee from the Lord, fair home of true
 24 observance, holy mountain-side! Once again Juda and Juda's townfolk shall dwell there; fields shall be tilled and flocks led out to pasture; faint hearts shall be refreshed, and hunger's craving satisfied.
 25 Ah, to wake upon such a sight! Then were sleep welcome.¹

27 A time is coming, the Lord says, when I mean to enrich Israel's home, Juda's home, with stock of men and of cattle both; jealous watch I will still keep over them, but not, as of old, to root up and to demolish, to scatter and lay waste and to do hurt; all shall be building, the Lord says, all shall be planting now. When that time comes, no more shall be heard of the proverb, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are being set on edge; tooth of eater shall ache now, and a man's own guilt shall be a man's own doom.²

31 A time is coming, the Lord says, when I mean to ratify a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of
 32 Juda. It will not be like the covenant which I made with their fathers, on the day when I took them by the hand, to rescue them from Egypt; that they should break my covenant, and I, all the while, their master, the Lord says. No, this is the covenant I will grant the people of Israel, the Lord says, when that time comes. I will implant my law in their innermost thoughts, engrave it in their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
 34 There will be no need for neighbour to teach neighbour, or brother to teach brother, the knowledge of the Lord; I will know me, from the highest to the lowest. I will pardon their wrong-doing; I will not remember their sins any more.³ A message from the Lord, from him, the God of hosts, the same who brightens day with the sun's rays, night with the ordered service of moon and star, who can stir up the sea

and set its waves a-roaring; All these laws
 of mine will fail me, he says, before the line of Israel fails me; a people it must remain until the end of time. You have the Lord's
 word for it; When you can measure heaven above, he tells you, and search the foundations of earth below, then I will cast away the whole line of Israel, for all its ill deserving.

Behold, says the divine promise, a time
 is coming when the city shall be rebuilt in the Lord's honour, from Hananeel's Tower as far as the Corner Gate; nay, in advance of that the limit of its range shall reach, across Gareb hill, to take in Goatha, burial-ground and ash-pit and all the dead soil as far as Cedron brook, and eastward as far as the corner by the Horsemen's Gate; all shall be consecrated to the Lord; tree shall not be uprooted there henceforward, nor house overthrown.

32 A message came from the Lord to Jeremias during the tenth year of Sedecias' reign in Juda, the eighteenth of Nabuchodonosor's at Babylon; the Babylonian army was besieging Jerusalem at the time, and Jeremias was a prisoner there, confined in the guard-court that lay before the royal palace. It was for his prophesying that king Sedecias had imprisoned him; what meant this threat from the Lord, of giving Jerusalem over to capture by the king of Babylon? He had said, besides: King Sedecias of Juda shall not escape from the Chaldaeans; the king of Babylon shall have the mastery of him; they shall have speech together, meet face to face.⁴ To Babylon Sedecias shall go, and there remain till I have entered into a reckoning with him. All shall go amiss, if you join battle with the Chaldaeans.

And now Jeremias announced a new oracle the Lord had given him. The Lord told me, he said, that my cousin Hanameel, son of Sellum, would come and ask me to buy in certain land of his at Anathoth, which was my duty as his next of kin. And as the Lord foretold, so it fell out; Hanameel came to my prison doors,

¹ What is the exact meaning of this phrase, or who is the speaker, cannot be determined with certainty.
² Cf. Ez. 18. 2. ³ *iv.* 31-34. Cf. Heb. 8. 8 sqq. At the end of verse 32 the Septuagint Greek adopts a different reading in the Hebrew, and translates 'And I should abandon them, the Lord says'. The quotation in the Epistle to the Hebrews follows the Greek. ⁴ See 34. 3 below.

and said, Pray buy in that field of mine at Anathoth in Benjamin; thou art the rightful heir, and thy duty it is, as next of kin, to buy it from me. Then I knew that I had
9 received a divine warning, and buy it I did, this field at Anathoth, from Hanameel, that was son to my uncle Sellum. I paid him the price, that was but seventeen pieces of
10 silver; wrote and signed the deed, called in witnesses, and weighed out the money on
11 the scales. So here was the deed of possession sealed up, all its terms set down and attested, and characters written with-
12 out; all this I handed over to Baruch, son of Neri, son of Maasias, still in the presence of my cousin Hanameel, and the witnesses that had signed it, and the Jews who sat around me in the court where I was confined. Before them all, I gave Baruch this
13 charge: A message for thee from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these two pieces of writing, the sealed deed within and the covering of it that is open to view, and keep them in some jar of clay, where they can remain long without damage.
14 This is what he would tell thee, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, that there shall yet be buying of house and field and vineyard, here in this land.
15 The deed once made over to Baruch, son of Neri, I prayed to the Lord thus: Alas, alas, Lord God! Thou art the maker of heaven and earth, so great is thy power, so wide thy reach; no task, for thee, is too
16 difficult. A thousandfold thou shewest thy mercy; yet, when thou dost punish, into the son's lap the father's guilt overflows; how great, how strong that God, whose
17 name is the Lord of hosts! How sublime thy counsels, thy thoughts how high above us! And still thou keepest watch over all mankind, ready to award each life what its own
18 devices have earned. Such deeds thou didst as are signs and portents to this day in the land of Egypt, in Israel too and all the world over; didst win that renown
19 which to this day is thine.¹ Signs and portents there must be, and the exercise of thy constraining power, and a great dread, before thou couldst rescue thy people
20 Israel from Egypt; then thou wouldst bestow

upon them this land, the home promised to their fathers, a land all milk and honey; they invaded it, they took possession of it.
21 But to thy voice they would not listen, thy law they would not follow; no duty thou hadst enjoined but lay neglected, and all the calamities we see about us are the issue. Here are siege-works raised to reduce the
22 city; sword and famine and pestilence are giving it over to the Chaldaeans for their prey; of all thou hast threatened thou seest here the fulfilment. And now, Lord God,
23 thou wouldst have me buy land, and call in witnesses of payment made; now, when this city lies at the mercy of the Chaldaeans!

Hereupon the word of the Lord came to
24 Jeremias: Am I not the Lord, the God of all that lives? How should any task be too difficult for me?

This is the divine sentence; ² I mean to
25 hand over this city to capture by the king of Babylon and his Chaldaeans; they shall
26 take it by storm, and set it alight, and burn all its houses to the ground; it was there,
27 on the roof-tops, they sacrificed to Baal, and made offerings to alien gods in despite
28 of me. From their youth up, Israel and
29 Juda have defied my will unceasingly; even now, says the Lord, their ill-doings
30 are a provocation to me. Anger and scorn
31 this city of theirs has earned from me, nothing else, from the day they built it to
32 this day when I purpose that it shall offend my sight no more; so long have Israel and
33 Juda defied my vengeance with the wrong they did, king and prince, priest and prophet, country-folk and citizens of Jerusalem; always the back turned, never a
34 glance my way, always the deaf ear, the warning unheeded, when I sent early to their doors to bring them to a better mind! Have they not profaned that house which
35 is the sanctuary of my name, by setting up their idols in it? Have they not made hill-shrines for Baal in the valley of Ben-Ennom, and there initiated son and daughter with Moloch-rites that were never of my bidding? No thought was it of mine that they should do this foul deed, which has brought guilt on Juda.

¹ The beginning of this verse runs literally, 'Who hast set signs and portents in the land of Egypt to this day, and in Israel, and among mankind'; there is probably some slight corruption in the text.
² *vv.* 28-35. It may be doubted whether these verses appear here in their true context; if we suppose that they belong elsewhere, verse 36 follows much more naturally.

36 What, then, of this city, doomed in your eyes to fall into the power of Babylon's king, through sword and famine and pestilence? This is the message the Lord God of Israel sends to it: I mean to gather its people again, scattered over so many lands by the vengeance my fierce anger brought; restore them to this place, and bid them dwell there contentedly. They shall be my people, I their God; one will they shall have, and journey by one way, living evermore in the fear of me, winning for themselves and for their sons a blessing. An eternal covenant I will make with them, nor ever cease to speed them; inspire their hearts with the fear of me, that never swerves aside. My welcome task it shall be to prosper them, and root their stock firmly in this land of theirs; this shall be all my love and liking. Threat of mine and promise of mine, the Lord says, shall alike be fulfilled. This country of yours a desert, man nor beast to dwell in it, given up to the power of Babylon? So your fears tell you; but there shall be buying of lands in it yet, the price paid, the deed executed, the bond sealed, witnesses called in, all over Benjamin and round about Jerusalem, all through the cities of Juda, by hill and plain and the uplands of the south; I mean to bring the exiles home again, says the Lord.

33 Jeremias was still confined to his prison in the court when the word of the Lord came to him a second time. It ran: Thus says the Lord, that all this will do, all this will devise and determine, so great is his name: Cry out to me still, and thou shalt find audience; great mysteries that lie beyond thy ken I will make known to thee. Ruined houses of Jerusalem, ruined palace of the kings of Juda, what has the Lord to tell thee about these?...

...to siege and sword. Come they to fight against the Chaldeans, it is but to strew those earthworks with their own dead bodies; in anger and scorn I will smite them down, turning my back on the city they have stained with such guilt...

6 Closed and cured those wounds shall

be; I myself will heal them, grant them peace and safety to their heart's content. The fortunes of Juda and Jerusalem I will reverse, and they shall be established as firmly as ever; all the guilt that offends me purged away, all the wrong and despite they did me forgiven. My pride and prize, my renown and triumph, to be their benefactor, so that all the world shall hear of it; everywhere the tale of my bounty and my blessing shall strike awe and dread into men's hearts. Where all seems to your eyes but a desert, man nor beast left in the townships of Juda and in Jerusalem, empty street, empty house, empty byre, there, says the Lord, you shall hear cries of joy and mirth, voice of bridegroom and voice of bride. There you shall hear men singing, Give thanks to the Lord, the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever, as they bring to his temple the offerings they have vowed. Your country's doom shall be reversed, says the divine promise, and all shall be as of old. Juda and all its townships a desert, no living thing to dwell there? Nay, says the Lord of hosts, once again it shall be the abode of shepherds, a resting-place for their flocks. By hill and plain and the uplands of the south, all over Benjamin and round about Jerusalem, all through the cities of Juda, there shall be flocks passing to and fro, and their masters a-counting them, the Lord says.

Behold, he says, a time is coming when I will make good my promise to Israel and Juda; the day will dawn, the time be ripe at last for that faithful scion to bud from David's stock; the land shall have a king to reign over it, giving just sentence and due award. When that time comes, Juda shall find deliverance, none shall disturb Jerusalem's rest; and the name given to this king shall be, The Lord vindicates us.¹ Never a man wanting of David's line, the Lord says, to sit on Israel's throne; never a lack of priest and Levite to wait upon me, bring me burnt-sacrifice and burn the bloodless offering, and slaughter victims, day after day.

And the word of the Lord came to Jeremias, giving him this message: If you

¹ *vv.* 4, 5. Although the Latin version conceals it, there is considerable confusion in the text here, which is probably due either to corruption or to omission. ² *vv.* 15, 16. Cf. 23, 5, 6 above. In the present passage, the Hebrew text represents the name 'The Lord vindicates us' as given, not to the king, but to the city of Jerusalem. The disparity is difficult to explain, and probably the manuscripts are at fault. The whole paragraph, verses 14-18, is lacking in the Septuagint Greek.

can rescind my ordinance of day and night, that there should be day-time and night-time no more, only then will I rescind the privilege granted to my servant David, and there shall be heirs of his throne no more, Levites and priests to wait on me no more. My servant David, the Levites that wait on me, these shall have a posterity countless as the stars of heaven, measureless as the sea-sand. This message, too, Jeremias had from the Lord: Mark well whom they declare, the folk among whom thou dwellest,¹ that there are two families² the Lord has chosen, and both he has cast off; so that they despise my own people, and no longer count it a nation. But this is the divine answer: Laws if I have made none for day and night, for heaven and earth no ordinances prescribed, then let it be thought that I mean to cast Israel away, or depose the line of David from its headship over all who spring from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Trust me, their doom shall be reversed, their lot shall be pitied.

34 The word of the Lord came to Jeremias at the time when king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon, at the head of his own army, with vassal kingdoms and peoples to aid him, levied war on Jerusalem and its daughter cities. This was the message sent by the Lord God of Israel: Go and warn Sedecias, king of Juda, in my name that I mean to hand over this city to the Babylonian king, who will burn it to the ground. And add this besides: Thou thyself wilt not escape from him; they will catch thee, sure enough, and hand thee over to him; thou and the king of Babylon shall have speech together, meet face to face, and to Babylon thou shalt go. Wouldst thou but listen, King Sedecias of Juda, to the Lord's bidding!³ Die by the sword, he tells thee, thou shouldst not; peaceful thy death should be, and they should make such burning for thee as they made for thy fathers that reigned before thee, raise such cries of lamentation, Alas, what a king was this! This is my promise to thee, the Lord says. All this king Se-

decias of Juda must hear from the prophet Jeremias, there in Jerusalem; and still the Babylonian army pressed hard on the city, and on those other cities of Juda that were left, Lachis and Azecha; the rest of the fortified cities had already been taken.

Here is another message the Lord entrusted to Jeremias, and this was the occasion of it. King Sedecias had bound the citizens of Jerusalem by a covenant; all alike were to set free their slaves and handmaids that were of Hebrew blood; would they play the master to their own Jewish kinsfolk? On hearing the proclamation, nobles and common people alike had agreed to release slave and handmaid, and exempt them from all service henceforward; and this they did obediently enough; but afterwards they changed their minds, haled them off, men and women, and reduced them to slavery once again. Then it was word came from the Lord to Jeremias, and thus the divine message ran: Word from the Lord God of Israel! I made a covenant with your fathers, when I rescued them from their place of bondage in Egypt. Seven years up, every slave sold in bondage to his fellow Hebrew must go free; six years of service, and then release. Your fathers would not listen, turned a deaf ear to me; but you, to-day, have thought better of it, and done my will, proclaiming liberty to your fellow-countrymen; you have sworn it in my presence, in the house that is the shrine of my name. And then you went back, and dragged my name in the dust! You would claim them afresh, men and women servants you had set free, now their own masters; they must be your servants and handmaids still.

This sentence, then, the Lord pronounces: You have not obeyed me, by granting freedom to your own brethren and neighbours, and here is the freedom I mean to grant you in return; freedom of the sword, freedom of the famine, freedom of the pestilence! A bane I will make you to all the kingdoms of earth. I will have no more of them, the men who transgress my covenant, have no respect for the

¹ Literally, 'this people'. If the text is sound, the reference cannot (in the nature of the case) be to the Jews, but either to some foreign nation or, less probably, to Israel as distinct from Juda. ² Probably the tribes of Juda and Benjamin; they may, however, be Israel and Juda, or Levi and David (mentioned in the foregoing verses), or Jacob and David (see verse 26 below). ³ This might be translated, 'Listen to a message from the Lord, king Sedecias of Juda!' But probably the promise made in the rest of the verse is meant to be conditional upon Sedecias' obeying the Lord (and ceasing to resist the invader).

agreement they made in my own presence, the calf they cut in two and walked between the slices of it, nobles of Juda and Jerusalem, chamberlains and priests, and all the common folk that passed between share and share. I mean to give them up into the hands of enemies that are sworn upon their lives; bird in air and beast on earth shall prey upon that carrion of theirs. Sedecias, king of Juda, and his nobles, shall fall into the hands of pitiless enemies, the armies of Babylon, that now give you a respite. These, at my command, shall march on this city again, lay siege to it, and capture it, and burn it to the ground; and I will make the townships of Juda into a desert, never a soul to dwell there.

35 In the reign of Josias' son Joachim, word came to Jeremias from the Lord, Go, make thyself acquainted with the men of Rechab's clan; I would have thee entertain them in one of the treasury rooms at the temple, and there set wine before them. So Jezonias, son of Jeremias, son of Habsanias was my guest, with his brethren and his sons and the whole Rechabite clan; into the temple I brought them, to the apartment of Hanan's sons, that come down from God's servant Jegedelias. It was next to the apartment of the door-keeper, Maasias the son of Sellum. Here I set a bowl and goblet of wine before the men of Rechab's clan, and bade them drink, but drink wine they would not. Our father Jonadab, said they, the son of Rechab gave us a rule to live by. Wine neither we should drink, nor any son of ours in perpetuity; no house build, no crops sow, no vineyard plant or possess; in tents we were to live all our days, and long those days should last in this land that was none of ours. As our father Jonadab son of Rechab bade us live, so live we, so our wives and sons and daughters live, drinking no wine at any time. Houses we build none to dwell in, vineyards and fields and crops have none; tent-dwellers we remain, true to every command of our father Jonadab; it was only when king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon marched against us that we were fain to take shelter in Jerusalem from threats of Chaldaean and Syrian; that is why we make our abode in Jerusalem.

And now the Lord's word came to Jeremias: A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel! Go and tell all the men of Juda, all the citizens of Jerusalem. Great marvel it is, the Lord says, you are so unruly still, and will not heed my bidding. Here is Jonadab son of Rechab will have his sons drink no wine, and his word holds; wine they drink none to this day, for love of their father's rule; and I, that send word early to your doors, can win no obedience. Early I sent them your doors, the prophets that were servants of mine, bidding you come back from your straying, and shape your thoughts anew; have recourse no longer to the worship of alien gods, if you would dwell securely in this land, my gift to you and to your fathers; but you gave me neither heed nor hearing. So loyal the Rechabites to the commands of their father Jonadab, and my people so disobedient! I mean, then, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to punish the citizens of Jerusalem for warnings unheeded, for calls refused, with all the punishments I have threatened. To the clan of Rechab Jeremias gave this message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: For your obedience to your father Jonadab, for precept remembered and for duty done, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, promises that this line of Rechab and Jonadab, long as time lasts, shall never want a posterity to do him service.

36 In the fourth year of Josias' son Joachim, the Lord gave Jeremias this commandment: Get thyself a scroll, and write down on it all the warnings I have uttered against Israel and Juda, and against the other nations of the world, ever since I first spoke to thee under king Josias. Maybe, when the men of Juda hear of all the mischief I mean to do them, they will leave off their straying in false paths, and so I will overlook the guilt of their wrongdoing.

So Jeremias sent for Baruch the son of Nerias; the Lord's utterances, every one, Jeremias rehearsed and Baruch wrote down on the scroll. And now Jeremias had an errand for him; I must keep my house, said he, go into the Lord's temple I may not.¹ Do thou, on a fasting day, go there

¹ Cf. Neh. 6. 10.

instead, and read out some of the divine utterances I have dictated to thee, in the temple itself, for all the citizens to hear, and all the men of Juda besides, that have come in from their several townships.

7 Maybe their intercession will find its way into the Lord's presence; maybe they will leave off their straying in false paths; here are grievous threats from the Lord of angry
8 vengeance against his people. So it was Baruch son of Nerias, but in fulfilment of Jeremias' command, that took the scroll and read out, there in the Lord's house, the Lord's message. It was the ninth month, in the fifth year of Josias' son Joachim, when they proclaimed a fast, that was to be kept in the Lord's presence by all the citizens and all who had come in
10 from the other towns of Juda. And there in the Lord's house, from the apartment of Gamarias, whose father, Saphan, had once been secretary, in the upper court, close by the entry of the new temple gate, Baruch
11 read out Jeremias' book of warning. No line he read of the divine utterance but had an eager listener in Gamarias' son Michaeas, who thereupon went down to the secretary's room, where he found all the
12 notables assembled. There was the secretary, Elisama; there were Dalaias son of Semeias, and Elnathan son of Achobor, and Gamarias son of Saphan, and Sedecias son of Hananias, and all the notables in
13 general. To these Michaeas repeated all he had heard Baruch read out from the scroll in public; and Judi, son of Nathanas, son of Selemias, son of Cushi, was sent on an errand to Baruch in the name of all present. Come thither he must, and bring the scroll he had read thus publicly with him. So it was Baruch, son of Nerias, that came be-
15 fore them, and the scroll with him; they bade him be seated, and read it aloud to them, so read it he did. When all the read-
16 ing was over, they looked each at other in amazement, and told Baruch all this must
17 be brought to the king's ears. Then they asked, How comes it that these are the words of Jeremias, and yet of thy writing?
18 Why, said he, Jeremias gave them out, as if he were reading them aloud, and I sat by with paper and ink to write them down.
19 Go into hiding, they told him, thou and

Jeremias with thee, and be sure none knows where to find you.

Then they made their way into the palace court to find the king, leaving the book there in the secretary's room. When they had brought their news to his hearing, the king would have Judi fetch the book
21 itself from Elisama's room; which he did, and read it out for the king to hear, and all the courtiers that stood about him. Since
22 it was the ninth month, Joachim was in his winter parlour, and a brazier of coals in front of him; and when Judi had read but
23 three columns or four, he took his penknife and began cutting the scroll into pieces, which he threw on to the brazier until the whole book had perished in the
24 flames. King and courtiers listened to all these warnings, yet feared they never, nor rent their clothes; and although Elnathan,
25 Dalaias and Gamarias would have prevented Joachim from burning the scroll, he would not listen to them. Jeremiel son
26 of Amalech,¹ Saraias son of Ezriel, and Selemias son of Abdeel were bidden to attach the persons of the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremias; but the Lord kept them in safe hiding.

And this was the Lord's word to the prophet Jeremias, when the king burnt the scroll, and with it all the utterances he had dictated to Baruch: Get thee another
28 scroll, and write down on it whatever was contained in the one king Joachim burnt. And to king Joachim give this message
29 from the Lord: Burn book and chide prophet, if thou wilt, for warning thee that the king of Babylon will come back with all speed, and lay this country waste, leaving
30 neither man nor beast to dwell in it. But this is the Lord's doom against king Joachim of Juda: No son of his shall follow
him on the throne of David; his body shall be cast away in the open, to bear the day's heat and the night frost. With guilt of his,
31 with guilt of household and court of his, I will reckon in full; all my unheeded threats against Jerusalem and Juda shall be made good.

So Jeremias must get Baruch another scroll to write on, and all the contents of the book Joachim burnt must be dictated anew; much more was added besides to enlarge it.

¹ 'The son of Amalech'; the Hebrew text is probably better understood as meaning 'the king's son', that is, a prince of the royal blood.

37 In place of Jechonias, that was son to Joachim, Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon would have Sedecias, another of Josias' sons, mount the throne of Juda; but no heed would the new king give, nor his courtiers, nor his subjects, to the warnings uttered in the Lord's name by the prophet Jeremias. To him the king sent envoys, Juchal the son of Selemias and the priest Sophonias, son of Maasias, bidding him pray to the Lord their God for the common welfare. Jeremias was still free to come and go as he pleased among his fellow-citizens; they had not yet imprisoned him.

At this time, Pharaoh's army was on the march, advancing from the Egyptian frontier; and the Chaldaeans, this news reaching them, had raised the siege of Jerusalem. So the Lord's word came to the prophet Jeremias: Take back this message from the Lord God of Israel to the king who sent you to consult me. Back home to Egypt it shall march, the army of Pharaoh that has come out in your support; whereupon the Chaldaeans will return to the attack, will capture this city and burn it to the ground. Never cheat yourselves with the hope that the enemy will march away and leave you alone; march away they will not, the Lord says. Low though you should lay every Chaldaean that takes the field against you, save for some few wounded, those wounded men shall rise up from their tents, and burn this city to the ground notwithstanding.

And now, while Pharaoh still threatened, and the Chaldaeans had raised the siege, Jeremias took occasion to leave Jerusalem and make his way to Benjamin, where he must divide up some property in the presence of his fellow-citizens. When he reached the Benjamin gate, the officer whose turn it was to mount guard there, Jerias, the son of Selemias, the son of Hananias, put the prophet under arrest, under the charge of deserting to the Chaldaeans. In vain did Jeremias protest, What, I desert to the Chaldaeans? There is no truth in it! Jerias led him away into the presence of the nobles; and these, in a rage, first had him beaten, then confined him in the house of the secretary, Jona-

than, who had charge of the prisoners at this time. So came Jeremias to a dungeon cell, and long remained there.

It was king Sedecias who released him, sending for him and questioning him privately in the palace. Has the Lord any message for me? he asked. Yes, said Jeremias; that thou shalt be at the mercy of Nabuchodonosor. Then he asked the king, What wrong have I done to thee, to thy courtiers or thy subjects, that thou hast thrown me into prison? Tell me, how have they sped, those prophets of yours who foretold that the king of Babylon should never reach you, never invade this land of yours? Listen to me, my lord king, I entreat thee, and look favourably on my suit. Do not send me back to the house of yonder secretary Jonathan, for there I needs must die! So king Sedecias had him confined in the court without, and given a loaf of bread each day, with seasoning added,¹ as long as bread there should be in the city. And there Jeremias was left, among the prisoners in the courtyard.

38 Still Jeremias would speak out before all the people; and among those who listened to him were Saphatias son of Mathan, Gedelias son of Phassur, Juchal son of Selemias, and Phassur son of Melchias. This message they heard him proclaim from the Lord: To remain in this city means death by sword, famine and pestilence; go over to the Chaldaeans, you shall have your lives for guerdon, and be spared. And this: Past doubt, the city will fall into the hands of the king of Babylon, by right of capture. And they urged the king, these notables, to make an end of him; He goes about, said they, to weaken the resolve of the garrison, and of the people at large, by talking in this fashion: there is malice here, not good will. He is at your disposal, king Sedecias answered; not for a king to withstand you! So they had their way with Jeremias; he should be left helpless in the cistern of Melchias the son of Amelech,² there in the court where the prisoners were kept. Into the cistern they lowered him with ropes; there was no water in it now, only mire, and into the mire he sank.

¹ 'With seasoning added'; according to the Hebrew text, 'from the Street of the Bakers'.

² See

note on 36. 26.

7 But there was an Ethiopian chamberlain at the court, named Abdemelech, that heard how Jeremias had been let down into the cistern; and as the king was sitting at 8 the Benjamin Gate, this Abdemelech came out from the palace and remonstrated with him. My lord king, he said, here is foul wrong done to the prophet Jeremias; they have let him down into a cistern, where he will die of hunger, such lack of bread there 10 is in the city. Why then, said the king to Abdemelech the Ethiopian, take thirty¹ men with thee, and rescue Jeremias from the cistern while there is yet life in him. So Abdemelech took the men with him, made his way into the palace, beneath the store-chamber, took old rags and clouts that lay mouldering there, and let them down by 12 ropes to Jeremias in the cistern. Here be torn things and mouldering, the Ethiopian said to Jeremias, but thou mayst put these under thy arm-pits, and the ropes under 13 these again. Jeremias obeyed, and they pulled him up by the ropes till he was clear of the cistern; but the courtyard was his prison still.

14 Then king Sedecias would have the prophet come to him by the third door of the palace, the one that leads to the temple. I have a question to ask thee, he said to 15 Jeremias; hide nothing from me. Why, Jeremias answered, if I tell thee what I know, thou wilt but kill me, and if I give thee advice, thou wilt not heed it. But king 16 Sedecias took a secret oath, As the Lord is a living God, the Lord who gave us this breath we breathe, slay thee I will not, nor hand thee over to thy mortal enemies. 17 Thereupon Jeremias told him a message from the Lord, the God of hosts: Go out and give thyself up to Nabuchodonosor's chieftains, and thy life shall be safe, nor shall there be any burning of the city; thou and thine shall be spared. If thou dost not give thyself up to them, then the Chaldeans shall gain mastery of the city and burn it to the ground, and for thyself there 19 is no escaping them. Yet my heart misgives me, Sedecias told him, over the Jews that have already made their submission; what if I should be handed over to these, and

they wreak their spite on me? That shall 20 not be, Jeremias answered. Give heed, only give heed, to this message from the Lord I bear thee; so thou shalt speed well, and life be granted thee. Refuse to yield, 21 and here is the doom he has made known to me. Never a woman that is left in the palace of the kings of Juda but shall be spoil for the chieftains of the king of Babylon! And as they are led away, this shall be their lament: False friend fooled thee, and had the better of thee; feet fast in the treacherous morass has left thee! Wife of thine and son of thine led away into 23 the enemy's camp, and thou thyself powerless to escape; thyself the king of Babylon shall take prisoner, and burn thy city to the ground.

On peril of thy life, king Sedecias 24 warned him, let none hear what has passed between us. If it reach the ears of the nobles that we have had speech together, 25 and they bid thee repeat what thou saidst, or what said the king, hiding nothing as thou holdest thy life dear, then be this thy answer, Why, I pleaded my suit with the king's grace that he would not have me sent back to Jonathan's house, to die there.² Come and ask him they did, and he answered as the king bade him; so with that they let him be; nothing had been overheard. This imprisonment of Jeremias in 28 the courtyard lasted until the taking of Jerusalem; for, sure enough, Jerusalem was taken.

39 Sedecias had been reigning for eight years and ten months in Juda when Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon led his armies to the siege of Jerusalem; in 2 the eleventh year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, the city wall was breached. In they marched, Neregel, Sereser, Seme-garnabu, Sarsachim, Rabsares, (Neregel, Sereser), and Rebmag,³ and all the king of Babylon's other chieftains, and occupied the central gate. Sedecias king of Juda and all his warriors fled at their approach, 4 leaving the city at dead of night by way of the royal garden and the gate between the two walls; it was the desert road they took

¹ Some suspect the word 'thirty' of being a copyist's mistake for 'three'. ² Some authors hold that Jeremias had in fact repeated, on this occasion, the appeal made in 37. 19 above; otherwise he would not have been induced to adopt the king's expedient. ³ Some of these names appear to have been repeated by a copyist's error. Rabsares and Rebmag are probably titles, not names.

- 5 when they left it. The Chaldaean army went in pursuit, and overtook Sedecias in the open plain of Jericho; captured him, and brought him before Nabuchodonosor at Reblatha, in the Emath country; and there sentence was pronounced on him.
- 6 Slain by the king of Babylon were all his sons, there in their father's sight; slain by the king of Babylon were all the nobles of
- 7 Juda; and as for Sedecias himself, his eyes were put out, and he was carried off, loaded
- 8 with chains, to Babylon. King's palace and poor man's house the Chaldaeans burnt to the ground, and threw down the
- 9 walls of Jerusalem in ruins. All the rest who survived, defenders and deserters alike, were carried off by Nabuzardan, the captain of the royal bodyguard, to Babylon; he left none except the poorest of the inhabitants, landless men, in Juda, who found themselves enriched, that day, with vineyards and cisterns of their own.
- 11 This Nabuzardan, captain of the royal bodyguard had orders from king Nabuchodonosor about Jeremiah; Take him
- 12 under thy loving charge, said he, and let
- 13 him have what cheer he will. So here were Nabuzardan, captain of the royal bodyguard, and Nabusezban, and Rabsares, and Neregel, and Sereser, and Rebmag, and all the king of Babylon's great chieftains, sending out to free Jeremiah from his prison in the courtyard. And they entrusted him to the care of Godolias, son of Ahicam; with him Jeremiah should dwell, and make his home among his own people.
- 15 While he was still in the courtyard prison, Jeremiah had been entrusted with a message from the Lord for the Ethiopian, Abdemelech: All my doom against this city, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I mean to fulfil; ban it is and not blessing, and thou shalt live to see it; but to thee I will grant safety, the Lord says. Never shall dreaded foe have the mastery, when I am there to deliver thee; thou art marked out for safety, that didst put thy confidence in me, the Lord says.

40 To Jeremiah the word of the Lord still came, after the captain of the bodyguard, Nabuzardan, had set him at liberty. This happened at Rama, where he was singled out, still in chains, among the prisoners from Jerusalem and Juda who

were on their way to Babylon. As he took him apart from the rest, the captain of the bodyguard said to him, With calamity the Lord thy God threatened this land of thine, and calamity he has brought upon it; his threat is fulfilled. What guilt was this, to refuse the Lord obedience! And here is the issue. From thy hands I have struck the chains, as thou seest; bear me company, if thou wilt, to Babylon, and I will take good care of thee; if thou wilt not go my way, then abide where thou art. The whole land is at thy disposal, and thou art free to take thy own path; none may constrain thee to go with me. Here is Godolias, son of Ahicam, son of Saphan, that is entrusted by the king of Babylon with the charge of all Juda; dwell with him if thou wilt, here among thy own people, or where thou hast a mind betake thee. And with that, the captain of the bodyguard furnished him with provisions, and made him a present besides, and so took leave of him. It was to Godolias son of Ahicam, at Maspath, that Jeremiah repaired, and dwelt with him among the remnant of the land's inhabitants.

Men, women, and children, to Godolias son of Ahicam the king of Babylon entrusted them, all these landless folk who had not been carried off into exile. And when the news of this appointment reached the army chieftains, scattered here and there with their men, they rallied to Godolias at Maspha. Here were Ismahel, son of Nathania, Johanan and Jonathan, sons of Caree, Sareas, son of Thanehumeth, the sons of Ophi from Netophathi, and Jezonias, son of Maachathi, all with men at their backs. To these, chiefs and men alike, Godolias son of Ahicam son of Saphan took an oath. They need have no fear of living under Chaldaean rule; let them remain in the country as the king of Babylon's vassals, and all should go well with them. I am living here in Maspath, said he, to take the orders sent me from Chaldea; it is for you to gather in vintage and harvest and olive-yield, each of you abiding in the city he now occupies. There were other Jews living in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and the countries round about; these, when they heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Juda, and put Godolias, son of Ahicam, son of Sa-

12 phan, in charge of them, came back from the countries where they had taken refuge into Judaea, came to Godolias at Masphath; and abundant was the store they brought in, of grapes and grain both.

13 And now, at Masphath, Godolias was visited by Johanan son of Caree, and the other chieftains from the countryside, with this warning: We have information that Ismahel, son of Nathania, was sent here by Baalis, king of Ammon, to take thy life.

14 But Godolias would not believe it. When Johanan was at Masphath he took Godolias aside; Let me go and make away with Ismahel secretly, he urged; if he should take thy life, all the Jews that have rallied about thee will be scattered again, and Juda have a remnant no more. But Godolias would have none of it; Nay, said he to Johanan, leave off thy purpose; it is but a false report thou tellest me concerning Ismahel.

41 The seventh month had come; and now Ismahel, son of Nathania, son of Elisama, one of the royal princes and the king's vassals,¹ came with ten followers to Masphath, where Godolias was, and at 2 Masphath they sat at table together. There and then, at the sword's point, Ismahel and his ten men put Godolias to death. So perished Godolias, son of Ahicam, son of Saphan, that held the king of Babylon's 3 warrant to rule the country. Such Jews as were with Godolias at Masphath, such Chaldaean soldiers as he found there, Ismahel despatched at the same time. And the day after Godolias' murder, before the 4 news of it was out, came eighty pilgrims from Sichein, Silo, and Samaria, beards shaven, garments rent, in mourning all of them, with bloodless offerings and incense 5 for the Lord's temple. Out came Ismahel son of Nathania from Masphath to meet them, and wept ever as he went; Welcome, said he, from Godolias son of Ahicam! 6 And when they had reached the middle of the town, just by the cistern,² they were 7 slain by Ismahel and his men; all except ten of them, who pleaded for their lives and told Ismahel they had a hoard of wheat, barley, oil and honey hidden away

under their lands; these were spared the fate of the rest. When he slew the companions of Godolias, Ismahel had thrown 9 their bodies into the cistern; it was one which king Asa had made to defend the place against Baasa, king of Israel; now, Ismahel's massacre filled it to the brim.

Thus there was no longer a remnant at 10 Masphath; the king's daughters, and all the other folk left there by Nabuzardan under the care of Godolias, Ismahel took off with him as his captives, and so would have marched away into the Ammonite country. But Johanan, son of Caree, and 11 the other army chieftains that were on his side, no sooner heard the ill news of what Ismahel had done than they mustered all 12 their men to give him battle, and caught up with him at the pool of Gabaoon. A welcome sight it was to Ismahel's company, when they saw Johanan, son of Caree, and the other chieftains approaching; back 14 went all the prisoners to Masphath, and threw in their lot with Johanan instead; Ismahel fled at the sight of him, and 15 reached the Ammonite country with only eight men at his back.

Johanan and his fellow chieftains would 16 not leave at Masphath this remnant they had rescued from Ismahel after the murder of Godolias; all the fighting men, the women and children, the eunuchs, who had returned with them from Gabaoon. They went off and made their home for a 17 time at Chamaan, near Bethlehem, thinking to take refuge in Egypt from the vengeance of the Chaldaeans. From these 18 they had much to fear, now that Ismahel son of Nathania had murdered Godolias son of Ahicam, the king of Babylon's own representative in Juda.

42 And now all the army chieftains, Johanan son of Caree and Jezonias son of Osaia and their followers, high and low, came to consult Jeremias. Look 2 kindly, they said, on our request; we would have thee intercede with the Lord thy God for this poor remnant, left so few in number, as thou seest. Whither go we? What 3 shift make we? Please it the Lord thy God to make all this known to us. And the 4

¹ This reads in the original, presumably by a copyist's error, as if it meant that Ismahel was accompanied by some of the king's vassals. ² Literally, 'into the middle of the cistern', a phrase which can hardly have been intended.

prophet Jeremias said, Your request shall be granted. Pray I will, as you bid me pray, to the Lord your God, and his answer you shall hear in full, no word kept hidden from you. And this promise they made on their part: The Lord himself bear witness against us, unerring and unailing, if we are not true to every word of that message the Lord sends us through thy means. Be it for weal or woe, it is the voice of the Lord our God; to him lies thy errand, and him we will obey; heed we the commands of the Lord our God, nothing can go amiss.

Ten days passed, and then the Lord's word came to Jeremias. Johanan son of Caree he summoned to him, and all the army chieftains, and their followers, high and low; and thus spoke to them: A message to you from the Lord, the God of Israel! To him I went on your errand, and I laid your prayers before him. Wait on quietly, he says, in this land of yours, and all shall be building now, not destroying, all shall be planting now, not uprooting; amends enough is the calamity I have brought on you. What, does the king of Babylon daunt you with his terrors? Of him have no fear; danger from him is none, the Lord says, when I am at your side to protect you, and deliver you from his power. I will take pity on you now; only pity shall you find, and on your native soil an abiding home.

But if you refuse to make it your home, if you disobey the divine command; if you are heard crying, No! To Egypt! There we will dwell, where are no sights of bloodshed, no sound of trumpet-call, no famine to be endured! then, last of the Jews, listen to this, the Lord's message. This he tells you, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel! If you turn your faces towards Egypt, and thither repair to find a refuge, the sword you dread shall overtake you, there in Egypt, the famine that haunts you shall be with you still, there in Egypt, and in Egypt you shall die. None that turns his face towards Egypt for refuge but sword or famine or pestilence shall be the undoing of him; such calamity I mean to bring on it as none shall survive, none shall escape. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Go you to Egypt, my angry vengeance shall blaze out against you no

less than when you dwelt once at Jerusalem; yours shall be a name of execration and horror, a name to curse by and to revile, and this land you shall never see more. Last of the Jews, this is the Lord's message: Go to Egypt you must not. Bear me witness, all of you, that I have given you solemn warning this day. But no, you did but hoodwink yourselves; you would have me do your errand to the Lord our God, and so you promised, Pray to the Lord our God for us, make known to us whatever is his divine will, and it shall be done; but now I have told it you, and where is your obedience to that divine will, to the message he bade me deliver to you? Here then is full warning that the land where you mean to take refuge shall be the undoing of you, by war and famine and pestilence.

43 Such was the errand upon which the Lord now sent Jeremias to his people. And when Jeremias had delivered all this message to them from the Lord their God, Azarias, son of Osaias, contradicted him; Johanan, too, the son of Caree, and the other malcontents¹ held the same language. Thou liest, they said, warrant thou hast none from the Lord our God to prevent us taking refuge in Egypt; it is Baruch, son of Nerias, who sets thee on, thinking to betray us to the Chaldaeans, and have us put to death, or carried away to Babylon. Thus Johanan, son of Caree, with the army chieftains and all their men in his support, refused to obey the Lord's bidding and remain where they were in Juda. He and his fellow chieftains took all the remaining Jews away with them; some of these had been scattered in distant parts, but had now come back to live at home with their wives and children; others, the king's daughters among them, had been entrusted by Nabuzardan, the captain of the bodyguard, to Godolias, son of Ahicam, son of Saphan, that had the prophet Jeremias and Baruch son of Nerias at his side. With all these at their back they crossed the Egyptian frontier, in defiance of the Lord's bidding, and made their way to Taphnis.

And at Taphnis the word of the Lord came to Jeremias: Take a load of great

¹ Literally, 'and all the proud men, saying'. The text is probably corrupt.

stones with thee, and go to the vault¹ under the brick wall by the gate of Pharaoh's palace at Taphnis; there bury them, with
 10 Jewish folk by to watch thee. And this message thou shalt give them from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I mean to summon one that is my servant, Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, and set up a throne for him on these foundations; where these stones lie buried, his canopy
 11 shall rise. He it is that shall come and doom the Egyptians; whom the plague beckons, to the plague, whom exile, to exile, whom the sword, to the sword. The idols of Egypt he shall carry away into banishment, first setting light to their temples and burning them down. Lightly as shepherd dons cloak, he shall invest himself with sovereignty over its people,
 12 and unmolested go his way, breaking in pieces the statues that adorn Egypt's sun-temple, the shrines of Egypt burning to the ground.

44 Here is a message that was sent through Jeremias to all the Jews living in Egypt, whether in Magdalu or Taphnis or Memphis or the Phatures country: Thus says the Lord, the God of hosts: You have seen for yourselves what calamity I brought on Jerusalem and the cities of Juda, how this day they are empty of inhabitants. By their own guilt they earned it, when they defied my vengeance, courting the sacrifices and the worship of alien gods they had never known till then, they and you and your fathers alike. Early to your doors I sent those prophets that were servants of mine, bidding you leave off such foul doings of yours, doings most hateful to me; but heed and hearing they gave me none, still went astray, to alien gods still made sacrifice. At last my angry vengeance blazed up, and lit such a fire in the townships of Juda, in the streets of Jerusalem, as has left them, this day, a barren wilderness. And now, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, what of yourselves? Would you fasten a noose round your own necks, court death for man and woman, child and weanling, till remnant of Juda there is none? For rivals must I have images of your own making? Will

you sacrifice to gods not yours, there in Egypt? Why would you take refuge there, to your own undoing, to be a name all the world should curse by and revile?

Have you forgotten them, ill deeds done
 in your fathers' days by king and queen,
 by man and wife, throughout Juda and the streets of Jerusalem? Alas, to this day
 10 there is no amending; no dread of me, no living by the divine law, by the rule I held up for a pattern to you and to your fathers! Thus, then he threatens you, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: It is myrown you shall see henceforward; the whole of Juda shall be cut away. The remnant that looked to find a refuge in Egypt, in Egypt shall perish, sword and famine their undoing, sword and famine for all of them, high and low. Theirs shall be a name of execration and of wonder, a name to curse by and to revile. Sword, famine and pestilence, so I called Jerusalem to account, and so I will call Egypt to account; for those
 14 Jewish survivors that have taken refuge in Egypt there is no escaping with their lives, no returning to Juda, home of their eager desire; only fugitives shall return.

Jeremias did not go unanswered; there
 were men there who knew well their wives made offering to alien gods; of the women themselves, many were standing by. They had but one thought, all these exiles that were making their home at Phatures in Egypt; Ay, so the Lord bids thee tell us, but we will have none of it. Sworn we are,
 17 and by that oath we mean to stand, that we will do sacrifice to the queen of heaven, and make offering of cakes to her, as we ever did, we and our fathers, kings and rulers of ours, in the townships of Juda and in Jerusalem streets; bread we had in those days to our heart's content, and all went well with us; bad times we never saw. It is only since we left off doing sacrifice to the queen of heaven, and paid tribute of cakes no more, that all is woe and want, sword wasting us and famine. Sacrifice
 19 when we women make to the queen of heaven, and pour libation to her, be sure our men-folk know in whose honour cake is made, and wine is poured!

But Jeremias turned upon them all, men
 20 and women alike, all that had given him

¹ 'The vault'; this represents a noun in the Hebrew which is not found elsewhere. Modern commentators give the rendering 'mortar'.

- 21 his answer. Nay, said he, when you did sacrifice all through Juda and in Jerusalem streets, and your fathers before you, king and noble and plain citizen, be sure the Lord was heeding you, and marked it well.
- 22 It was when the Lord could bear no longer with false aims and foul deeds of yours, that your land became a wilderness, a thing of wonder, a name to curse by, a land
- 23 empty of inhabitants, as it is this day. It was because you sacrificed, in the Lord's despite, to false gods, because you would not obey him, would not follow law and decree and ordinance of his, that all the calamity of these times has come upon you.
- 24 This, too, Jeremias said to the crowd about him, and to their women-folk besides: Jews of Egypt, listen to the message he sends you, he, the Lord of hosts, the
- 25 God of Israel. So you will be as good as your word; sacrifice and libation you have vowed to the queen of heaven, and must pay it; all is accomplished, will has turned
- 26 into act! Then listen, Jews of Egypt, to the doom which the Lord pronounces: By the honour of my own name I have sworn it, the Lord says, never Jew shall be heard more taking his oath by the living God, in
- 27 all this land of Egypt! For woe, not for weal, these eyes of mine shall watch over them, till sword and famine have done
- 28 their work, and Jew in Egypt is none. To Juda from Egypt they shall return, such few as have escaped the sword's point, and the remnant that took refuge here shall learn to their cost whose prophecy was fulfilled, theirs or mine. Here is a sign I mean
- 29 to give you, the Lord says, here in this land, in proof that my threats shall be
- 30 accomplished. Thus says the Lord: I, that gave up Sedecias of Juda to Nabuchodonosor, his mortal enemy, will give up to his mortal enemies yonder Ephree,¹ that is now Pharaoh in Egypt.

45 When Baruch, son of Nerias, had written down the words dictated to him by Jeremias, in the fourth year of Joachim's reign in Juda, this comfort Jeremias gave him: ² A message from the Lord, the God of Israel, to thee, Baruch! Woe is thee, heavy is thy heart; sorrow upon sorrow the Lord gives thee, and respite thou canst find none. Yet this message the Lord

has for thee: Here am I destroying what my own hands built, uprooting what my own hands planted; and for thee must it be all prizes? For prizes never look thou; enough for thee that, go thou where thou wilt, safe-conduct of thy life I am granting thee.

46 Here follows the doom which the Lord pronounced to the prophet Jeremias against the nations of the world. And first against Egypt, whose army stood at Charcamis, by the river Euphrates, under its king Pharaoh Necho, and there was defeated by Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, in the fourth year of Joachim's reign over Juda, that was son to Josias.

Buckler, there, and shield; march we to battle! Yoke steed, and, horsemen, mount; stand to your ranks, helmeted; scour lance, and don breastplate! What means it? Here be cowards turning their backs, here be great warriors slain; pell-mell they flee, and never a glance behind: peril is all around, the Lord says. For the swift no escape, for the strong no prevailing; there in the north, by Euphrates banks, they fail and fall!

Can it be a river that comes up in flood, eddies are these of a foaming torrent? Like river in flood, like foaming torrent marches Egypt to battle, threatening to cover earth with its advance, drown city and citizen. Ay, mount horse, dizzily reel the chariot; way there for the warriors, Ethiop and Libyan with their great shields, men of Lydia that ply bow and shoot arrow so well! Alas, not yours the day; this day the Lord, the God of hosts, has chosen for his day of vengeance, when he will take toll of his enemies; fed and glutted his sword shall be, drink deep of men's blood; here, on Euphrates banks, the Lord, the God of hosts, will claim his sacrifice. Egypt, poor maid, to Galaad betake thee, to find balm for thy wounds! Salve after salve thou wilt try in vain; there is no healing thee. Thy shame has come to all men's ears. earth echoes with thy lament; warrior leaped upon warrior of thine for support, and they fell both together.

And thus the Lord prophesied to Jeremias the coming of Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, and his victory over Egypt.

¹ That is Apries, or Hophra, deposed by Amasis in B.C. 571.

² Cf. ch. 36.

14 Here is news for Egypt; cry it in Magdalu,
wake the echoes of Memphis, in Taphnis
tell it abroad! Stand to arms, make ready
for battle; thy border countries have fallen
15 a prey to the sword already! Why have thy
warriors melted away? Stand they could
not, when the Lord was minded to over-
16 throw them. Many he brought to earth;
stumbled they, man over his fellow, crying
out, Up, to men of our own race return we,
to the land of our birth; escape we from
the invader's sword!¹

17 What name shall we give to Pharaoh?
18 Call him, Din of Battle at Last.² By his
own life he has sworn it, that King whose
name is the Lord of hosts; Pharaoh's con-
queror is on the way, towering high as
Thabor among the hills, as Carmel above
the sea.

19 Poor maid of Egypt, an exile's pack pro-
vide thee! A lonely wilderness Memphis
shall be, where none may dwell hence-
forward.

20 Fitting emblem of Egypt, a heifer lithe
and graceful; from the north a gad-fly⁴
21 shall come to trouble her rest. But those
mercenaries of hers that went to and fro
like bullocks full-fed, see how they have
turned about and taken flight all at once,
none ready to stand his ground! The day
has come when they are marked down for
slaughter; they shall be called to account
22 at last. Loud her voice shall rise above the
clash of bronze,³ now that the invader's
army draws near, pitiless as woodmen that
23 go a-hewing; forest is none so deep they
shall not lay it bare, numberless as the
24 locust-swarm. Poor Egypt, all shame and
confusion, prey of the northern folk! The
25 Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, has pro-
nounced his doom: I mean to have a
reckoning now with Ammon of Thebes,⁶
with Pharaoh and Egypt, with all its gods
and all its kings, with Pharaoh and all who

trust in Pharaoh's aid! I mean to give them²⁶
up into the hands of their mortal enemies,
Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon and his
vassals; then Egypt shall have rest, as
Egypt did of old.

Have thou no fear, the Lord says, Jacob,²⁷
that art my servant still; not for Israel is
danger brewing. From that far country of
exile I mean to restore thee, restore those
children of thine; Jacob shall return, and
live at ease, every blessing shall enjoy, and
enemies have none to fear. For thee no²⁸
terrors, Jacob that art my servant, the
Lord says; am I not at thy side? Of all the
lands in which I have dispersed thee I will
take full toll, but not of thee; I would but
chastise thee with due measures kept, lest
I should leave thee altogether acquitted.⁷

47 And this doom the Lord pro-
nounced to the prophet Jeremias
against the Philistines, before the defeat of
Gaza by king Pharaoh.

Waters rising in the north,⁸ the Lord²
says, a river that overflows its banks, cover-
ing earth and earth's increase, city and
citizen! Loud the cries everywhere, a
whole world in lament, as the sound of
armed hosts draws nearer, groan of chariot³
and rattle of wheels; listless hang hands,
father for son has never a glance to spare.
So comes the day when Philistia shall be⁴
plundered, all of it, Tyre and Sidon of all
their defenders shall be stripped; Philistia
the Lord despoils, and all that is left of
the island-dwellers from Caphtor. Shorn⁵
heads in Gaza; Ascalon is silent now, silent
all their valleys. Long wilt thou bear the
marks of thy mourning! Rest thee, sword⁶
of the Lord! Back into thy scabbard, calm
thyself, and rest! Nay, rest how should it?⁷
It holds the Lord's warrant to subdue
Ascalon and the sea-board country; there
he has made tryst with it.

¹ Literally, 'Why has thy strong one been thrown down' (in the Latin version, 'become rotten'). Some think there is an allusion to the god Apis here, perhaps concealed by a false reading. ² See note on 25: 38.

³ Literally, 'The (appointed) time has brought tumult'. The sense of the Hebrew is probably 'Tumult has passed its appointed time', perhaps meaning that it is too late now to do anything about it.

⁴ If 'gad-fly' is the right rendering of a word not found elsewhere, it is impossible not to suspect a reference to the Greek myth of Io (regularly identified with the Egyptian goddess Isis). Io was changed by Zeus into a heifer and pursued by a gad-fly as the result of Hera's jealousy.

⁵ Literally, 'as if of bronze'. The Hebrew text gives 'as if of a serpent'. ⁶ The Latin version has read the name of the god Ammon as a common noun, 'multitude'; and, somewhat strangely, identifies the town of No not with Thebes, but with Alexandria, which was founded two centuries after Jeremias' date.

⁷ *vv.* 27, 28. A repetition of 30: 10, 11. ⁸ The mention of the north suggests that we are still dealing with the conquests of Nabuchodonosor. If so, the time-indication of verse 1 must be regarded as having an *a fortiori* value; even before the invasion of Philistia by Pharaoh Necho, Jeremias prophesied its invasion by Nabuchodonosor some years later.

48 And thus to Moab speaks the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. Alas for Nabo, spoiled and shamed, for Cariathaim taken, the high fortress humbled, a prey to alarms! For Moab, scant triumph; against Hesebon there are plots a-brewing, Away with it, a nation let it be no more! Silence for thee, a long silence; the sword is at thy heels. From Oronaim the cry goes up, rack and ruin everywhere; Moab lies crushed, let Segor echo the cry! Weep they and wail, that climb the slopes of Luith; all the way down from Oronaim their foes may hear it, the cry of desolation. Fly he must that would escape with life, stripped though he be as the desert tamarisk. Ill reposed that confidence in ramparts of thine, stores of thine; taken thou shalt be like the rest, and Chamos go into exile, all his priests and all his votary chiefs with him. Of all thy cities, none shall be safe from the spoiler's entry; wasted thy valleys shall be, swept bare the hill-sides; the Lord decrees it. Weave a coronal¹ for Moab; in the flower of her pride she goes into exile, and all her cities lie desolate, none to dwell there. Cursed the man who goes about the Lord's work grudgingly, nor with blood stains his sword! Since those first days of his, ever was Moab too rich; he, that knew not exile, is like a wine that has settled on its lees, never decanted; tang and reek of it were never lost; a time is coming now, the Lord says, when I mean to send certain stewards of mine that shall tilt those jars; draw wine, drain goblet, and break jar to pieces! Chamos will play Moab false, as Bethel played Israel false, when Israel trusted in its sanctuary. Ay, boast on of your bravery, tell us you are warriors all! Yet Moab is laid waste, its townships aflame, all the flower of its chivalry gone to their death; so that king decrees, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Not long delayed, Moab's last hour; runs on swift feet his calamity. Mourn with him, you that are his neighbours, you that are his familiars; so trusty a rod broken, a staff so fair.

Poor maid of Dibon, come down from thy splendour and sit on the parched ground; the spoiler of Moab has scaled thy heights, dismantled thy walls; poor maid of Aroer, by the wayside linger and look around thee; ask of the fugitives, How went the day? Alas, Moab's hope is lost; Moab lies conquered. Loud be the cry of lament in Arnon, that tells of fields laid waste; doom on the hill-country, on Helon, Jasa, and Mephaath, Dibon, Nabo, and Beth-Deblathaim, Cariathaim, Bethgamul, Bethmaon, Carioth, and Bosra, and all the cities of Moab, far and near. Blunted now is that horn, the Lord says, crushed that strong arm! Senseless let him fall, that once for the divine power vaunted himself a match; a laughing-stock let him be, that once, vomiting over his wine, clapped hands in derision to make a laughing-stock of Israel! An interloper thou didst call him, and now, for this ill speaking of thine, thyself shalt be cast into exile.² Leave your cities, Moabites, and take to the hills; make the dove your model, that ever at the outermost edge of cave will build her nest.

The boasting of Moab has long been in our ears,³ as it was ever boastful; proud, scornful, boastful Moab, with head so high in air! Well I know, the Lord says, those high pretensions of hers, that have no strength to warrant them, those dreams that never come true! So, from one end of Moab to the other, there is dole and dirge, mournful hearing for the men behind those walls of hardened brick. Jazer laments for thee, vineyard of Sabama, and with Jazer I too will mourn; thy shoors reached from Jazer itself to the Dead Sea and beyond; now, harvest of thine and vintage of thine the spoiler has overrun. From the garden-lands of Moab joy and triumph have died away; all the presses I have emptied of their wine, no vintage-song, no treading the grapes as of old. The dirge goes up from Hesebon, from Eleale and Jasa; goes up all the way from Segor to Oronaim, like the lowing of heifer full-

¹ Literally, 'give a flower'. The Hebrew text is generally rendered 'wings', with 'flying' instead of 'flourishing' in the second part of the verse, but the justification of this sense is doubtful. ² *ibid.* 26, 27. The sense here is very doubtful. 'Interloper'; literally, 'thief'; the reference is perhaps to Israel's comparatively late arrival in Palestine. ³ *ibid.* 29-38. Most of these phrases are to be found, though some of them in a different form, in chs. 15, 16 of Isaiah. The simplest explanation seems to be, that both prophets, at this point, wrote in certain appropriate lines from an older poem. The 'walls of hardened brick' and the 'heifer full-grown' perhaps conceal proper names.

grown; foul run the waters of Nemrim.
 35 None will I leave in Moab, the Lord says,
 to worship at the hill-shrines, or do sacri-
 36 fice to its gods. For Moab my heart wails
 like the wailing of flutes, wailing of flutes
 for those brick-walled cities of hers; too
 high she aimed, and see, they lie in ruins.
 37 Every head is shorn, every beard shaved in
 mourning; with bound¹ hands men go,
 38 sackcloth on their backs. Roof-top and
 street in Moab is none but echoes with
 grief; I have cast Moab away, the Lord
 says, like a jar past mending.
 39 Lament for Moab in defeat, bowed
 heads for Moab's shame! A laughing-
 stock it will be and a by-word for all its
 40 neighbours. An eagle's flight yonder con-
 queror has, the Lord says, and will sweep
 41 down on Moab too. Now Carioth² is lost,
 and all the strongholds taken; cowed as
 42 woman's heart in child-bearing are those
 warrior hearts; Moab, that set the Lord at
 43 defiance, shall be a people no more. Terror
 in front of its people, the Lord says, trap
 and toil behind them; from terror flee
 44 thou, into trap fall thou; from the trap free
 thee, toils shall fasten thee. Such shall be
 my year of reckoning with the men of
 45 Moab, the Lord says. From the toils
 escaped, who turns to Hesebon for shelter?
 Helpless he stands; such a fire comes out
 from Hesebon, all Seon's capital aflame,
 46 consumed. Alas, Moab, alas, people of
 Chamos, for thy undoing! Gone into exile
 47 now thy sons and daughters!³ Yet a time
 shall come at last, the Lord says, when her
 lot shall be reversed.

Thus far the doom of Moab.

49 And thus the Lord speaks to the
 Ammonites: Did Israel, then,
 leave no sons, no heirs to follow him? How
 comes it that Melchom boasts possession
 of Gad, and worshippers of his dwell in
 2 yonder cities? A time is coming, the Lord
 says, when Rabbath Ammon shall hear the
 din of fighting, and shall be thrown down

in ruins; when her daughter cities shall be
 burnt to the ground, and Israel, so runs the
 divine promise, shall drive out the in-
 3 truder. Shall Hesebon mourn for Hai
 laid waste, and the women of Rabbath for
 Rabbath make no lament?⁴ Nay, put on
 sackcloth, raise the dirge as you scatter
 among the hedge-rows; Melchom goes
 into banishment, his priests and his votary
 chieftains with him. So proud of thy
 4 valleys! Wasted away, now, is that vale of
 thine, pampered maiden; confident in thy
 rich store, thou didst flatter thyself none
 should come near to harm thee, but I mean
 5 to fill thee with dread, says the Lord, the
 God of hosts, dread of all thy neighbours.
 Each man shall take his own path, scatter-
 ing in flight, and there shall be none to
 rally the fugitives. Yet afterwards, the
 6 Lord says, I will bring the exiled sons of
 Ammon back to their home.

And for Edom, this. No more is The-
 7 man wise, as of old, says the Lord of hosts;
 the prudence of that breed is lost, its
 wisdom all gone to waste. Flee away, men
 8 of Dedan, and never look behind you, or
 hide deep in earth; I am bringing ruin
 upon Esau, calling him to account at last.
 Here are such vintagers as will leave thee
 9 never a cluster, such night-robbers as will
 have their fill; mine to strip Esau bare, dig
 up his lairs till there is no hiding in them.
 The whole brood of him must be de-
 stroyed, never a kinsman or neighbour left,
 that will say,⁵ To my care entrust thy
 11 orphans, to me let thy widows look for
 support. So many there are, the Lord
 12 says, that must drink the cup of vengeance
 all undeserving; and wouldst thou be
 spared, wouldst thou be acquitted? Ac-
 quittal for thee is none; thou shalt drain
 it to the dregs. By my own honour I have
 13 sworn it, the Lord says, that Bosra shall be
 an empty wilderness, a name to revile and
 to curse by; that her daughter cities shall
 for ever be desolate.

Hue and cry the Lord has brought to
 14 my ears, that even now goes out among the

¹ According to the Hebrew text 'lacerated' (in sign of mourning). ² Or perhaps the Hebrew word should be read as a common noun, 'cities'. ³ *vv.* 45, 46. Here again the prophet seems to be quoting from an older poem, which may or may not be the same as that already alluded to; cf. Num. 21. 28, 29. ⁴ The original runs simply, 'Mourn, Hesebon, for Hai is laid waste; lament, daughters of Rabbath'. But it seems clear that Hesebon, which had no connexion with the Ammonites, is only brought in by way of comparison. No town of Hai is elsewhere mentioned east of the Jordan, and many think the text is corrupt. ⁵ *vv.* 10, 11. The words 'that will say' are not expressed in the original, but it seems necessary to supply them; otherwise the two verses are in direct contradiction, and the mention of 'neighbours' is inexplicable.

nations, Muster we and march we against
 15 her; on to battle! A little thing I mean thee to be in the world's eyes henceforward,
 16 unregarded among the nations; till now, pride and the insolence of thy heart deduced thee, so safe thy nest among the rock-crevices, so close thou didst cling to the mountain summits; but now, be thy eyrie high as the eagle's, I will yet drag
 17 thee down, the Lord says.¹ A very desert Edom shall be; no passer-by but will stand amazed, and hiss derision at its sufferings;
 18 not more ruinously Sodom fell, and Gomorrah, and their neighbour cities, that lie uninhabited, far from the homes of men.
 19 See how lion from the fens of Jordan sallies out against yonder protected fold! Not less sudden the alarm shall be;² and the flock shall have a master of my own choosing. Match for me is none, there is none dare implead me, no rival shepherd
 20 may challenge a claim like mine! Would you know what the Lord's design is for Edom, what plans he is devising against the homesteads of Theman? Why, he says, it will but need an array of weaklings to dislodge them,³ pull their dwelling-place down about their ears! And with the crash of that ruin earth shakes, far as the
 22 Red Sea ring the echoes of it. An eagle's flight yonder conqueror has, to soar high and sweep down on Bosra; cowed as woman's heart in child-bearing are the warrior hearts of Edom.
 23 And for Damascus, this. Hamath and Arphad see their hopes betray them; grievous the news that reaches them, and they are rocked on a sea of doubt; anxiety
 24 gives them no respite. As for Damascus, her strength has left her; no thought has she but for flight, daunted by her peril, overcome, like woman in child-bearing, with sharp pangs. City so renowned,
 25 home of such delights, must all abandon her? In her streets they lie slain, all the flower of her youth, all her brave warriors
 27 lie silent now, the Lord says; and such a fire I will light within Damascus walls as shall feed on the palaces of Benadad.
 28 And this for Cedar, and the realms of

Asor, that were destroyed by Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon. Word comes from the Lord: Up, march against Cedar, despoil we these children of the East! Pillage
 29 there shall be of home and herd, plundering of tents and gear and camels, and cries of Danger everywhere. Flee away, wander
 30 far away, men of Asor; deep, says the Lord, be your hiding-places! Here is Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon holding a council of war, devising plans against you.

Up, march against a people that lives at
 31 ease, fearing no attack, the Lord says; gates and bars they have none, dwelling there in the wilderness; camels for you
 32 plunder, herds a many for your prey! Scattered they shall be to all the winds, the folk that clip their foreheads bare, and from every corner of their lands death shall threaten them, the Lord says. Asor shall
 33 be a lair for serpents, a land for ever desolate; uninhabited it shall lie, far from the homes of men.

And here is the doom the Lord pro-
 34 nounced to the prophet Jeremias against Aelam, at the beginning of Sedecias' reign
 35 in Juda. A message from the Lord of hosts! I mean to break the bows of yonder Aelamites, wherein lies all their strength. Upon Aelam I will bid the winds blow
 36 from the four corners of heaven, and before each scatter them like chaff, till nation is none that has not seen their fugitives. Daunted the Aelamites shall be by the
 37 onset of their mortal enemies; my angry vengeance I will let loose against them, the Lord says, and my sword shall go at their heels till I have taken full toll of them.
 38 Aelam I will set up my throne, he says, and rid it altogether of kings and princes. Yet afterwards, so runs the divine promise, I will bring the exiled sons of Aelam
 39 back to their home.

50 And here is the doom the Lord pronounced, with Jeremias for his spokesman, against Babylon and Chaldea.

Tell it out, proclaim it for all the world

¹ *vs.* 14-16. The prophecy of Abdias opens with (substantially) the same expressions, and Abd. 5 is a reminiscence of verse 9 above. The use of common material by the two prophets seems the most probable explanation; cf. note on 48. 29-38. ² Literally, 'I will suddenly make him run to it', but the Hebrew text has, 'I will make him (Edom) suddenly run away from it'. ³ Literally, 'the little ones of the flock will throw them down'; the Hebrew text can be interpreted as meaning, 'they will throw down the little ones of the flock'.

to hear; set up a trophy, and cry the news, leave nothing untold! News of Babylon taken, and Bel thwarted, and Merodach overcome; all the idols put to shame, routed, all the false gods! Here is a people on the march from the north country that shall attack Babylon and turn her land into a desert; man nor beast shall dwell there, all are fled and gone.

So the day shall dawn, the time be ripe at last, the Lord says, when Israel and Juda both together shall come back, weeping as they hasten on their journey to find the Lord their God. For Sion every voice asking, every face towards Sion turned, they will come back, and bind themselves to the Lord by an eternal covenant, never to be forgotten. My people, all this while, has been but a flock gone astray; their shepherds led them by false paths, and left them to roam the hill-side; hill and mountain-side they crossed, and their own resting-place lay forgotten. None passed by but preyed on them; nor did the oppressor's conscience smite him; had they not set the Lord at defiance, that Lord who was the home of their loyalty, the hope of their race?

Flee, Israel, from Babylon; from Chaldaea's land be foremost to depart, like buck-goats that lead the way for their fellows. See what a confederacy of great nations I am mustering, there in the north country, to besiege and take Babylon, death-dealing archers that never speed arrow in vain! Chaldaea shall be a prize of war, the Lord says, and all her spoilers be content. Ay, boast and brag, trample on my own domain, like calves at grass or bellowing bull! Shame waits for the mother that bore you, her pride must be lowered in the dust; least regarded of all realms, a desert, pathless and parched! Doomed, all of her, by the Lord's vengeance to empty desolation; no passer-by but shall stand amazed at Babylon, or hiss derision at her sufferings. To your posts, archers, around the walls of Babylon; shoot, never spare arrow; to the Lord her life is forfeit. Now, raise the cry! Everywhere she is yielding; falls buttress and

gapes wall, the Lord is avenged! Ay, take your fill of vengeance, pay her what she has earned. Leave none in Babylon to sow the fields, or carry scythe in harvest-time; fled, each to his own, before the invader's sword, fled, this way and that, to the countries of their birth.

Poor Israel, a flock so scattered! Lions have chased them away; first the Assyrian king would prey on them, and since then yonder Nabuchodonosor, of Babylon, has mangled their bones! And now, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I mean to have a reckoning with the Babylonian king, and his realm, as once with Assyria. And Israel I will restore to his home; Carmel and Basan shall be his pasture-ground again, hill-country of Ephraim and Galaad his hunger shall content. When that day dawns, the Lord says, when the time is ripe for it, guilt shall be found in Israel no more, for the record of Juda's sins you shall search in vain; the remnant which I leave shall win my pardon.

March on, the Lord says, into the land of tyranny, and call its citizens to account; bale and ban at their heels! All my command see thou execute. Din of battle sounds through the land, and the crash of ruin; rack and ruin everywhere! And this Babylon was once a hammer to smite the world; now it lies by all the world abandoned! I laid a trap for thee, Babylon, and thou wast caught unawares; thy long defiance of the Lord has found thee out and overtaken thee at last. Now the Lord opens his armoury, takes out from it the tools that shall wreak his vengeance; he, the Lord of hosts, has work for them to do in the country of the Chaldaeans. From the furthest confines of the land draw near; open a way for the spoilers; pile up stones from the road in heaps; make an end of her, leave nothing to survive.¹ An end of all her warriors, to the slaughter-house with them! Woe betide them, their day has come, the time when they must meet their reckoning.

Listen to the buzz of voices, as the fugitives escaped from Babylon come back to Sion, spreading the news how the Lord

¹ The sense of the Hebrew text is probably 'beifer treading out the corn or neighing stallion'.

² The Latin version here seems to have misunderstood the Hebrew text, which refers to the opening of store-rooms and the piling up of their contents as forfeit to the Lord and therefore unavailable for booty (Jos. 6. 17. 18; 7. 11, 12).

has been avenged, how the Lord's temple has been avenged.

29 Archers a many with bent bows, give them orders how the city must fare: Stand about in a ring, let never a man escape, pay it what its deeds have earned; to Babylon do as Babylon did to others, the city that was the Lord's enemy, defied the holy One
30 of Israel. In her streets they lie slain, all the flower of her youth, all her brave warriors lie silent now, the Lord says.¹ Have
31 at thee, says the Lord, the God of hosts; thy day has come, the time when thou must meet thy reckoning! Stumbles the tyrant and falls, with none there to raise him; and in those cities of his I will kindle such a fire as shall consume all around it.

32 Thus says the Lord of hosts: Here is great wrong done to Israel and to Juda both; he that has them holds them fast,
34 and let them go he will not. Yet they have a strong champion that claims them as his own; his name is the Lord of hosts; right and redress he will bring them in such a fashion as will shake earth,² and
35 make the homes of Babylon tremble. The sword it must be, the Lord says, for the men of Chaldaeae, for citizen of Babylon, and prince, and councillor; the sword for their wise men, that shall be fools, and their brave men, that shall be cowards; the sword for horse and chariot, the sword for all the mixed breed in it, that shall be weak as women, the sword for all their treasure-houses, that shall be given up to plunder.
36 And for their waters, not a sword, but drought to dry them up; is not this a land of idols, that loves to see portents befall?³
37 It shall be a lair for serpents and strange monsters,⁴ a haunt of the ostrich, but never again shall man dwell there; age after age, it shall never be rebuilt; not more ruinously the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrhah and their neighbour cities, that lie uninhabited, far from the homes of men.⁵

41 Here is a people marching from the north country, the Lord says, a great nation from the world's end, and vassal kings

a many. Bow and shield they ply, and their hard hearts pity none; loud their battle-cry as the roaring of the sea. So they ride on, as warriors ride, poor Babylon, thy enemies. Unnerved the king's hands droop at the very rumour of it; grief overmasters him, sharp as the pangs of travail.⁶ See how lion from the fens of Jordan sallies out against yonder protected fold! Not less sudden the alarm shall be; and the flock shall have a master of my own choosing. Match for me is none, there is none dare implead me, no rival shepherd may challenge a claim like mine! Would you know what the Lord's design is for Babylon, what plans he is devising against the realm of Chaldaeae? Why, he says, it will need but an array of weaklings to dislodge them, pull their dwelling-place down about their ears!⁷ Babylon has fallen; earth trembles at the sound of it; a great cry goes up for all the world to hear.

51 Thus says the Lord, I mean to let loose on Babylon, and the whole of Defiance-land,⁸ a destroying blast; win-
2 ners of mine shall reach Babylon and fall to winnowing it, till all the heaps are gone; an ill day for Babylon, cut off on every side. Let not a man live to bend
3 bow again, or don breastplate for battle; never a warrior spare, army she must have none left. Everywhere in country-side and street of Chaldaeae the mangled corpses
4 lie; Juda's God, the Lord of hosts, has not altogether forsaken her, and to that holy
5 One of Israel the whole land is forfeit. Fly away from the confines of Babylon, flee for your lives; would you meekly accept her
6 punishment? The time has come when the Lord will take vengeance on her, he it is that sends this retribution. Babylon, that was once a golden cup in the Lord's hand, for a whole world's bemusing! Drank
7 nations of that cup, how they reeled and tottered! And now, all in a moment, Ba-
8 bylon herself falls to her ruin. Raise the dirge, go find balm to heal those wounds

¹ Repeated from 49. 26. ² 'Shake earth'; or perhaps (deriving the Hebrew verb from a different root) 'bring repose to earth'. ³ There is here a play upon words in the Hebrew; 'sword' and 'drought' differ only by a single point. The second half of the verse is of doubtful interpretation. Herodotus affirms (i. 191) that Cyrus took Babylon by diverting the course of the Euphrates. ⁴ Literally, 'dragons and fig-fauns'. Cf. Is. 34. 14, where the Latin version renders the same Hebrew phrase 'demons and onocentaur's'. There can be no certainty what creatures are really alluded to; some think wild cats and jackals. ⁵ Repeated from 49. 18. ⁶ *vv.* 41-43. Repeated from 6. 22-24. ⁷ *vv.* 44, 45. Repeated from 49. 19-21. ⁸ The Hebrew letters of this word form a cipher equivalent for the name 'Chaldaeae'.

9 of hers! Alas, we sought a cure for Babylon, but curing her there was none; time it is we left her, and went back each to his own land; towers heaven-high the measure of her punishment, and is lost
10 among the clouds. Come, then, since he has given us the redress we needed, recount we in Sion the great doings of the Lord our God.

11 Whet arrow, and fill quiver; the Lord has put a resolve into the heart of the Median king; he will have Babylon overthrown. The Lord shall be avenged, his temple shall be avenged! Against Babylon's walls display the standard, keep strict watch, post sentinels, lay ambush; the doom of its folk, long since devised, long
12 since denounced, he will execute. Land by all those tributary streams so enriched, thy end is reached, thy thread is spun. By his own honour the Lord of hosts has sworn it, thy enemies shall swarm about thee like locusts, raising their vintage-song.

13 His the power that made the earth,¹ the wisdom that orders nature, the foresight that spread out the heavens. At the sound of his voice, what mustering of the waters overhead! He summons up the cloud-wrack from the world's end, turning the lightning into a rain-storm, bringing the winds out of his store-house; how puny, then, is man's skill, how sorry a thing is the metal-caster's workmanship; after all his labour at the forge, only a lifeless counterfeit! Fond imaginations, fantastic figures, when the time comes for reckoning,
14 they will be heard of no more. Not such the worship that is the heirloom of Jacob's line; their God is the God who made all things, Israel his patrimony, the Lord of hosts, his name.

15 Great conqueror, the weapon I wield! By thy means I crush the nations, undo empires;² crush horse and rider, crush chariot and charioteer, crush man and woman, crush old and young, crush lad and lass, crush shepherd and flock, crush ploughman and team, crush prince and ruler! And now I mean to repay Babylon, and all the people of Chaldea, for the wrongs they did, says the Lord, and your

eyes shall see it. Have at thee, stronghold of ruin, the Lord says, a whole world's ruin! My hand is raised to smite thee, and tear thee from thy rocky bed; a calcined heap thou shalt be, that never corner-stone, never foundation-stone shall yield; the Lord dooms thee to lie for ever desolate.

16 Display your standard for all the world to see, sound the trumpet far and wide, enrol the nations against her; make tryst with the kings of Ararat, Menni, and Ascenez, and count Taphsar among her enemies; like locusts in bristling array swarm your cavalry. Plight all the nations to make war on her, the kings of Media with their chieftains and satraps, all their wide dominion; a whole world in turmoil and travail with the stir of the divine resolve to crush Babylon, make Babylon an empty desert. See how her warriors quit the field, to garrison their strongholds, how their valour dies away and grows womanish, how her roofs blaze, the bars of her gates are shattered! Courier meets courier, post to post hands the tidings on; tell the king of Babylon how his capital has fallen, length and breadth of it, the fords occupied, the reed-beds aflame, dismayed the defenders. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Babylon is a threshing-floor time has worn smooth; wait but a little, and it is ready for harvest.

17 Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, how he has preyed on me, feasted on me, left me but an empty shell; a devouring monster that with kernel fills his maw, throws husk away! Thus Sion, for her torn flesh, thus Jerusalem, for her blood spilt, arraigns Babylon and all yonder Chaldaean folk; and now the Lord of hosts promises to maintain their quarrel, to redress their wrongs. I will turn her sea into desert sand, he tells you, dry up her flow of waters; Babylon shall remain a heap of ruins, a lair for serpents, a thing of wonder and derision, and never a soul to dwell in it. What though they rage like roaring lion, like young lion that tosses his mane?³ I have a medicine for this thirst of theirs, to bemuse them and steal away their

¹ vs. 15-19. These verses are repeated from 10. 12-16; it is not easy to see how they are relevant in their present context.

² Some think Babylon itself is addressed, as having been previously the instrument of the divine vengeance. But it seems better to understand the passage as referring to king Cyrus, like verse 11 above and verse 28 below.

senses; they shall sleep on, the Lord says, with that eternal sleep from which there is no waking. Never was lamb led to the slaughter-house, never ram or buck-goat, so unsuspecting. Sesach¹ taken, the paragon of kingdoms fallen! Babylon turned into a sight of horror for all the world to see! Babylon foundered and gone, the waste waves closing over her! All her cities a picture of desolation, an empty desert, uninhabited, untrodden by mortal foot. Bel, too, the God of Babylon, I will call to account, and make him disgorge his treasures; no more shall pilgrims flock into his temple from distant lands; Babylon's defences are down.

You that are my own people, separate yourselves from her, flee all of you from the Lord's vengeance; else you shall be ever faint with alarms,² ever daunted by the news that reaches you, each year a fresh rumour of wrongs done in this land, of rulers struggling for preeminence.

A time is coming when I mean to have a reckoning with the idols of Babylon; the land will learn that they have played it false, when corpses lie thick in the heart of Heaven and earth, and all they contain, will be triumphing over Babylon, says the Lord, as they see the spoilers marching against her from the north country; through Babylon so many slain in Israel, of Babylon so many slain, in every corner of their land! Come, linger not, you that have escaped the sword; exiled far away, bethink you still of the Lord, still let the thought of Jerusalem return to your hearts.

Alas, we are all confusion; what taunts we must listen to, shame-faced, now that the Lord's holy temple by alien intruders is defiled!³

A time is coming, the Lord says, when I mean to have a reckoning with those false gods of hers. Everywhere in Chaldaea there shall be wounded men a-groaning; let Babylon scale the skies, fortify her walls heaven-high, they shall yet find their way in, the spoilers that do my errand, the Lord

says. Babylon shall be all lament, Chaldaea a crash of ruin; the mighty stir of the city will be drowned, when the Lord lays it waste, by the surge of armies, wave upon wave, and the noise of their shouting. The spoiler has come upon Babylon; her warriors are caught in a trap, their bows are useless now; the Lord's vengeance is irresistible, and he pays full measure. Bemused they shall be, prince and councillor and chieftain and ruler and warrior; all shall sleep eternally the sleep from which there is no waking; such is the decree of that King whose name is the Lord of hosts.

That wide wall of Babylon, says the Lord of hosts, shall be dismantled at last, those high gates burnt. So men labour for nothing; so the toil of nations perishes in the fire.⁴

And now Jeremias had an errand for Saraias, son of Nerias, son of Maasias. When king Sedecias departed to Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign, Saraias went with him as his principal spokesman.⁵ Jeremias had written down on a single scroll all the doom that was to befall Babylon, all the prophecy against Babylon aforesaid. When thou reachest Babylon, he told Saraias, be sure thou readest all this. And say, in reading it: Lord, thou dost threaten this place with destruction; man nor beast shall dwell there, it shall lie desolate for ever. Then, when thou hast finished reading the scroll, tie a stone to it and sink it in the midst of Euphrates; and this add: Thus Babylon shall sink, and rise no more out of the calamity I mean to bring upon it; Babylon shall melt away.⁶

Here ends the prophecy of Jeremias.

52 Sedecias was twenty-one years old when he came to the throne,⁷ and his reign at Jerusalem lasted eleven years; his mother's name was Amital, daughter of Jeremias of Lobna. He disobeyed the Lord's will, as Joachim had; for now the Lord's anger hum over Juda and Jerusalem, ready to banish them from his

¹ As in 25. 26, a cipher name for Babylon.

² Literally, 'and lest you should (continue to) be faint-hearted'. The common rendering 'And do not be faint with alarms' does not suit the context; escape would make alarm unnecessary.

³ This verse is generally understood as a protest from the exiles, who dare not return to Juacea from a sense of shame. But its appearance here is curiously inappropriate, and some suspect that, through accident, it has been misplaced.

⁴ The second half of this verse is also found in Hab. 2. 13.

⁵ According to the Hebrew text, 'his chief of resting-place', perhaps in the sense of quartermaster.

⁶ The words 'Babylon shall melt away' represent what is probably an error of copying in the Hebrew text.

⁷ The whole of this chapter, except verses 28-30, is repeated from IV Kg. 24 and 25. There are a few very slight differences, some of which suggest errors of transcription.

presence. And Sedecias in his turn revolted from the king of Babylon.

4 And now, in the ninth year of Sedecias' reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nabuchodonosor reached Jerusalem at the 5 head of his army. They surrounded it and threw up siege works about it, and so the city continued beleaguered until king Sedecias' 6 eleventh year. Then, on the ninth day of the fourth month, when famine had broken out in the city and the poorer folk 7 had nothing left to eat, a breach was made in the walls; and that night all the fighting men made their escape by way of the gate between the two walls, by the royal garden, leaving the Chaldaeans to continue the siege of the city. They chose for their flight 8 the road which leads to the desert, and in the desert by Jericho Sedecias was overtaken by the Chaldaeans, who had set out in pursuit. All his retinue deserted him; 9 and so, a prisoner, the king was borne away to Reblatha, in the Emath country, where Nabuchodonosor passed sentence 10 on him. Slain by the king of Babylon were all his sons, there in their father's sight; slain by the king of Babylon, at Reblatha, 11 were all the nobles of Juda; and as for Sedecias himself, his eyes were put out, and he was carried off, loaded with chains, to Babylon, where he remained a prisoner till the day of his death.

12 On the tenth day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of Nabuchodonosor's reign, the commander of his bodyguard, Nabuzardan, came on his master's errand 13 to Jerusalem, where he burned down temple and palace and private dwellings too; no house of note but he set it on fire. 14 The troops he brought with him were employed in dismantling the walls on every 15 side of it. Then Nabuzardan carried off the remnants of the people that were left in the city, the deserters who had gone over 16 to Nabuchodonosor, and the common folk generally; leaving only such of the poorer sort as were vine-dressers and farm labourers. 17 Brazen pillars and brazen stands and the great basin of bronze that stood in the Lord's temple the Chaldaeans broke up, and took away all the bronze to Babylon; for bronze, too, they carried away pot 18 and fork, ladle and cup and saucer, all the appurtenances of worship that were of bronze; for gold, too, and for silver, bowl

and censer and urn and basin and lampstand and spoon and goblet; nothing did 20 Nabuzardan leave behind him. There was no reckoning the weight of bronze, when the two pillars, the great basin, and the twelve calves supporting it, all set up by Solomon in the temple, are included; each 21 pillar was eighteen cubits high, twelve cubits round, and four fingers thick, and they were hollow within. On each rested 22 a brazen capital, five cubits in height, with network and pomegranate mouldings on the rim; the pattern of each was the same. There were ninety-six pomegranates be- 23 sides, making a hundred in all, and all had network around them.

Prisoners, too, Nabuzardan carried 24 away with him, the two chief priests, Saraias and Sophonias, the three doorkeepers from the temple, and among the 25 citizens, the chamberlain who commanded the army, seven other courtiers who were left in the city, the secretary who was charged with the army and had the levying of recruits, and sixty surviving citizens of the common sort. All these were carried 26 away by Nabuzardan to Reblatha, into Nabuchodonosor's presence; and there at 27 Reblatha, in the Emath country, Nabuchodonosor put them to death. So the men of Juda were exiled from their country. Three thousand and twenty-three 28 Jewish citizens Nabuchodonosor banished in the seventh year of his reign, and another eight hundred and thirty-two, from 29 Jerusalem, in the eighteenth year of it; then, in his twenty-third year, seven hundred 30 and forty-five were banished by Nabuzardan, the captain of the bodyguard; four thousand six hundred in all.

On the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth 31 month, in the thirty-seventh year after king Joachim of Juda had been carried into exile, the new king of Babylon, Evil-Merodach, in this first year of his reign, gave redress to his captive and released him 32 from prison. Graciously did Evil-Merodach receive him, gave him a seat of honour above the other captive kings, and relieved him of his prisoner's garb. All the 33 rest of his life he was entertained at the royal table; all the rest of his life he received, day and day, a perpetual allowance 34 granted to him, as long as he should live, by the king's bounty.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAS

WHEN Israel was brought into captivity, and Jerusalem left deserted, the prophet Jeremias sat down there and wept, with this mournful lamentation following. And as he spoke, ever he sighed and moaned in the bitterness of his heart.

1 Alone she dwells, the city erewhile so populous; a widow now, once a queen among the nations; tributary now, that once had provinces at her command.

2 Be sure she weeps; there in the darkness her cheeks are wet with tears; of all that courted her, none left to console her, all those lovers grown weary of her, and turned into enemies.

3 Cruel the suffering and the bondage of Juda's exile;¹ that she must needs dwell among the heathen! Nor respite can she find; close at her heels the pursuit, and peril on either hand.

4 Desolate, the streets of Sion; no flocking, now, to the assembly; the gateways lie deserted. Sighs priest, and the maidens go in mourning, so bitter the grief that hangs over all.

5 Exultant, now, her invaders; with her enemies nothing goes amiss. For her many sins, the Lord has brought doom on her, and all her children have gone into exile, driven before the oppressor.

6 Fled is her beauty, the Sion that was once so fair; her chieftains have yielded their ground before the pursuer, strengthless as rams² that can find no pasture.

7 Grievous the memories she holds, of the hour when all her ancient glories passed from her, when her people fell defenceless

before the invader, unresisting before an enemy that derided them.³

Heinously Jerusalem sinned; what wonder if she became an outlaw?⁴ How they fell to despising her when they saw her shame, that once flattered her! Deeply she sighed, and turned away her head.

All might skirts of her robe the defilement conceal; alas, so reckless of her doom, alas, fallen so low, with none to comfort her! Mark it well, Lord; see how humbled I, how exultant my adversary!

Jealous hands were laid on all she treasured; so it was that she must see Gentiles profane her sanctuary, Gentiles, by thy ordinance from the assembly debarred.

Kindred was none but went sighing for lack of bread, offered its precious heirlooms for food to revive men's hearts. Mark it well, Lord, and see my pride abased!

Look well, you that pass by, and say if there was ever grief like this grief of mine; never a grape on the vineyard left to glean, when the Lord's threat of vengeance is fulfilled.⁵

Must fire from heaven waste my whole being, ere I can learn my lesson? Must he catch me in a net, to drag me back from my course? Desolate he leaves me, to pine away all the day long with grief.

No respite it gives me, the yoke of guilt I bear, by his hand fastened down upon my neck; see, I faint under it! The Lord has given me up a prisoner to duress there is no escaping.

Of all I had, the Lord has taken away the noblest; lost to me, all the flower of my chivalry, under his strict audit; Sion, poor

¹ Literally, this verse appears to imply that Juda has gone into exile *because* of affliction; and some think the reference is to refugee Jews in Egypt and elsewhere. But the word used for 'exile' really means 'deportation'.

² In the Hebrew text, 'stags'.
³ Literally, 'her enemies derided her sabbath'; that is, her quiescence. The Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning that Sion, in her affliction, remembers her past glories; but the expression is obscure.

⁴ 'An outlaw'; literally, 'unable to hold her ground'; but the word used in the Hebrew text implies ceremonial defilement.
⁵ The opening of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is of uncertain interpretation; some think the meaning is, 'May it never happen to you!' The vineyard metaphor used here and in verse 22 seems due to a mistaken interpretation in the Latin.

maid, here was a wine-press well trodden down!

16 Pray you, should I not weep? Fountains these eyes are, that needs must flow; comforter is none at hand, that should revive my spirits. Lost to me, all those sons of mine, outmatched by their enemy.

17 Quest for consolation is vain, let her plead where she will; neighbours of Jacob, so the Lord decrees, are Jacob's enemies, and all around they shrink from her, as from a thing unclean.

18 Right the Lord has in his quarrel; I have set his commands at defiance. O world, take warning; see what pangs I suffer, all my folk gone into exile, both man and maid.

19 So false the friends that were once my suitors! And now the city lacks priests and elders both, that went begging their bread, to revive the heart in them.

20 Take note, Lord, of my anguish, how my bosom burns, and my heart melts within me, in bitter ruth.¹ And all the while, sword threatens without, and death not less cruel within.

21 Uncomforted my sorrow, but not unheard; my enemies hear it, and rejoice that my miseries are of thy contriving. Ah, but when thy promise comes true, they shall feel my pangs!

22 Vintager who didst leave my boughs so bare, for my much offending, mark well their cruelty, and strip these too in their turn; here be sighs a many, and a sad heart to claim it.

2 Alas, what mantle of cloud is this, the divine anger has thrown over unhappy Zion? The pride of Israel cast down from heaven to earth; the ground where the Lord's feet once rested, now, in his anger, forgotten?

2 Blessed abodes of Jacob, by the Lord's unsparing vengeance engulfed; towers that kept Juda inviolable hurled to the ground in ruin; kingdom and throne dragged in the dust!

3 Crushed lay all the defences of Israel, under his displeasure; failed us, at the enemy's onset, the protection of his right hand; Jacob must be hedged about, as by flames of a consuming fire.

4 Deadly his bent bow, steady the play of

his right hand assailing us; all that was fairest in poor Zion's dwelling-place needs must perish, under the fiery rain of his vengeance.

Enemies he counts us, and has engulfed the whole of Israel in ruin; gone the palaces, gone the strongholds; Alas, poor Zion! weeps man, weeps maid, with cowed spirits.²

Fallen, as it had been some garden shed, his own tabernacle; his own trysting-place with men he would pull down! Feast-day and sabbath should be forgotten in Zion; for king and priest, only anger and scorn.

Grown weary of his altar, from his own sanctuary turning away in abhorrence, the Lord has given up yonder embattled towers to the enemy; their cries ring through the temple like shout of holiday.

Heedfully the Lord went about his work, to strip the inviolable city of her walls; exact his measuring-line, busy his hand with the task of overthrow, till wall and rampart should lament their common ruin.

Idly the gates of her sag towards earth, bars riven and rent; king and chieftain are far away, exiled among the heathen; tradition is dead, nor any prophet learns, in vision, the Lord's will.

Jerusalem's aged folk sit there in the dust, dumb with sorrow; dust scattered over their heads, and sackcloth their garb; never a maid shall you see but has her head bowed down to earth.

Keen anguish for the overthrow of an unhappy race, that dims eye with tears, that stirs my being to its depths, as my heart goes out in boundless compassion!³ Child and babe lie fainting in the streets.

Listen, how they ask where all the bread and wine is gone to! Wound they have none, yet there in the open streets you shall see them faint away, sighing out their lives on their mothers' bosoms.

Might I but confront thee with such another as thyself! What queen so unhappy as Jerusalem, what maid as Zion desolate? How shall I comfort thee? Seadeep is thy ruin, and past all cure.

Never a true vision or a wise thy prophets have for thee, never shew thee where thy guilt rests, and urge thee to

¹ Literally, 'for I am full of bitterness'. But the Hebrew text has, 'for truth it is that I have rebelled against thee'. ² The Latin here describes God as filling Juda with 'humiliated men and humiliated women'; the sense of the Hebrew is rather 'lamentation and lament', as in Is. 29. 2. ³ Literally, 'my liver is poured out on the ground'.

- repentance; lies and lures are all the burden of their revealing.
- 15 Openly the passers-by deride thee, poor maid; clap hands, and hiss, and wag their heads at thee; So much, they cry, for the city that was once the nonpareil of beauty, pride of the whole earth!
- 16 Pale¹ envy mops and mows at thee; how they hiss and gnash their teeth! Now to prey on her carnion! What fortune, that we should have lived to see this day, so long looked for in vain!
- 17 Quit is the Lord of his oath taken in times past; all his purpose is fulfilled; for thee, ruin relentless, for thy bitter enemy, triumph and high achievement.
- 18 Round those inviolable defences, cry they upon the Lord in good earnest. Day and night, Sion, let thy tears stream down; never rest thou, never let that eye weary of its task.²
- 19 Sleepless in the night-watches raise thy song; flow thy heart's prayer unceasingly; lift ever thy hands in supplication for infant lives; yonder, at the street corner, they are dying of famine.
- 20 Think well, Lord, is there any other people of whom thou hast taken such toll? Shall woman eat her own child, so tiny, hands can still clasp it? In the Lord's sanctuary, priest and prophet be slain?
- 21 Untended they lie on the bare earth, the young and the aged; maid and warrior slain by the sword! This day of thy vengeance was to be all massacre, thou wouldst kill unsparingly.
- 22 Vengeance this day all around me; what mustering of thy terrors,³ as for a solemn assembly! Escape is none, nor any remnant left; of all I fondled and fostered, the enemy has taken full toll.

3 Ah, what straits have I not known, under the avenging rod!⁴

- 2 Asked I for light, into deeper shadow the Lord's guidance led me;
- 3 Always upon me, none other, falls endlessly the blow.
- 4 Broken this frame, under the wrinkled skin, the sunk flesh.

Bitterness of despair fills my prospect, walled in on every side;

Buried in darkness, and, like the dead, interminably.

Closely he fences me in, beyond hope of rescue; loads me with fetters.

Cry out for mercy as I will, prayer of mine wins no audience;

Climb these smooth walls I may not; every way of escape he has undone.

Deep ambushed he lies, as lurking bear or lion from the covert;

Drawn aside from my path, I fall a lonely prey to his ravening.

Dread archer, of me he makes a target for all his arrows;

Each shaft of his quiver at my vitals taught to strike home!

Evermore for me the taunts of my neighbours, their songs of derision.

Entertainment of bitter herbs he gives me, and of wormwood my fill,

Files all my teeth with hard gravel-stones, bids me feed on ashes.⁵

Far away is my old contentment, happier days forgotten;

Farewell, my hopes of long continuance, my patient trust in the Lord!

Guilt and suffering, gall and wormwood, keep all this well in memory.

God knows it shall be remembered, and with sinking of the heart;

Gage there can be none other of remaining confidence.

His be the thanks if we are not extinguished; his mercies never weary;

Hope comes with each dawn; art thou not faithful, Lord, to thy promise?

Heart whispers, The Lord is my portion; I will trust him yet.

In him be thy trust, for him thy heart's longing, gracious thou shalt find him;

If deliverance thou wouldst have from the Lord, in silence await it.

It is well thou shouldst learn to bear the yoke, now in thy youth,

Just burden, in solitude and silence justly borne.

¹ The Hebrew letters Pe and Ain are unaccountably transposed, here and in 3. 46-51; 4. 16 and 17.

² The first part of this verse is perhaps corrupt; the Hebrew text of it gives a rather improbable sense.

³ Some think that we should interpret the Hebrew text as meaning '(some) of my neighbours', not 'terrors'.

⁴ There is no general agreement whether this chapter (and especially the concluding part of it) refers to the personal experiences of Jeremiah, or describes poetically the misfortunes of the Jewish race.

⁵ The sense given here is that of the Septuagint Greek; the Latin version gives in the first half, 'He has broken my teeth one and all'; the Hebrew text in the second half is usually rendered, 'he has bowed me down among the ashes'.

29 Joy may yet be thine, for mouth that
 kisses the dust,
 30 Jeering of the multitude, and cheek
 buffeted in scorn, bravely endured.
 31 Know for certain, the Lord has not
 finally abandoned thee;
 32 Kind welcome the outcast shall have,
 from one so rich in kindness.
 33 Kin of Adam he will not crush or cast
 away wantonly;
 34 Let there be oppression of the poor
 under duress,
 35 Law's right denied, such as the most
 High grants to all men,
 36 Lying perversion of justice, then he
 cannot overlook it.¹
 37 Man may foretell; only the Lord brings
 his word to pass;
 38 Mingled good and evil proceed both
 from the will of the most High;
 39 Mortal is none may repine; let each his
 own sins remember.
 40 Narrowly our path scan we, and to the
 Lord return;
 41 Never hand or heart but must point
 heavenward this day!
 42 Nothing but defiant transgression on
 our part; and shouldst thou relent?
 43 Over our heads thy angry vengeance
 lowered; smiting, thou wouldst not spare.
 44 Oh, barrier of cloud, our prayers had no
 strength to pierce!
 45 Offscouring and refuse of mankind thou
 hast made us,
 46 Put to shame by the mocking grimaces
 of our enemies.
 47 Prophets we had, but their word was
 peril and pitfall, and ruin at the last.²
 48 Poor Sion, for thy calamity these cheeks
 are furrowed with tears;
 49 Quell if thou wouldst the restless fever
 of my weeping,
 50 Quickly, Lord, look down from heaven
 and pay heed to us,
 51 Quite forspent, eye and soul, with grief
 Jerusalem's daughters bear.³
 52 Relentless as hawk in air they pursued
 me, enemies unprovoked,
 53 Reft me of life itself, sealed with a stone
 my prison door.

Round my head the waters closed, and 54
 I had given myself up for lost,
 Save for one hope; to thee, Lord, I cried 55
 from the pit's depth,
 Sure of thy audience; wouldst thou turn 56
 a deaf ear to sighs of complaint?
 Summoned, thou didst come to my 57
 side, whispering, Do not be afraid.
 Thine, Lord, to take my part; thine to 58
 rescue me from death;
 The malice of my enemies to discover, 59
 my wrongs to redress.
 Thrust away from thy sight, the grudge 60
 they bear me, the ill they purpose,
 Unheard by thee their taunts, their 61
 whispered plottings?
 Uttered aloud or in secret, their malice 62
 assails me from morn till night;
 Up in arms, or met in secret conclave, 63
 ever against me they raise the battle-song.
 Visit them with the punishment their 64
 ill deeds have earned;
 Veiled be those blind hearts with fresh 65
 blindness of thy own making;
 Vanish from the earth their whole brood, 66
 ere thy vengeance leaves off pursuing them!

4 All dim, now, and discoloured, the
 gold that once shone so fair! Heaped
 up at every street-corner lie hallowed
 stones.

Bright they shone once in all their re- 2
 nown, the men of Sion, and now what are
 they? Little regarded as common earthen-
 ware, of the potter's fashioning.

Cub of jackal⁴ is fed at its dam's breast; 3
 and has my people grown unnatural to-
 wards its own children, like some ostrich
 in the desert?

Dry throat and parching tongue for babe 4
 at the breast; children asking for bread,
 and never a crust to share with them!

Ever they fared daintily, that now lie 5
 starved in the streets; ever went richly
 arrayed, and now their fingers clutch at the
 dung-hill.

Faithless Juda! Heavier punishment 6
 she must needs undergo than guilty So-
 dom, that perished all in a moment, and
 never a blow struck.

¹ *vv.* 33-36. This is perhaps the least unnatural of the various interpretations suggested for this difficult passage. It assumes that the word 'wantonly' is emphatic, and that the end of verse 36 is a question, 'Does the Lord take no notice?' ² In the Hebrew text, 'Peril and pitfall, rack and ruin have overtaken us'. ³ Literally, 'My eye has treated my soul harshly as the result of all the daughters of my city'; the text is perhaps corrupt. ⁴ This is the accepted meaning of the word used in the Hebrew text, here represented in the Latin by an obscure and inappropriate rendering.

- 7 Gone, the fair bloom of princely cheeks,¹
snowy-pure, cream-white, red as tinted
ivory,² and all sapphire-clear;
- 8 Here is no recognizing them, out in the
streets, coal-black, skin clinging to bones,
dry as wood!
- 9 It were better to have fallen at the
sword's point than yield thus to the stab of
hunger, wasted away through famine.
- 10 Juda brought low, and mother-love for-
gotten; that women should eat their own
children, cooked with their own hands!
- 11 Kindled at last is the Lord's anger; rains
down from heaven the storm of his ven-
geance, lighting a flame that burns Sion to
the ground.
- 12 Little dreamed they, king and common
folk the world over, that any assault of the
foe should storm Jerusalem gates;
- 13 Malice and lawlessness it was of priest
and prophet, whereby innocent men came
to their deaths, that brought such punish-
ment.
- 14 Now, as they walk blindly through the
streets, they are defiled with blood; no
help for it, gather their skirts about them
as they may;
- 15 Out of my way! cries one to another;
Back, pollution, do not touch me! The
very Gentiles protest in alarm, Here is no
place for them!
- 16 Protection the Lord gives them no
longer, they are dispersed under his frown;
the priesthood no honour claims, old age
no pity.³
- 17 Quenched is the hope our eyes strained
for, while hope was left us; looking for help
so eagerly to a nation that had none to give!
- 18 Refuge for us in the treacherous high-
ways is none; we are near the end; all is
over, this is the end;
- 19 Swifter than flight of eagles the pursuit;
even on the mountains they give chase,
even in the desert take us by surprise.
- 20 Through our fault he who is breath of
life to us, our anointed king, is led away
captive;⁴ under his shadow we hoped our
race should thrive.

Until thy turn comes, shout on, Edom, ²
triumph on, land of Hus; the same cup
thou too shalt drink, and be drunken, and
stripped bare.

Vengeful audit-day! Sion's account ²
closed, recovered her fortunes; Edom
called to account, discovered her guilt!

5 Bethink thee, Lord, of our ill case;
see where we lie humiliated, and
seeing take pity! New tenants our lands
have, our homes foreign masters; or-
phaned sons of widowed mothers were not
more defenceless. Ours to buy the very
water we drink, pay a price for every stick
of fire-wood; led hither and thither under
the yoke, with no respite given, we must
make our peace with men of Egypt or
Assyria, for a belly-full of bread. So must
we bear the guilt of our fathers, that sinned
and are gone! Slaves for our masters now,
and none to ransom us; bread won out in
the desert, and at peril of our lives from the
sword's point! What wonder if our skins
are burnt dry as an oven, seared by long
famine?

Never a woman in Sion, never a maid in ²
all Juda's cities, but has met with dis-
honour; merciless hands hurry our princes
to the gallows; reverence is none for grey
hairs. Toiling at the mill, the flower of our
youth, or staggering under loads of wood;⁴
never an old man left to sit at the gate, or
a young man to wake the echoes of the
harp; gone, all our mirth, all our music
drowned in sadness. Alas, we are sinners;
the wreath has faded from our brows;
there are sad hearts everywhere, and dim
eyes. What, does not the hill of Sion lie
desolate, ravaged by the foxes?

Lord, thou abidest ever; age after age thy
throne endures; and wilt thou still be for-
getful of us, through the long years leave
us forsaken? Bring us back to thee, Lord,
and let us find our home; bring back to us
the days of our youth; wouldst thou alto-
gether abandon us, shall thy indignation
know no measure?

¹ 'Princely cheeks'; the word 'Nazirite' can hardly be used in its technical sense (Num. 6), and is better taken in its wider meaning of 'consecrated person'. That royal princes are referred to is only a conjecture based on the context.

² Literally, 'ancient ivory'; the Hebrew word perhaps means 'coral'.

³ *v.* 14-16. The interpretation of this passage is very doubtful. The Latin version is not always in accordance with the Hebrew text, and gives 'him' instead of 'them' in verse 15, perhaps with the idea that Almighty God is referred to (cf. verse 16).

⁴ It is generally held that the literal and primary reference of this verse is to King Sedecias. The Hebrew text has, not 'through our fault', but 'through the trap they have laid'.

⁵ The sense given is that of the Hebrew text; cf. *Jg.* 16. 21.

THE PROPHECY OF BARUCH

THE words which follow were committed to writing in the country of Babylon. The writer of them, Baruch, was descended from Helcias, through Nerias, Maasias, Sedecias and Sedei, and wrote in the fifth year, . . . on the seventh day of the month, at the time when the Chaldaeans took Jerusalem and burnt it to the ground.¹ Baruch read this book of his aloud to Jechonias, son of Joakim, king of Juda. All the people, too, flocked to hear the reading of it, nobles and royal princes, and elders, and common folk high and low; all that were then living in the country of Babylon, near the river Sodi.

And as they heard it, all was weeping and fasting and prayer offered in the Lord's presence; they made a collection of money besides, each according to his means, which they sent to the chief priest, Joachim, son of Helcias, son of Salom, and his fellow priests and fellow citizens at Jerusalem. . . . when he² travelled to Juda on the tenth day of Sivan, taking with him the sanctuary ornaments which had been removed from the temple, and were now to be restored. They were of silver; Sedecias, the son of Josias, that now reigned in Juda, had had them made, when Jechonias, with the princes and all the nobles and many other citizens of Jerusalem, was carried off by Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, to his own country.

¹ It seems almost certain that the text is defective here; to mention the day of the month and not mention which month it was, would be most unusual. But probably the omission was a more considerable one. It is difficult to see how the events referred to in verses 6-8 could have happened in or near the year 587, when Jerusalem was burnt; it had been closely besieged for two years already. It looks as if these prophecies of Baruch had been dated over a period of years, like those of his master Jeremiah (Jer. 1, 2, 3), and only the earlier part of them had been sent to Jerusalem at the time indicated. The text will have run: 'in the fifth year of Sedecias' reign, right up to the eleventh year of it, the fifth month and the seventh day of the month, when the Chaldaeans took Jerusalem'. Some think, however, that the words 'at the time when' indicate an anniversary, as in Deut. 16. 6. ² 'He' can hardly be Joakim, and the last mention of Baruch is too far away to justify a reference by pronoun. Another short deficiency in the text seems probable; the money was sent to Jerusalem 'by the hand of' some person named, Baruch or another. It is commonly assumed that Sedecias had made silver ornaments at Jerusalem, to replace the old ones which had been carried off; that these silver ones were carried off in their turn (on some unspecified occasion), and were then restored to Juda (for some unspecified reason). All this seems unduly elaborate. The gold ornaments were removed with Jechonias (IV Kg. 24. 13), and at the same time all metal-workers were exiled (ib. 16). Sedecias, who was still in favour, had to get models made not in Jerusalem but in Babylon; and with these silver models the prophecy of Baruch, or rather such parts of it as had already been committed to writing, could conveniently be despatched. ³ Literally, 'manna', but it is clear that the Septuagint Greek has confused two separate Hebrew words, and the Latin version has come to us through the Greek.

Here is money, they said, with which you are to buy victims for burnt-sacrifice, and incense; bloodless offerings³ too you must make, and amends for fault committed, at the altar of the Lord our God. You shall pray long life for king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon, and his son Baltassar, that their reign on earth may last as long as heaven itself. May the Lord grant courage to all of us, and send us a gleam of hope; long thrive we under the protection of king Nabuchodonosor and his son Baltassar, persevering loyally in their service and winning their favour! And intercede with the Lord our God for us exiles; against his divine will we have rebelled, and to this hour he has not relented. Scan closely, too, this book we are sending to you; it is to be read aloud on feast-days and in times of solemn assembly. You shall make your prayer in these words following.

The fault was never with him, the Lord our God; ours the blush of shame, as all Juda this day and all the citizens of Jerusalem can witness. With king and prince of ours, priest and prophet of ours the fault lies, and with our fathers before us. We have defied the will of the Lord our God; trust and loyalty we had none to give him, nor ever shewed him submission, by listening to his divine voice and following the commands he gave us. Ever since the day when he rescued our fathers from

Egypt we have been in rebellion against the Lord our God, straying ever further from the sound of his voice; till at last, as these times can witness, bale and ban have caught us by the heels, the very same he pronounced to his servant Moses long ago, when he had rescued our fathers from Egypt and was leading them on to a land all milk and honey. Unheeded, that divine voice, when message after message came to us through his prophets; each must follow the whim of his own false heart, doing sacrifice to alien gods, and setting the will of the Lord, our own God, at defiance.

2 That is why the Lord our God has made good his threats against us; against the rulers of Israel, whether kings or nobles, and against the common folk of Israel and Juda. Here was a threat made in the law of Moses, that went beyond all hitherto seen on earth, and yet in Jerusalem it came true; that men would be eating the flesh of their own sons and daughters! Neighbouring kings had the mastery, and in all the far countries to which the Lord had banished us, we became a thing of scorn and horror. Slaves are we, that might have ruled; and the reason of it? Because by sinning we offended the Lord our God, and left his voice unheeded; his was never the fault; for us and for our fathers the blush of shame, as this day can witness. No calamity has befallen us but he, the Lord, had prophesied it; and still we would not sue for the divine mercy, but each of us went on straying by false paths. That is why the Lord's jealous care was for our undoing; he has but fulfilled what he threatened; in all he has imposed upon us,¹ the Lord our God is without fault. It was our fault if we would not listen to his warnings, would not follow the divine commands which he set before us.

11 Lord God of Israel, whose constraining hand rescued thy people from Egypt with portents and wonders, with sovereign power signally manifested, and won thee renown that is thine yet, we are sinners!

We have wronged thee, revolted against every claim thou hast upon us. But oh, would thy vengeance give over the pursuit! So wide thou hast parted us, and we are left so few. Grant a hearing, Lord, to this our plaint and plea; for thy own honour, be our rescuer still, and win over the hearts of our captors; prove to the whole world that thou art the Lord our God, that it was thy name Israel bore, and Israel's race yet bears. Look down upon us, Lord, from the sanctuary where thou dwellest; thine be the attentive ear, the watchful eye! Once breath has left body, and a man lies in the grave, honour and devoir is none he can pay thee; but let a man be downcast over his great misfortune, so that he goes bowed and tottering, dim eyes and hungry belly, there, Lord, thou shalt have the honour that is thy due.

Well for us, O Lord our God, as we pour out our supplications for thy mercy, if we could plead that fathers of ours, kings of ours, did loyally thy will. But no; thou hadst given them due warning, through those prophets that were servants of thine, before letting thy angry vengeance have its way, and the warning went unheeded. Bow shoulder and bow neck, said the divine voice, and be vassals to the king of Babylon; and the land I gave to your fathers shall still be your home. Refuse to serve the king of Babylon at my divine bidding, and Jerusalem with her daughter cities shall mourn their loss; no more the cry of joy and mirth, no more the voice of bridegroom and of bride; untrampled the whole land shall be, and uninhabited. But all thy threats could not persuade them to be the king of Babylon's vassals; thy servants prophesied in vain. And so thy threats were performed; kings of ours and fathers of ours might not rest quiet in their graves; their bones were cast out to endure sun's heat and night frost, and great anguish they endured in their deaths, from the sword, and famine, and pestilence.² As for the temple that was the shrine of thy name, thou madest it into the thing it is this day, for Israel's sin, for Juda's sin.

¹ This is usually understood of God's commandments, but the context suggests rather a reference to his chastisements. ² 'And the warning went unheeded'; these words are not in the original, but are supplied here from the context in order to make the connexion between verses 19 and 20 intelligible.

³ The Greek word used here (of which the Latin gives a literal rendering) means 'a despatching of envoys', and does not justify the translation 'banishment'. It is probably used here, as in Jer. 32. 36, to represent the Hebrew word for 'pestilence', as something specially sent by Almighty God.

17 No greater proof we could have had of
 thy consideration, of that abundant mercy¹
 18 which is thine. And merciful was the
 promise thou didst make to thy servant
 Moses, when thou badest him write down
 9 thy law for Israel's acceptance. Out of all
 this swarming multitude, thou didst say to
 him, what a sorry remnant of scattered
 exiles will be left, if my voice goes un-
 0 heeded! And go unheeded it will; this is
 a race that ever spurns the yoke. What then
 if they come back to a right mind, there in
 1 the country of their banishment? What if
 they learn to recognize that I, the Lord,
 am their God (the heedful heart, the lis-
 : tening ear, are mine to give them); what if
 they remember to honour me, to invoke
 my name, in their exile? What if they
 : follow the example of their fathers, that
 were sinners before them, repent of their
 stubborn indifference and of all their ill
 : doings? Then they shall come home
 again; back to the country I promised to
 | their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;
 they shall be masters of it, and their
 : dwindled strength shall thrive anew. A
 | fresh covenant I will make with them, that
 shall last for ever; I their God, and they
 : my people; never again will I banish my
 : people, the sons of Israel, from the land
 | I have made theirs.

3 Lord Almighty, God of Israel, here
 : be lives in jeopardy, here be troubled
 : hearts, that plead with thee! Listen, Lord,
 : and have mercy, none so merciful as thou;
 : pardon the sins that lie open in thy sight.
 | Thou reignest for ever; must we for ever
 : be lost? Lord Almighty, God of Israel,
 | listen to the prayer Israel makes to thee
 : from the grave!² Our fathers it was that
 | defied the Lord their God, and gave no
 | heed to him; and to us, their sons, the
 : punishment clings. Forget the wrong they
 : did, those fathers of ours; remember thy
 : ancient power, thy own honour, this day;
 : only to thee, the Lord our God, shall praise
 : of ours be given. Why else hast thou in-
 : spired us with such dread of thee? Thou
 : wouldst have us learn to invoke thy name,

to utter thy praise, here as exiles, in proof
 that we disown the wrong our fathers did,
 when their sins defied thee. Exiles we are
 this day, dispersed by thee to suffer scorn
 and reviling, until we have made amends
 for all the wrong our fathers did when they
 abandoned thee, abandoned the Lord our
 God.

Listen, Israel, to the warnings that shall
 9 bring thee life; give attentive audience, if
 thou wouldst learn to be wise. What means
 10 it, Israel, that thou findest thyself in the
 enemy's land, grown old in exile, unclean
 11 as a dead body, no more taken into account
 than men who have gone down into their
 graves? It is because thou hast forsaken
 12 the fountains whence all wisdom comes.
 If thou hadst but followed the path God
 13 shewed thee, thou mightest have lived in
 peace eternally. Learn where to find wis-
 14 dom, and strength, and discernment; so
 thou wilt find length of years, too, and
 true life, and cheerfulness, and peace. Who
 15 can tell where wisdom dwells, who has
 made his way into her store-house? What
 16 has become of those heathen princes, who
 gained mastery of the beasts that roam the
 earth, tamed the birds for their pastime;
 17 heaping up silver and gold, man's con-
 18 fidence, man's interminable quest? How
 anxiously they toiled for wealth! And now
 these devices of theirs are beyond our
 tracing.

They disappeared, went to their graves,
 19 and other succeeded them; a younger
 generation saw the light and peopled the
 earth in its turn; but still they could not
 find their way to the true wisdom, the path
 21 to it was hidden still. Their children, too,
 clutched at it in vain, it was as far as ever
 from their reach. In Chanaan, none had
 22 heard tell of it, in Theman none had caught
 sight of it; even the sons of Agar, so well
 23 schooled in earthly wisdom, even the mer-
 chants of Merrha and Theman, with all
 their store of legend, their skill and cunning
 laboriously gained, never found the
 track of true wisdom, or told us what its
 haunts were.

Israel, how wide is God's house, how 24

¹ In verses 19-26, the divine mercy has been shewn in the warning issued to the Jews against further resistance. In verses 27-31 the same mercy is shewn in the promise of ultimate restoration. ² Literally, 'the prayer of the dead of Israel'. Some think this refers to prayer offered by the dead on behalf of the living; others, that the race of Israel is, by a metaphor, described as 'dead'; others, that the Hebrew text had simply 'the folk of Israel', and that the Greek translator, having no vowel-points to guide him, was deceived by the identical form of the two words.

25 spacious is his domain, large beyond all
 26 bound, high beyond all measure!¹ The
 heroes of old were nurtured there, men
 whose fame has come down to us from the
 beginning of time, huge in stature, great
 27 warriors; but it was not these God had
 chosen; they died without ever attaining
 28 true knowledge. Not for them was the
 possession of wisdom, and in their folly
 they perished.

29 What man ever scaled heaven, gained
 wisdom there, and brought it back from
 30 the clouds? What man ever crossed the
 sea, and found it there, brought it back
 31 like a cargo of pure gold? The path to it
 none may know, the clue of it none may
 32 find. Only he who knows all things pos-
 sesses it, only his mind conceives it. He it
 is who framed the abiding earth, and filled
 it with cattle and four-footed beasts of
 33 every kind. It is on his errand that the
 light goes forth, his summons that it obeys
 34 with awe; joyfully the stars shine out,
 keeping the watches he has appointed,
 35 answer when he calls their muster-roll,
 and offer their glad radiance to him who
 36 fashioned them. Such a God is ours; what
 37 rival will be compared to him? He it is
 who has the key to all knowledge, and gave
 it to his servant Jacob, to the well-loved
 38 race of Israel; not till then would he reveal
 himself on earth, and hold converse with
 mortal men.

4 Here is the book² in which you may
 read God's commandments, that law
 of his which stands for ever; holding fast
 by it or forsaking it, a man makes life or
 2 death his goal. Jacob, thy steps retrace,
 and this path follow, guiding thy steps by
 3 glow of the light that beckons thee; this is
 thy pride, wouldst thou yield it up to
 4 another? Thy prize, shall an alien race
 enjoy it? Israel, a blessed race is ours, that
 has knowledge of God's will.

5 People of God, take courage, all that is
 6 left of Israel's muster-roll! Sold as slaves
 though you be, he does not mean your
 ruin. He has given your enemies the
 mastery, none the less; had you not defied
 7 his vengeance? Had you not challenged
 the eternal power that made you, by sacri-

ficing to evil powers, that gods were none?
 To God that fostered you, what ingrati- 8
 tude, to Jerusalem that nursed you, what
 bitter pain!

Alas, she cried, as she saw the divine 9
 vengeance falling on you, listen, neighbour
 cities all, to my complaint; here is a heavy
 load of grief God has charged me with!
 Sentence of banishment he, the eternal, 10
 has pronounced upon my people, sons and
 daughters of mine; how joyously I nur- 11
 tured them, with what tears of anguish I
 saw them depart! And let none boast over 12
 my widowing, that so much have lost; if
 I am thus forlorn, it is because of my sons'
 transgression, that refused God's will; his 13
 claim disowned, his paths left untrodden;
 not for them the straight road of loyal
 observance. Come, neighbours, tell me the 14
 sad tale again, how he, the eternal, would
 sentence these sons and daughters of mine
 to exile. A cruel race he summoned to the 15
 attack from far away, men of an alien
 speech; for old age they had no reverence. 16
 for childhood no pity; robbed widow of
 her darling sons, and left her desolate.

Alas, my children, look not to me for 17
 aid! He it is must save you from the power 18
 of your enemies, who is the author of your
 calamity. Go your ways, my children, go 19
 your ways; I am left desolate; the festal 20
 robe of happier times I have put aside,
 clothed myself in sackcloth as the sup- 21
 pliants do; I will spend my days pleading
 with him, the eternal. Take courage, my 21
 children, and raise your voices, too, in
 appeal; from the enemy's tyrant grasp the
 Lord shall deliver you. Upon him, the 22
 eternal, I pin evermore my hopes of your
 happiness, the holy God, evermore our
 deliverer! Light grows my heart, to think
 of the mercy he has in store for you. With 23
 lamentation I bade farewell to you, and
 with tears; with joy and triumph he will
 bring you back to me, and for ever; these 24
 neighbours of mine, that saw you banished
 at his decree, shall witness ere long a divine
 deliverance; what renown shall be yours
 when it comes, what dawn unending! Bear 25
 patiently, my children, with the punish-
 ment that has overtaken you. What if thy
 enemy hunts thee down? Ere long thou

¹ v. 24 sqq. God's 'house' is usually identified as creation generally. But it must be confessed that this reference to the giants (Gen. 6. 4) belongs to a stream of tradition about which we know little. ² Apparently in the sense that wisdom is to be identified with the divine law.

shalt see the ruin of him, set thy foot on his neck! Ah, the rough roads delicate feet of yours have travelled! Like a plundered flock the enemy drove you. Yet take courage, my children, and cry out upon the Lord; he, the author of your exile, has not forgotten you. Hearts that loved to stray, ten times more eagerly retrace your steps, and come back to him! And he, that compassed your woe, in unending joy will compass your deliverance.

Thyself, Jerusalem, take courage! He that called thee by thy name brings thee comfort. Woe to the men that harassed thee, and triumphed in thy ruin, woe to every city that enslaved and harboured children of thine! No smile of content greeted the disaster of thy fall, but shall be paid for with a sigh of desolation; the city that was once so populous, all its boasting gone, all its pride of yesterday turned into lament! Long shall the fires of eternal justice smoulder there, long shall it be the haunt of devils.¹

Turn thee about, Jerusalem, and look to the sun's rising; see what rejoicing the Lord has in store for thee; sons of thine, in many lands lost to thee, gathered by his call from east to west shall come back again, praising joyfully God's holy will.

5 Enough, Jerusalem; lay aside now the sad garb of thy humiliation, and put on bright robes, befitting the eternal glory God means for thee; cloak of divine protection² thrown about thee, thy temples bearing a diadem of renown. In thee God will manifest the splendour of his presence, for the whole world to see; and the name by which he will call thee for ever is, Loyalty rewarded, Piety crowned.³ Up, Jerusalem, to the heights! Look to the sun's rising, and see if thy sons be not coming to thee, gathered from east to west, joyfully acknowledging God's holy will! Afoot they were led off by the enemy; it is

the Lord that shall lead them home, borne aloft like royal princes. He will have the ground made level; high mountain must stoop, and immemorial hill, and the valleys be filled up, for Israel's safe passage and God's glory; spinneys of every scented tree shall grow, by his divine command, to give Israel shade. So merciful he is, and so faithful! In great content, their journey lit by the majesty of his presence, Israel shall come home.

6 Here follows a copy of the letter Jeremias sent to the prisoners whom the king of Babylon was carrying off to his own country, with the warnings God bade him give them.

In atonement for the sins by which you have offended God, you shall now be carried off to Babylon, by Nabuchodonosor that is king of it. Babylon once reached, you shall have a long exile there, years a many, till seven generations⁴ have passed; then I will grant you a safe return. And you must know that you will see, in that country, gods of gold and silver, gods of stone and wood, that are carried about on men's shoulders; to the heathen, things of great dread. Look well to it that you do not fall in with these alien customs, by the same fear overmastered. What though a great throng of worshippers attends them, before and behind? Let your hearts whisper in adoration, To thee, Lord, all worship belongs! My angel is at your side, and your lives shall be held to account for it.⁵

Puppets of gold and silver, speak they cannot, for all the craftsman has given them tongues to speak with. Ay, gold must go to their fashioning, never was maid so bravely tricked out; gods they are, and must wear golden crowns. And of this gold and silver the priests will steal some part for their own uses, and spend it on their minions; what the gods wore, harlots wear,

¹ The same Greek word is translated 'satyrs' in Is. 13. 21. Some think the reference is to wild goats. ² 'Divine protection'; literally 'justice', that is, a renewal of the covenant between Israel and their God, with the obligations of it fulfilled on either side. ³ Literally, 'Prosperity (which comes) of justice (see last note), and Honour (which comes) of Piety'.

⁴ It is not easy to see how this computation is arrived at. Notoriously the exile of Juda was expected to last seventy years. If, therefore, our versions correctly represent the figures given in the original, and the word 'generation' has its ordinary meaning, it would appear that the beginning of the exile is dated here, not by the capture of Jerusalem in B.C. 587, but by the destruction of Samaria in B.C. 722. This would give, roughly, seven generations of thirty years each down to Zorobabel, or seven generations of forty years each down to Nehemias.

⁵ Literally, 'I will require your lives'. Some think this means, 'I will require (or perhaps, according to the Greek, he will require) satisfaction from anyone who takes your lives'.

11 what harlots wore, the gods.¹ From rust
 12 they cannot protect themselves, nor from
 13 the moth; alas for the purple robes that
 14 deck them! And the temple dust lies thick
 15 upon them, so that their faces must be
 16 wiped clean. Here is an idol bearing a
 17 sceptre, human-fashion, as though it ruled
 18 the country-side, yet has it no power to kill
 19 the blasphemer; another carries sword or
 20 axe, yet from alarm of war or of robbers
 21 cannot defend itself; be sure, then, gods
 22 they are not. Never fear them; broken jar
 23 a man throws away as useless can be
 24 matched with such gods as these.
 25 They they sit in their temples, with
 26 eyes full of dust from the feet of passers-by,
 27 mewed up by their priests with bolt and
 28 bar for fear of robbery, like king's enemy
 29 in his dungeon, dead man in his tomb; of
 30 all the lights that burn before them, they
 31 see none; roof-beam is not more senseless.
 32 Yet men will have it that serpents creep
 33 out of the earth and drink in the secrets of
 34 their hearts! Worms, more like, that eat
 35 the idol up, clothes and all, and it none
 36 wiser.² Smoke of the temple blackens their
 37 faces; about their bodies and heads fly owl
 38 and swallow; birds hover and cats prowl.
 39 Be sure they are no gods; never fear them.
 40 Fair, golden faces! Yet will they not
 41 shine on the worshipper, till he rub off the
 42 stains on them; cast once for all in a mould,
 43 without feeling.³ Cost what they will,
 44 there is never a breath of life in them;
 45 never a pace they walk, but must still be
 46 carried on men's shoulders, putting their
 47 own worshippers to shame by the betrayal
 48 of their impotence. Fall they to earth, they
 49 cannot rise from it, and though they be set
 50 up again, it is in no power of their own that
 51 they stand. As well bring gifts to dead

On the senseless Images of the Heathen

men as to these; the victim thou offerest
 27 yonder priest will sell, or put to his own
 28 use, nor ever a slice his wife cuts shall find
 29 its way to the sick and the needy. Those
 30 offerings every woman may touch if she
 31 will, child-birth and monthly times not-
 32 withstanding. And are these gods? Are
 33 these to be feared? Things of silver and
 34 gold and wood, that have women for their
 35 ministers, shall the divine name be theirs?

In their temples you shall find priests
 36 sitting by with clothes rent, shaven and
 37 shorn, heads uncovered, raising lament
 38 over their gods as at a dead man's dirge.
 39 Vestments their idols wore they will carry
 40 away, to dress their wives and children; so
 41 powerless are these gods to requite injury
 42 or reward service done. Not theirs to make
 43 kings or unmake them, grant riches, or
 44 wreak vengeance; the unpaid vow they
 45 cannot exact, nor deliver men from death,
 46 and the tyrant's oppression, give sight to
 47 the blind, succour in time of peril, shew
 48 mercy to the widow, or cheer the orphan's
 49 lot. Things of wood and stone, gold and
 50 silver, no more than rock on the mountain-
 51 side can they speed their worshippers;
 52 gods do we reckon them, gods do we call
 53 them?

And indeed the Chaldaeans themselves
 40 have but scant reverence for these idols of
 41 theirs; hear they of a dumb child that can
 42 utter no word, Bel's image must be brought
 43 to it and petitioned for the gift of speech;
 44 as if the senseless thing which cannot move
 45 could yet hear them! Sense neither god
 46 nor worshipper has, else god should find
 47 no worship.⁴ See where their women sit
 48 in the streets, with ropes about their men,
 49 each before a fire of olive-stones,⁵ each waiting
 50 till some passer-by drags her away and

¹ Literally, 'They give some of it to prostitutes, and deck out harlots, and again when they have received it from harlots, they deck out their gods'. The Greek has 'They give some of it to the harlots on the roof; and they deck out the gods in clothes, like men, gods of silver and gold and wood'. Such a variation between the two versions must indicate that the Hebrew original was very obscure, or that its text had suffered from corruptions. And indeed, throughout this chapter it is impossible to feel that the versions have always caught the meaning of the original exactly.

² Literally, 'And they say that serpents from the earth lick out their hearts, while they eat them and their clothes, unfelt by them'. The Greek has 'creeping things' instead of serpents. If the meaning of the original has been preserved, the reference is perhaps to the belief in snakes as an incarnation of heathen divinities; cf. Aristophanes, *Plutus* 733.

³ Literally, 'The gold, too, which they have is for appearance; unless a man rubs off the stains, they will not shine, and if it comes to that, they had no feeling while they were being cast'. The Greek has, 'Unless a man rubs off the stains, they will not cause to shine the gold with which they are beautiful...' etc.

⁴ *ib.* 40, 41. The meaning here is very uncertain. The Greek almost certainly implies that Bel's image was brought to the patient, not the patient to the image, and the meaning is perhaps that it was absurd to expect help from a statue which had to be carried because it could not walk (cf. verse 25). There are several differences between the Greek and the Latin; the Greek, for example, has 'sick person' in the masculine, whereas the neuter gender used in the Latin presumably implies a child in arms.

⁵ This ceremony of general prostitution is described by Herodotus, i. 199; he does not mention the fires of olive-stones (or bran, according to the Greek).

beds her, then taunting her less coveted neighbours, that have ropes about them still! All lies, the worship of them, and shall they claim the title of gods?
41 Carpenters made them and goldsmiths, only at the priests' whim; and shall the handicraft of mortal craftsmen be divine?
42 One day, their descendants will reproach them with a legacy of imposture. Come war, come peril, the priest thinks only of hiding himself and his gods both; gods who shall think them, that from war and peril their own selves cannot deliver?
43 Recognize it at last they will, kings and peoples everywhere, that gods of wood, gold and silver are false gods, creatures of man, not creators. Man's handiwork, with nothing in them of the divine, who can doubt it? Not through them comes king to throne, comes rain to country folk; redress wrong they may not, nor rid a people of tyranny; dead crow hung between heaven and earth is not more powerless. Does a temple catch fire? You shall see priests taking refuge in flight, and the wooden gods, for all the silver and gold on them, burning among the woodwork.
44 Against the king's power, against the enemy's attack, they can make no head; who shall reckon them or name them divine?
45 Wood and stone, gold and silver, how to protect themselves against the superior strength of house-breaker and robber, that will carry off sheathes of silver and gold, carry off the clothes from their backs, and leave them powerless? Better some golden emblem of royal prowess, cup of silver

meant for use, not only for display, door of wood that keeps safe the treasures of a house, than these deceiving idols!¹ How fair to look upon are sun and moon and stars! Yet theirs is loyal and useful service; and so it is with yonder lightning, that dazzles the view. Everywhere winds blowing, clouds drifting across the earth as God bade them, fulfil an appointed task; an appointed task, too, has the heaven-lit fire that burns mountain-side and forest. What beauty have the idols, or what power, that they should be compared with any of these? Gods never think them, gods never call them, that have no power to execute judgement, to do men good or ill. And, since gods they are not, need is none to fear them; can they pronounce a curse or a blessing on kings? Can they startle the world with portents, shine like the sun, light up darkness like the moon? Why, the very beasts are their betters, that know at least how to take shelter for their own safety!

Fear we never the gods that ungod themselves so plainly! Wood and silver and gold, that watch over the world as a scare-crow over a herb-garden; wood and silver and gold, patient of the birds that perch on them as bush of white-thorn, or corpse left to lie in a dark alley! From the purple robes that rot on them, you may learn they are no gods; they, too, shall be eaten away when their time comes, and be a disgrace to the country-side.

Well it is for God's loyal servants, that eschew idolatry, and live from all censure far removed.

¹ Literally, 'So it is better to be a king making display of his power, or a useful vessel in a house of which its owner is proud, or a door in a house which guards its contents, than false gods'. The Greek adds, 'or a wooden pillar in a palace' after the word 'contents'.

THE PROPHECY OF EZECHIEL

THIRTY years had passed;¹ it was the fifth day of the fourth month, and I was sharing the lot of the exiles by the river Chobar, when heaven opened, and I saw a vision of God.

² The fifth day of the month, and the fifth year since king Joachim was banished. To the priest Ezechiel, son of Buzi, the divine word came; there in the Chaldaean land, by the river Chobar, the power of the Lord could reach him.

⁴ I looked round me, to find that a storm-wind had sprung up from the north, driving a great cloud before it; and this cloud had fire caught up in it, that fringed it with radiance. And there in the heart of it, in the very heart of the fire, was a glow like amber, that enclosed four living figures. These were human in appearance, but each had four faces, and two pairs of wings. Either leg was straight-formed, yet ended in a calf's hoof; they sparkled like red-hot bronze. On each of the four sides, human arms shewed beneath the wings; faces and wings looked outwards four ways.² Wings of each were held touching wings of other; and when they moved, they did not turn round, but each kept an onward course. As for the appearance of their faces, each had the face of a man, yet each of the four looked like a lion when seen from the right, like an ox when seen from the left, like an eagle when seen from above.³ So much for their faces; each had two wings spread out above him, those two which met his neighbours' wings; with the other two he veiled his body. Each of them

marched straight forward, following the movement of a divine impulse, never swerving as he marched. There was that, too, in the appearance of the living figures which put me in mind of flaming coals, or of torches; that was what I saw going to and fro in the midst of the living figures, a glow as of fire, and from this glow lightning came out. So the living creatures came and went, vivid as lightning-flashes.

And as I watched the living figures, all at once wheels appeared close to them, one at each of the four sides, of strange colour and form. All four were alike, the colour of aquamarine,⁴ and each looked like a wheel within a wheel. Moved they, it was ever one of the four ways the living figures looked; and they did not turn round in moving. As for their size, their height was terrible to look upon; and the whole frame of them, all round, was full of eyes. Onward the wheels moved, when the living figures moved onward, at their side; rose above the earth when the living figures rose above it. They too had a living impulse in them, they too, whenever that impulse stirred them, must rise up and follow the way it went; with the living figures, whose vital impulse they shared, the wheels too moved, and halted, and rose.

Over the living figures a vault seemed to rise, like a sheet of dazzling crystal resting on their heads; under this vault each held two wings erect to meet his neighbour's. Each had two turned upwards to overshadow him, and two turned

¹ This must refer either to the prophet's age, or to some date artificially chosen, e.g. the rediscovery of the Law under Josias.

² It is not easy to form a clear picture of what the prophet saw; but it seems most probable that the four figures stood back to back in a square, the eight upper wings all touching. If so, the 'four sides' will be the four sides of the square, and each angel will have had one arm (or hand) shewing underneath either of his lower wings.

³ If the assumption made in the previous note is true, we can understand why no reference is made to the appearance of the angelic body from behind; we are given a view from above instead. But the Hebrew text and the other versions omit the word 'above', leaving the whole picture in considerable confusion.

⁴ Literally, 'a vision of the sea'. The Latin translators seem to be have supposed, here as in Is. 23, 10 and elsewhere, that 'Tharsis' was a Hebrew word meaning 'sea'. (In 10. 9 the rendering given is 'chrysolith'). Here, as in Ex. 28. 20, it evidently means some kind of precious stone, possibly jasper. It is doubtful whether the phrase 'a wheel within a wheel' describes a wheel with an inner circle joining its spokes in addition to the outside rim, or to two wheels intersecting one another at right angles, forming a kind of approach to a sphere.

24 downwards to veil his body.¹ When they moved, the sound of their wings reached me, loud as waters in flood or thunders from on high,² incessant as the hum of a great throng or an armed camp; only when they came to rest did they lower their wings. A voice would come from the firmament over their heads; then they would halt, then they would lower their wings.³ Above this vault that rested on them, sapphire blue towered up into the form of a throne, nor did that throne seem to be empty; a shape was there above it, as of one enthroned, and all about him it was filled with amber-coloured flame. Upwards from his loins, downwards from his loins, an arch of light seemed to shine, like rainbow among the clouds on a day of storm; there was brightness all about him.

2 So much I saw of what the Lord's glory is like; and seeing it, I fell down face to earth. And now I heard a voice, which said to me, Rise up, son of man, I must have speech with thee. And at his words, a divine force mastered me, raising me to my feet, so that I could listen to him. Son of man, he told me, I am sending thee on an errand to the men of Israel, this heathen brood that has rebelled and forsaken me; see how my covenant has been violated by the fathers yesterday, the children to-day! To brazen-faced folk and hard-hearted thy errand is, and still from the Lord God a message thou must deliver, hear they or deny thee hearing; rebels all, at least they shall know that they have had a prophet in their midst. Never fear them, son of man, never let rebuke of theirs dishearten thee; with the unbelieving and the unruly⁴ thou must learn to live, scorpions ever at thy side; rebels all, they must not frighten thee, must not dishearten thee. Hear they or deny thee

hearing, remonstrate with them thou must; they are a defiant brood.

Do my bidding, then, son of man; no rebel thou, like those others; open thy mouth and eat what I give thee. And with that, I saw a hand stretched out towards me, with a closed book in it; and this, when he opened it to my view, had writing on both sides of it; nothing was there but dirge and lamenting, nothing but cries of woe.

3 Son of man, he told me, eat thou must what eat thou canst; here is this scroll for thy eating. After that, go and give my message to the sons of Israel. Thereupon I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat, promising me safe digestion and a full belly with the gift; and indeed, it was sweet as honey when I ate it. Now, son of man, said he, to the men of Israel betake thee, and give them my message. Are they strange folk that lisp and stammer, these men of Israel? Ah, no; nations there are a many that lisp and stammer, past thy understanding, but I am sending thee to Israel instead. These might have listened to thee;⁵ hearing from Israel thou shalt have none; my word goes ever unheeded, so stubborn of forehead they are and so hard-hearted, all the brood of them. But see, I have given thee strength of brow, hardness of forehead, that shall outmatch theirs; unyielding as flint or adamant thou shalt face them. Fear them not, never let their frown daunt thee, this brood of rebels.

Then he said to me, Son of man, all the words I tell thee heed and hear; then to captive Israel betake thee, and give them thy message in the name of the Lord God, hear they or deny thee hearing. And with that, a sudden transport seized me, and as I went, I heard the noise of a great stir behind me. . . . Blessed be the glory of the Lord. . . from the place where he was.⁷

¹ The Hebrew text of this verse is perhaps corrupt; it seems to imply that each angel used all four wings to veil his body, which is in contradiction with all the other evidence this chapter provides. The statement in the Latin version that 'each of them veiled his body with two wings, and the other one was veiled similarly' yields no acceptable sense.

² Literally, 'the voice of the most High'; it seems clear that thunder is referred to, cf. Apoc. 14. 2.

³ This is the sense given in the Latin version to a sentence in the Hebrew which is obscure, and perhaps corrupt.

⁴ The Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning 'thorns and briars'.

⁵ Literally, 'of deep speech and unknown tongue'; in the Hebrew text, 'of deep lips and heavy tongue'. The language of the other Semitic races suggested an attempt to talk Hebrew under difficulties.

⁶ Literally, in the Latin, 'If I were sending thee to these, they would be listening to thee'. The sense of the Hebrew text is probably, 'But no, I am sending thee to these (the Israelites). These (the other nations) would be listening to thee'.

⁷ If one consonant were altered, the Hebrew text would give the sense, 'I heard the noise of a great stir behind me, as the glory of the Lord rose up from the place where it was'.

13 Beat of wing against wing as the living figures moved onwards, and whirr of the wheels that followed them, great stirring
 14 there was all about me; and I, in a transport borne up and on, set out on my journey, unwillingly enough, and vexed at heart, but the Lord's hand was there to hold me
 15 to my purpose. So I made my way to the settlement of exiles at Tel-Abib,¹ near the river Chobar; and when I had found them, I sat there for seven days in their company, dumb all the while with grief.

16 Then, when seven days had passed, the Lord's word came to me. Son of man, he told me, I am posting thee here as a sentry, to give the sons of Israel warning; no message I send thee but thou must pass it on in my name. When I threaten the sinner with doom of death, it is for thee to give him word, and warn him, as he loves his life, to have done with sinning. If not, he shall die as he deserves, but for his undoing thyself shalt be called to account. If thou warn him, and leave his rebellious sinning he will not, die he shall as he deserves, and thou go free. Or if the upright man leaves his innocence, and I take him unawares in his wrong-doing, dies he for want of warning? Die he shall, his good deeds all forgotten, but thou for his undoing shalt be called to account. Thine to warn the upright man against the marring of his innocence; and he, sin avoiding, shall owe his life to thy remonstrance; thy duty is done.²

22 Then the power of the Lord came over me, bidding me rise up and keep tryst with him, out in the open plain. Rise up I did, and when I reached the open plain, there was the glory of the Lord rising above it, such as I had seen it by the banks of
 24 Chobar; and I fell face to earth. But a

divine force mastered me and raised me to my feet again. Now go within doors, he said, and shut thyself in there... And
 25 thou, son of man... here are bonds confining thee; closely thy fellow-countrymen shall keep thee imprisoned, so that thou canst not escape from them. And I,
 26 meanwhile, will keep tongue of thine fast fixed in thy mouth; dumb thou shalt be, when thou wouldst fain expostulate with a rebellious brood. Then, when my message I give thee, I will unseal thy lips, and thou shalt speak to that rebellious brood in the name of the Lord God, hear they or deny thee hearing.³

4 And now, son of man, go and get thee a tile; set it before thee and make marks on it, to represent the city of Jerusalem. This thou art to beleague; siegeworks built, mound raised, camp pitched, battering-rams all around.⁴ And therewithal get thee an iron cooking-pan, that shall make a ring of iron between thee and this city of thine; look closely as thou wilt, here is siege complete. So thou shalt beleague it; a sign, this, for the race of Israel.

This, too, thou must do; ever on thy left side lie down to sleep, weighing it down, day after day as thou sleepest upon it, with the guilt of Israel; bear it thou must. Three hundred and ninety days of guilt-bearing I have allotted thee, one day for every year of Israel's guilt; this done, Juda's guilt thou must bear for forty days yet, sleeping on thy right side; a day for a year, for every year a day. And ever towards beleaguered Jerusalem thou shalt turn thy face, and hold thy arm stretched out, prophesying its doom; I hold thee enchained, and never shalt thou turn from one side to other, till the days of thy siege are over.⁵

¹ Tel-Abib (not the modern Tel-Aviv, in Palestine) is translated, instead of being transliterated, in the Latin version; 'to the Mound of New Crops'.

² *et.* 16-21. The sense of these verses, and in great part the actual language of them, can be found repeated in ch. 33, and some think they have been misplaced here through an error.

³ *et.* 24-27. There has perhaps been some fault in the manuscript transmission of these verses, which run very awkwardly. The Hebrew text has 'so that thou canst not go out among them' instead of 'so that thou canst not escape from them'.

⁴ *et.* 1, 2. It is not clear whether the prophet was to draw a map, or simply to write the name, of Jerusalem. The directions in verse 2 may be simply an anticipation of verse 3; the rim of the iron cooking-vessel was to represent the continuous cordon of besiegers.

⁵ *et.* 4-8. The word rendered 'to sleep' in the Latin may also mean 'to lie', and it is generally understood that the prophet was to remain all day and all night in the same posture. The figures are extremely perplexing. We should have expected that the days would be equal in number with those of the siege, but this, according to IV Kg. 25, lasted about 500 days. The forty years do not match the interval between the taking of Samaria in 722 and the taking of Jerusalem in 587. And we should expect the other figure to correspond with the number of years between the division of the Kingdom and the fall of Samaria, i.e. about 410 years; instead of which the Hebrew text gives 300 and the Septuagint Greek 190.

9 For thy food, wheat thou must have by thee, and barley, and beans, and lentils, and spelt, and vetch; all in one pan mix them, and make thee bread, while thou art sleeping ever on thy same side; for three hundred and ninety days thou shalt eat it.¹
 10 Nine ounces shall be all thy daily food, at
 11 set times apportioned, and water thou shalt drink at set times, two pints by
 12 measure. Cooked in the ashes thy bread, like barley cakes, and dung of man shall be thy fuel, for all to see. Polluted as this, the
 13 Lord says, shall be the bread Israel eats, in the land I have decreed for his exile.
 14 Alas, alas, Lord God, said I, here is a soul that never knew defilement; from childhood's days, beast I never ate that died by chance or lay mangled, nor ever did food unclean cross my lips. Be it so, he answered; for dung of man droppings of cattle thou shalt have, and cook thy
 16 bread with these. But be sure of this, son of man; I mean to cut off from Jerusalem every source of bread; weighed out to them their bread shall be, and anxiously, measured out to them their water, and in great
 17 lack. And at last, for want of bread and water, every man's face shall fall as he looks at other, and they shall pine away in their guilt.

5 And next, son of man, to the sharp sword betake thee! A razor thou must take, and pass it over head and beard both; then weigh thy hair in the scales and make equal portions of it. A third of it thou shalt set alight and burn up within this city of thine, when the days of its besieging are over; a third thou shalt cut to pieces with the blade thou carriest, round about it; and a third thou shalt scatter to the winds, for my unsheathed
 3 sword to go in pursuit. Of this last third, gather some few hairs and secure them in
 4 the fold of thy cloak; yet even of these take some away and throw them into the heart of the fire, to burn there; fire enough to kindle the whole race of Israel!²

5 Look you, says the Lord God, here is Jerusalem, that I have set down at earth's
 6 very midst, the nations all about her, and

she has defied my will, than the very heathen more rebellious, defied my commandments, as neighbouring peoples never did. My bidding they have cast to the winds, followed never where my commandments led. All your neighbours, the
 7 Lord God says, outdone in wickedness, my paths untrodden, my bidding unheeded! False even to the heathen traditions of yonder country-side! Have at thee,
 8 says the Lord God; in thy very heart I will execute judgement for all the world to see; such punishment I will inflict as never was before, never shall be again, for thy detestable doings. Men's flesh men shall eat,
 9 father of son and son of father; then, when my sentence is executed, I will scatter all that is left of thee to the four winds.

As I am a living God, the Lord says,
 11 since thou hast not scrupled to profane my sanctuary with vile things and detestable things a many, I will make havoc of thee, and my eye shall not melt with pity; I will not scruple in my turn. A third of thy sons
 12 shall die of pestilence, or with famine pine away; a third shall fall in thy defence; a third I will scatter to the four winds, and my sword unsheathed in pursuit. And at
 13 last, my anger spent, my vengeance glutted, my grief healed, doubt they shall not that the God whom they slighted has decreed it; my sentence shall take full toll of them. Desolate, and the scorn of thy
 14 neighbours, so every passer-by shall see thee. A name of scorn and reproach, a by-
 15 word thou shalt be and a thing of horror, to all the nations about thee, when thy punishment is done, so fierce the anger, so shrewd the blow; I, the Lord, have decreed
 16 it. Hungry arrows³ of mine shall fly abroad, dolorous and deadly, for your minishing; famine that grows worse and worse as the stocks of bread fail, and with
 17 the famine wild beasts to bereave you, visitations of plague and violent death; and the sword too, I will let loose upon you; I, the Lord, have decreed it.

6 And now the Lord's word came to me: Turn thy eyes, son of man,
 2 towards the hills of thy own country, and

¹ The different kinds of crop are probably meant to symbolize the simultaneous deficiency of all bread-stuffs; cf. verse 16. ² It is not clear what is meant by the last clause of this verse. ³ Literally, 'arrows of hunger', but it seems likely that the other plagues about to be mentioned are included, as well as the famine.

3 prophesy their doom. Mountains of Israel, thou shalt say, listen to the word of the Lord God; here is a message from the Lord God to mountain and hill, to rocky slope and river-bed. I mean to let the sword
4 loose on you, pull shrine down, overthrow altar, break column, pile corpses before the false god's feet; before every idol, sons of Israel prostrate in death, before every altar, the ground strewn with their bones.
6 In all your confines, every city desolate, every shrine wrecked and ruined; deserted and defaced the altars, forlorn the idols, shattered the columns, obliterated all the work of man; and ever the dead lying in the midst of you. Will you doubt, then, the power of the Lord?¹
8 I will leave a remnant of you; some shall escape the sword, to live on among the Gentiles, dispersed far and wide; and these survivors, in their land of exile, shall once again bethink themselves of me. Wanton heart that played me false, eyes that hankered still after idols, shall be tamed now; they will look back with loathing on all the
10 foul wrong they did, and confess it was no empty boast, when I threatened this calamity.²
11 Clap hands and stamp feet, the Lord God says, and cry aloud, Out upon the foul wrong the men of Israel did, that are now doomed to perish by sword, famine and pestilence! Keep thy their distance, the plague shall smite them, come they to grips, the sword; safe behind the battlements, they shall die of famine; so shall my
13 vengeance take toll of them. Who shall doubt the Lord's power, when the dead lie thick at the feet of your idols and about your altars; on hill-top and mountain height, in forest covert and under spreading oak, where once men would burn
14 fragrant incense to their false gods? When the blow falls, I will make their countryside, once so thickly inhabited, into a

wilderness; Deblatha³ itself is not more forlorn. And who shall doubt the Lord's power?

7 Then the Lord's word came to me: And thou, son of man...⁴ A message to the land of Israel from the Lord God! For this land, for every corner of it, here is doom, here is doom. Doom for thee at last; I mean to wreak vengeance on thee, pass sentence on thy evil life, bring home to thee thy foul deeds. Nor shall my eye melt with pity; I will not spare. All thy evil life brought home to thee, all thy foul deeds confronting thee; who shall doubt that it comes from the Lord? The blow, the first blow has fallen, says the Lord God; all is over now, all is over; the day dawns, and for thee doom comes with day. Dwellers in the land, this is the end of you: your time is up, your day has come; a day when your mountains shall echo with tumult, not with harvest-home.⁵ Close at hand, now, I will rain down my vengeance upon you, give my anger full play, no crime unjudged, no weight of punishment unborne. Never shall my eye melt with pity for thee; all thy evil life shall be accounted for, all thy foul deeds brought to light; and none shall doubt that I, the Lord, punish.

It has come, the day has come; the wheel full circle,⁶ the branch in full bloom, pride bears its harvest. Violence has grown up into a shoot of rebellion... and not by their means, not through clamouring multitude of theirs; rest thy shall have none. The time is up, the day of reckoning come; who buys now, of his purchase shall have no joy, who sells now, shall not feel his loss; the Lord's vengeance will overtake the whole throng of citizens alike;⁷ alas! here is property alienated for ever, though buyer and seller count among the living yet. The vision is for the whole throng of

¹ *vv.* 6, 7. It is not clear whether we should take these verses as part of the first paragraph (addressed to the mountains) or as part of the second (addressed to the Israelites themselves). ² *vv.* 8-10. These verses seem to interrupt the thread of the chapter, and some think they have been accidentally misplaced. ³ No such place as Deblatha is elsewhere heard of, and there may be some error in the text. ⁴ It seems probable that there is some slight omission in the manuscripts here. ⁵ *v.* 7. 'This is the end of you'; literally, in the Latin version, 'ruin has come upon you', but this is probably a guess, the word translated 'ruin' being of quite uncertain significance. The root idea seems to be that of 'a garland'. 'When your mountains shall echo with tumult, not with harvest-home'; literally, 'of slaying (in the Hebrew, of tumult) and not of the glory (in the Hebrew, of the shout) of the mountains'.

⁶ 'The wheel full circle' is only a guess at the sense of the Hebrew phrase 'the garland (see note on verse 7) has gone out'. The text of this and the next two verses is hopelessly obscure, and may well be corrupt. ⁷ Literally, here and in verse 13, 'her multitude'; Jerusalem is presumably meant.

citizens; there is no reversing it; never a man of that guilty race shall survive.¹

- 14 Sound the trumpet there, rally all to arms! But none goes out to war; on the whole throng of citizens my vengeance has
15 fallen; sword without, pestilence and famine within; sword for the straggler, pestilence and famine for the besieged.
16 Fugitives there shall be that make good their flight, but these must take to the mountains, fluttered as the doves that
17 haunt their ravines, sinners all; hands that
18 hang listless, knees weak as water. See where men go clad in sackcloth, trembling in every limb, with downcast faces, and
19 their heads shorn! See where they cast their silver out of doors, their gold on to the dung-hill; how should precious metal
20 speed them in this day of the Lord's vengeance? Hunger it sates not, belly it fills not; and this, all the while, was the very
21 occasion of their guilt! Did they not pride themselves on the beauty of their workmanship, was it not from this they made
22 images of their detestable false gods? And
23 now there it lies, all defilement! Now I am giving it over to strangers for spoil; the vilest of earth's inhabitants shall plunder
24 it. Still my eyes shall be averted, while my own treasure-chamber is broken open, while the enemy's pursuivants enter and
25 profane it. Make short work of it,² a land where innocent lives are forfeit, a nest of
26 wrong! The very refuse of the heathen I will summon to dispossess them of their homes, to be masters of their holy places, that proud
27 boast of theirs³ now for ever silenced.
28 Days of despair, when they will look about them for a respite, and respite shall
29 be none! Fresh anxieties still, and fresh alarms; vainly they ask the prophet for revelation; tradition among the priests,
30 counsel among the elders is none. Mourns king, princes go covered with dismay, numb with despair the common folk; ill
31 they shall fare, that ill did, cruelly be judged, that were cruel judges; they shall know what manner of God they serve.

8 The sixth year of King Sedecias⁴ came; and on the fifth day of the sixth month, as I sat in my house with the elders of Juda for my company, the power of the Lord God came over me there. I had
2 a vision; a figure was there before me all aglow, fire beneath where his loins shewed, and from the loins upwards, brightness
3 made visible, like amber to see. It seemed as if an outstretched hand caught me by a lock of my hair; and with that, a force
4 lifted me up between heaven and earth, and I was carried away in a divine transport to Jerusalem. There was the gateway of the inner court, looking northwards, and there
5 was that image of rival deity God sees and hates. There, too, was the bright presence
6 of Israel's God, as I had seen it earlier on the river plain; Son of man, he told me,
7 look northwards; so northwards I looked from the altar-gate, and saw the image of
8 rival deity standing at the very entrance. Foul deeds a-doing, son of man, said he,
9 little wonder if I was fain to withdraw from my sanctuary, where the men of Israel do
10 me such wrong. But thou art not finished with them; thou hast fouler yet to see.

And with that, he brought me close up to the door of the court, where I found a hole in the wall. Then he would have me
2 dig through the wall; so dig I did, and there was a door facing me. Now go in, he
3 told me, and see for thyself what foul deeds are done here. And when I went in to look,
4 what should I find painted on the walls but likenesses of reptile and of beast! A very
5 foul sight it was; no idol Israel worships but it was there; and in front of these pic-
6 tures stood Jezonias, the son of Saphan, with seventy elders of Israel about him,
7 censer in hand each of them, so that a thick cloud of incense went up. Now, son of
8 man, he told me, thou canst see for thyself what work they make in the darkness, these
9 elders of Israel, each hidden where hide he may; Fear is none, they say, the Lord
10 should see us; he has forsaken the land for good and all, the Lord has.

¹ The sense of the first clause is perhaps that property which changes hands now, in B.C. 587, will not revert to its owner at the time of jubilee (Lev. 25. 13), because the population will still be in exile. Some think 'the vision' should be 'the vengeance'; it is doubtful, in spite of Is. 55. 11, whether 'shall not return' can mean 'it is irrevocable'. ² Never a man of that guilty race shall survive'; literally, in the Latin, 'a man shall not be strengthened in the wickedness of his life', but a comparison of the Hebrew text with the Septuagint Greek suggests that the true meaning is 'a man in his wickedness shall not lay hold of life'. ³ Literally, 'make a conclusion'; in the Hebrew text, 'make a chain'. ⁴ Literally, 'the pride of the powerful'; this seems to be a phrase regularly applied to local sanctuaries (24. 21, 30. 18 below). ⁵ Of King Sedecias' is not expressed in the original. So in 26. 1; 29. 1.

13 Thou hast not seen all yet, he told me;
 14 thou shalt see still fouler things done; and
 he took me through the northern gate of
 the temple, and there what found I but
 15 women that sat weeping for Adonis? Hast
 thou marked it well, son of man? he asked.
 16 Prepare thyself for a sight fouler yet. Then
 he took me into the inner court of the
 temple, and there, at the door of the Lord's
 own house, between porch and altar, some
 five and twenty men were standing with
 their backs to the temple, that worshipped
 17 the eastern sun. Hast thou marked it well,
 son of man? he asked. And are they not
 content, the men of Juda, with such de-
 testable doings as these, that they must
 provoke me further yet, filling the whole
 land with wrong? See how they hold
 18 branch to nostril!¹ For their busy wicked-
 ness, busy shall my vengeance be; un-
 melting this eye, this heart un pitying, deaf
 these ears to their cry of complaint.

9 Then I heard him cry aloud, Make
 way there for the plagues that must
 befall the city, for the weapon-bearers of
 death! And with that, from the upper gate
 which looks northwards, I saw six men
 coming on their way, and none of them but
 bore his deadly weapon; in their midst
 walked another, clad in linen, with a
 writer's ink-horn at his girdle. All, when
 they had entered, took their stand by the
 3 brazen altar; and now, borne on cherub
 wings, the glory of Israel's God rose above
 the threshold of the house, summoning
 him of the linen clothes and the ink-horn
 4 to set about his task. Make thy way, the
 Lord said to him, all through the city, from
 end to end of Jerusalem; and where thou
 findest men that weep and wail over the
 foul deeds done in it, mark their brows with
 5 a cross.² To the others I heard him say,
 Yours it is to traverse the city at his heels,
 and smite. Never let eye of yours melt with
 6 pity; old and young, man and maid,
 mother and child, all alike destroy till none
 is left, save only where you see the cross
 marked on them. And begin first with the
 temple itself.
 7 So they began with the elders in the

court. Desecrate yonder temple, said he,
 and fill its precincts with the slain; then go
 out on your errand. So out they went, and
 now it was on the city their strokes came.
 And I, left alone amid that carnage, fell
 face to earth; Alas, alas, Lord God, cried
 I, wilt thou destroy all the poor remnant
 of Israel, pouring out thy vengeance on
 Jerusalem thus? Nay, he told me, the guilt
 of Israel and Juda is past bound or mea-
 sure; all bloodshed the country-side, the
 city all wrong-doing; The Lord has for-
 saken the land for good and all, say they;
 fear is none the Lord will see it. And
 should eye of mine melt with pity? Nay,
 they shall rue yet the false paths they have
 taken. And sure enough, the man clad in
 linen stood there with the ink-horn at his
 side to give account of himself, and re-
 ported, I have done thy errand.

10 And now I looked up at the vault
 over the cherubim, and there was
 the hue of sapphire, and the likeness of a
 throne.

And his word came to the man clad in
 linen, Make thy way in where the whirring
 is loudest, beneath the cherubim, take a
 handful of the coals that lie there among
 them, and pour these out over the city. So
 I watched him make his way in; and all the
 while, as he did so, the cherubs were
 standing close to the right of the temple,
 and the inner court was full of smoke. And
 the brightness of the Lord's presence,
 cherub-throned, rose up above the thresh-
 hold, till the house was all smoke, and all
 the precincts filled with the divine radi-
 ance; and ever the beating of the
 cherubs' wings could be heard in the outer
 court, loud as the voice of the Omnipotent
 heard in thunder.³ There by the wheels
 stood the man clad in linen, ready to re-
 ceive the cherub-guarded flame as he was
 bidden; and one cherub, parting from the
 rest, reached hand out, took fire from the
 midst, and gave it him; so he went on his
 errand. Cherub hand shewed under every
 cherub wing.

Such was the vision I saw; four wheels
 beside four cherubim, one by each, and

¹ We have no means of determining what is the sense of the phrase which concludes this verse. Some think it is a forgotten proverb; others, that it refers to idolatrous ceremonies. ² Literally, 'with a tau'. This was the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and in the old script a cross was the symbol for it.

³ See note on 1. 24.

their colour shewed like aquamarine; all alike had the same appearance, of a wheel within a wheel. Moved they to this quarter or that, they followed ever without ado the lead of the foremost; there was no turning about when they moved. Eyes were everywhere, on body and neck and hand and wing and wheel too, for each cherub had its own wheel. (It was these wheels I had heard spoken of as the whirring.¹) Fourfold was the semblance of them, now cherub, now man, now lion, now eagle. They rose aloft, these cherubim, (such living figures as I had seen by Chobar; the wheels accompanying them as they went, never left behind, but still at their side when they spread their wings for flight, resting when they rested, rising when they rose; these too had a living impulse in them), and therewith the bright presence of the Lord left the temple threshold, and stood there, cherub-throned. With my own eyes I saw them, as they spread their wings and rose aloft; saw the wheels follow as they went; saw a halt made² at the eastern gate of the temple, and the Lord's bright presence resting above them. Full well I knew that cherubs they were, living figures I had seen bearing God's throne by Chobar, each with four semblances, and four wings, and human hands shewing under their wings; the same faces, the same looks, I had seen by Chobar, the same onward impulse of their journeying.

11 Thereupon a transport seized me, carrying me off to the gate of the temple that looks eastward; and here were twenty-five men at the gate's threshold, with two nobles, Jezonias son of Azur and Pheltias son of Benaïas, plain to be seen among them. Son of man, the divine voice said to me, here are folk that plot mischief, and give the city ruinous counsel. What, say they, have we not houses here newly built? We may lie as snug here as meat in a cooking-pot.³ Tell them of their doom, son of man, tell them of their doom.

With that, the spirit of the Lord came full upon me, and bade me speak. This

message I gave them from the Lord of hosts, These are your own words, men of Israel; can I not read your hearts? So many done to death in this city, you have filled all the streets of it with bodies of the slain! You have peopled it with the dead, says the Lord God; their flesh it is shall line yonder cooking-pot; as for you, I will fetch you out of it. The sword it is you dread, and to the sword I doom you, the Lord God says; out of it you shall come, and fall into the enemy's hands, and be punished as you deserve. Doomed to fall by the sword, up and down the countryside of Israel; then you shall learn what manner of God the Lord is! Cooking-pot is none here to shelter you; up and down the country-side you shall meet your sentence, and learn what manner of God it is whose paths you have left untrodden, whose will you have disobeyed, to follow the ill customs of your neighbours!

So, in my vision, I prophesied, and while I was prophesying, Pheltias the son of Banaïas sank down dead. Thereupon I fell face to earth, crying aloud, Alas, alas, Lord God, wilt thou take full toll of the remnant left to Israel? But the Lord's answer came to me: Thou hast brethren, son of man, thou hast brethren still. They are nearest of kin to thee that are far away, exiled sons of Israel. What though these dwellers at Jerusalem cry, Keep your distance, the land is ours? Not such is the message the Lord God sends them; Far away I have banished them, says he, widely scattered them; yet, go they where they will, a sanctuary in little they shall find in my companionship. Tell them this, from the Lord God, Lost among the peoples, I will gather you, scattered over the world, I will muster you, and give you the land of Israel for your home. To it they shall find their way, and rid it of all that is foul, all that is abominable there; one mind they shall have, and a new spirit shall fill their inmost being; gone the heart of stone, and a human heart theirs in place of it. My paths they shall tread, my will jealously obey, they my people, and I their God. Only where men's hearts are set on their

¹ Literally, 'And in my hearing he called (to) the wheels (to) them rotation (in the Latin, rotatory)'. This obscure phrase is perhaps best understood as a note on verse 2, where the same word is used in the Hebrew.

² Literally, 'I saw it (or, him) halt'. It is not easy to see what noun should be supplied.

³ The attitude here condemned is perhaps that of the citizens who refused to surrender, trusting in the strength of their walls; cf. Jer. 21. 9. For the metaphor of the cooking-pot, cf. 4. 3 above.

own foul abominations, the Lord God says, they shall bear their punishment.

- 22 And now the cherubim spread their wings for flight, the wheels beside them, the bright presence of the Lord above them; and that presence, withdrawn from the city's midst, came to rest upon the mountain height eastwards of it. With that, a fresh transport seized me, and I was back among the exiles in Chaldaea, still in a trance, still full of the divine impulse. So the vision faded from my eyes, and I told the exiles all the Lord had made known to me.

- 12 Word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, thou dwellest among a brood of rebels, that have eyes to see with, ears to hear with, yet see and hear nothing, so bent are they on rebellion. Do thou, then, son of man, provide thee with an exile's pack, and while it is daylight, let them see thee marching to and fro; in their full view, if those rebellious eyes will but mark it, remove from one place to another, carrying those goods of thine with thee, as if ready for a journey. Then, at nightfall, take thy leave in public, as if thou wert going into exile. Let them see thee dig a hole through the wall of thy house, to escape by; let them see thee carried out on men's shoulders, darkness all around, blindfold, so that thou canst not view the land about thee. A portent of doom thou shalt be to the men of Israel.¹

- 7 His bidding was done; while daylight served, I brought my exile's pack out into the open; then, at nightfall, dug wall through and went out on my dark journey, borne on men's shoulders, plain to view. 8 And word came to me from the Lord: 9 What of the rebel brood? Have the Israelites asked to know what thou meanest? 10 This tell them from the Lord God, A princely burden!² Here went the prince that rules over Jerusalem, and over all such Israelites as dwell in their native country.

Tell them, This is your own doom I fore-shadow; the men of Israel shall fare as I do, exile and prison their lot, and he who rules among them shall be fain to escape in the darkness, borne on men's shoulders. They shall breach wall to make way for him, and he shall go with his face covered, so that he will look on the land no more. But my net is spread; I have him in the noose; Babylon for him, the Chaldaean country for him; that land, too, he shall not see, yet die in that land he must! Retinue and bodyguard of his, nay, all his army, I will scatter to the four winds, with my naked sword at their heels. Then at last they shall learn what manner of God I am, when they find themselves lost among the nations, dispersed all the world over! A few shall survive, in despite of sword, famine, and pestilence, to tell these new neighbours of theirs what foul deeds they did; so shall the Gentiles⁴ learn to know me.

Word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tremble still when bread thou eatest, nor ever drink water but with anxious fear; and this message send from the Lord God to thy countrymen that are left at home: Never citizen of Jerusalem, never inhabitant of Israel, but must eat in fear, put cup to his lips unmanned, till at last unmanned it lies, the whole country-side around them, for their guilt that dwelt in it. Lonely the crowded streets, wasted the country-side must be, ere you learn to know me.

Word came to me from the Lord: What means this saying you have in Israel, The days drag on, and never a warning comes true? Tell them this from the Lord God: Here is a proverb shall be heard in Israel no more; I mean to do away with it. Tell them the time is close at hand now for the fulfilment of all my warnings. Vain vision and flattering hopes Israel shall know no longer; the divine foretelling shall not wait for the divine fulfilling; in your own days.

¹ Here, and in verses 7 and 12, the fugitive is represented by the Septuagint Greek, and by the Latin version, as being carried on men's shoulders; by the Hebrew text, as carrying his pack on his shoulders. It is doubtful whether the Hebrew verbs are rightly pointed; the more so, as they have no pronoun to express the object they refer to. The implication is perhaps that it will be impossible or unsafe for Sedecias to escape on horseback. Presumably he has his face muffled so as to be unrecognizable; the darkness is perhaps only the effect of the blindfolding, since the escape must have taken place at twilight if the men of Israel were to see it.

² In the Hebrew text, there is a play upon words, the burden being 'that which is lifted up' and the prince 'he who is lifted up'. Curiously, the Hebrew text here represents Sedecias as being carried, the Latin as being weighed down with a burden.

³ See IV Kg. 25. 7.

⁴ In the original simply 'they', which can be read, less probably, as referring to the exiles themselves.

brood of rebels, you shall witness both, the
 6 Lord God says. And the Lord's word came
 7 to me: Fond hope of Israel, that these
 should be distant things thou foretellest,
 8 the prophet of a later age! Give them
 word from the Lord God: Warning of
 mine knows no delay; here and now, the
 Lord says, it shall be accomplished.

13 Word came to me from the Lord:
 2 Son of man, on the prophets pronounce my doom, the prophets whom Israel heeds; would they prophesy after their own devices? Give them this message
 3 from the Lord: Out upon the reckless prophets, the Lord God says, that follow their own whim, and vision have none!
 4 Poor Israel, that such foxes as these should burrow among thy ruins! What did you to restore the fortunes of the day, when the Lord's stroke fell? Not for you to man the breach, to throw up a wall about Israel!¹
 5 Vain vision and cheating hopes are theirs, that warrant from me have none, yet speak in the Lord's name, and look to see their word fulfilled; has the Lord spoken? Not the Lord, only your empty dreams, your lying oracles. For these vain visions, these cheating hopes of yours, have at you! says
 6 the Lord God. On false prophet and sightless seer my hand is raised in judgement; never shall they take part in the assembly of Israel, or have their names written in its muster-roll, or find a home in Israel's land! So shall you learn what manner of God the Lord is.

How dared they cheat my people with false hopes, crying, All's well, when in truth all went amiss? My people, that strove to build a wall, and here were the prophets plastering it with clay that had no straw in it! Thine to warn these unskilful plasterers that the wall must needs crumble; here is a rain-storm brewing, and I mean to ply it with a volley of great hail-

stones, and a tempestuous wind that scatters all before it; crumble your wall, shall
 12 no one ask what became of the mortar that went to its plastering? Like a tempestuous
 13 wind my anger shall break out, the Lord God says; like the rain-storm my indignation shall be, and like a volley of hail-stones my vengeance shall take toll of you; down
 14 shall come the wall you plastered so ill, razed to earth, and all its foundations shewing, overthrown to your common ruin; so you shall learn what manner of God the Lord is. Wall nor plasterer my
 15 vengeance shall spare; Down with the wall, my sentence is, and down with the plasterers that plastered it so unworkmanly, Israel's prophets, that gave Jeru-
 16 salem comfort, the Lord says, promising all should be well when all went amiss.

There are women, too, among this
 17 people of mine who would play the prophetess as their own whim bids them. Turn upon these, son of man, and tell them their doom: Out upon them, says the Lord
 18 God, the women who stitch an elbow-cushion for every comer, make a soft pillow for the heads of young and old!² Men's lives are their prey; shall they cast a net about the lives of Israelites, and save their own? For a handful of meal, or a crust of
 19 bread, they will put me to shame³ before my own people; will doom to life or death the undeserving, such credence they win from a people ever credulous. Have at
 20 those elbow-cushions of yours, the Lord God says, the nets yonder silly birds are caught in! I mean to snatch them away from your grasp, and set the birds free, those lives you have ensnared with your prophesying.⁴ Your pillows shall be torn
 21 in pieces; I will rescue my people from your power, and they shall no longer be yours to ensnare; then you will learn what manner of God the Lord is. You have
 22 brought woe on innocent lives, when I was

¹ The military expressions in this verse are probably no more than a metaphor to illustrate the uselessness of the false prophets, like the building metaphor which follows.

² *iv.* 17-23. This passage remains hopelessly obscure. Some have thought that 'cushions' and 'pillows' are only a metaphor describing the false hopes raised by these diviners. But more probably they were magical contrivances; if the rare words used in the Hebrew have been rightly translated, we may perhaps suppose that the enquirer slept on pillows that were stuffed with magical herbs, etc., and took omens from his dream (cf. Virgil, *Aeneid* vii. 89). Even so, it is not clear whether these prophetesses were content to tell people's fortunes, or whether (as the text seems to imply) they were in a position to swear away innocent lives by false accusations.

³ Literally, 'profane me', an unusual expression. The meaning seems to be that by fathering their impostures on divine revelation the prophetesses brought religion into disrepute.
⁴ 'The nets yonder silly birds are caught in'; literally, 'by which you catch flying souls'; 'set the birds free, those lives you have ensnared'; literally, 'set free the souls you catch, souls for flying'. The Hebrew text is no less obscure than the Latin.

fain to comfort them, confirmed the sinner in those evil ways that shall be his undoing; now there shall be no more of your empty visions, there shall be no more divinings; I mean to save my people from your clutches, and you shall know the Lord's power at last.

14 At a time when some of the Israelite leaders had come to visit me, and sat closeted with me, this message I had from the Lord: Son of man, here be folk that have cumbered their own hearts with false gods, entangled their own feet with guilt; wouldst thou have me answer when I am consulted by such as these? Speak to them, thou, and tell them this from the Lord God: When a man of Israel's race comes to consult me through a prophet, his own heart yet cumbered with false gods, his own feet yet entangled with guilt, shall I, the Lord, give him answer in his idolatry? Nay, the faithless heart that leaves me for the worship of false gods shall be Israel's undoing. This warning give them in the name of the Lord God: Come back to me, leave those idols of yours, have no eyes henceforward for sights detestable! If a man of Israel's race, or any of alien breed among them, forsakes me, cumber his heart with false gods, entangles his feet with guilt, and then comes to consult me through a prophet, shall I, in my own name, answer him? Nay, that man, under my frown, shall become a warning and a by-word, lost to his people, and you shall doubt the Lord's power no longer. Or, if misguided the prophet speaks, it is I, the Lord, that have guided that prophet amiss.¹ And thereupon I will exert my power, and rid my people Israel of his company; both alike shall be held guilty, the prophet and his dupe; till Israel learns to wander from me no more, stain itself with guilt no more.

So they shall be my people, and I will be their God, says the Lord of hosts.

And word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, if a land lies deep in guilt, sin upon sin, and I cut off every source of bread; sending famine upon it to slay man and beast, though three such men as Noe, Daniel, and Job were counted among its citizens, innocence of theirs no life but theirs should save. If I send beasts to make a pathless wilderness of it, none daring to pass for fear of their encounter; as I am a living God, the Lord says, man nor maid should those three rescue by their companionship; in a desert land they alone should live. The sword if I let loose, bid the sword pass through that land to destroy man and beast, as I am a living God, the Lord says, their own lives those three should ransom, and neither man nor maid besides. Or if pestilence does my errand of punishment, taking deadly toll of man and beast; though Noe dwell there, and Daniel, and Job, as I am a living God, the Lord says, only their own lives they shall ransom, neither man nor maid besides. And what of Jerusalem, says the Lord God, when I send all four plagues on her at once, sword and famine and wild beast and pestilence, till men nor cattle are left alive there? A remnant only shall survive, sons and daughters of your race led out into exile. When these reach you, and you find out what manner of folk they are in thought and deed, for the sorrows of Jerusalem you shall weep no more, though I have plagued her so abundantly. From thought and deed of theirs you shall take consolation, nor doubt it was with good reason I used her thus, says the Lord God.²

15 Word came to me from the Lord: So much timber in the forest, son of man! And what of the vine that grows wild there? What avails the wood of it for

¹ At the end of this verse, and at the end of verse 7, the original would be more naturally rendered as a statement, not a question: 'I will give him answer.' This is usually understood as meaning, 'I will give him a practical answer, i.e. inflict punishments on him'. But this leaves a great deal to the imagination, and there is no parallel for such use of language elsewhere. It is perhaps better, therefore, to translate by a question, as above, and treat verses 5 and 8 as depending loosely on their context. See III Kg. 22. 21-23, where it will be observed that Almighty God is described as the author of an effect which was directly attributable to the angel. Here, as there, a false prophet is in question; and his guilt lies in the pride which makes him take some omen or presentiment, of a common sort, as proof that God is speaking through him. ² *iv.* 22, 23. These verses imply, according to the common opinion, that the exiles will recognize the justice of Jerusalem's fate, when they witness the idolatrous behaviour of the new arrivals from that city. But it seems curious that this recognition should be described as 'consoling' the exiles, and conceivably the prophet means us to think of the new arrivals as atoning, by their amended lives, the good effects of the chastisement they have undergone.

any manner of craftsmanship? Who will use it to make so much as a peg that pot or pan should hang from? And now it has been thrown away to feed the fire; now either end is burnt up altogether, and the middle of it no better than charcoal; of what use is it now, that use had none even when it was whole? Half burned away, half scorched, here is right unserviceable timber! And I, the Lord says, that destined yonder wild vine to feed the oven, have decreed for the citizens of Jerusalem no other destiny. My frown shall meet them yet; if they have escaped the fire, it is to be consumed by fire anew. Under my frown, they shall learn what manner of God I am; their land all pathless and desolate, for their guilt's rewarding, says the Lord God.

16 Word came to me from the Lord: And now, son of man, do thou confront Jerusalem with the record of her misdoings. Tell her this, in the name of the Lord God: Root of thee, stock of thee, spring from yonder soil of Chanaan; an Amorrhite it was begot thee, a Hethite bore thee. Born when thou wast, there was none to cut navel-string, in healing water wash thee, with salt harden thee, wrap thee in swaddling-clothes; never an eye melted with pity, none befriended thee; on the bare ground thou wert cast away, a thing of abhorrence, that day of thy birth. Who but I found thee, as I passed on my way, blood-bespattered as thou wert, and trodden under foot; in that plight preserved thee, bade it live on, this defiled thing?

Swift as the wild blossoms I bade thee grow; grow thou didst and thrive, and camest to woman's estate, the breasts formed, new hair shewing; and still thou wast all naked, and blushing for thy nakedness. Who but I came upon thee, as I passed on my way? And already thou wert ripe for love; cloak of mine should be thrown about thee, to hide thy shame; my troth I plighted to thee, the Lord God says, and thou wert mine. Water to wash thee, all thy stains gone, oil I brought to anoint thee; clad thee with embroidery, shod thy feet with leather; of fine linen thy tiring should be, of silk thy wear. How I

decked thee with ornaments! Bracelets for those arms, a collar for that neck; a frontlet on thy brow, rings in thy ears, on thy head a crown magnificent. Of gold and silver thy adorning, of fine linen and silk and embroidery thy apparel, of wheat and honey and oil thy nourishment; matchless beauty, too, was thine, such beauty as brought thee to a throne. All the world heard the fame of thy loveliness; I had made thee so fair, says the Lord God, utterly fair!

Fatal beauty, fatal renown, which emboldened thee to play the harlot, lavish thy favours on every passer-by, and be his! That thou shouldst use those garments of thine to make curtains for thy hill-shrines, what age can match the villainy of it? Silver and gold of mine, thy adornment and my gift, should they be turned into gods of male form, at thy harlot's whim? And these wouldst thou clothe with thy own embroideries, offer them the perfume and incense that was mine by right, set before them the bread, the oil, the honey I gave thee, to appease them with the smell of burnt-sacrifice? More happened besides (he, the Lord God, reminds thee); to these gods thou wouldst bring sons and daughters of thine and mine, consecrating them to death. Could not thy wanton desires rest content, without immolating my own sons as victims to such as these? Most foul deeds and most lecherous, that quite put thy youth out of mind, the days when thou wast naked, and overcome with shame, blood-bespattered and trodden under foot.

And at last, to crown thy misdoings (Fie on thee, fie on thee for shame! says the Lord God), thou wouldst build thee a brothel, a common stew, in every street; no cross-roads but should carry the blazon of thy harlotry. O the dishonour done to thy beauty, when thou didst welcome every passer-by to thy favours, insatiable in thy dalliance! With those lusty neighbours of thine, the Egyptians, thou wouldst play the wanton; these should be my rivals! What wonder I should interpose, and abridge the rights thou didst enjoy, handing thee over for a prey to the maids of Philistia, rivals of thy own, and such as blushed to witness thy ill-doings? It was

¹ Sennacherib claims, on an inscription, that he took certain towns from Ezechias and handed them over to the Philistine princes.

not enough; thou must needs dally with the men of Assur, nor might their dalliance content thee; thou wouldst extend thy trade as far as Chaldaeae, where all is for sale, insatiable to the last.¹

30 Salve is none, says the Lord God, for such a heart as thine, set on following a harlot's ways. Never a cross-roads, never a street, but thou hast set up some brothel for public resort; no harlot thou, to bargain over a hateful trade. Thine was the craving of the false wife, that must ever bring a stranger between her husband's sheets.

31 The price of love other harlots claim, thou wouldst offer; gifts of thine should entice gallants from every side to thy bower.

32 Never did wanton the like, nor shall again; it is out of all nature, a harlot that gives, not takes.

33 Here then, poor wanton, is the Lord's doom; this message he has for thee. Because all thy bronze was put to such ill use,² because thou didst wanton so shamelessly with those lovers of thine, idols most foul, in whose honour the lives of thy own children were sacrificed, I mean to have a reckoning with thee. All the gallants that have enjoyed thee, men that love thee and men that hate, I will muster together; muster them from all around, and then lay thy shame bare, expose thy nakedness for all to see. Such punishment thou shalt have as unfaithful wives have, or murderers; to my jealous anger thy life must make amends; I mean to leave thee at their mercy. Ruined thy bower, ransacked thy brothel shall be; thy garments stripped off thee, plundered thy fair adornment; naked they shall leave thee, and overcome with shame. Hue and cry they shall raise against thee, stone thee and put thee to the sword; house of thine the flames shall not spare. Before all womankind they will make an example of thee; no more dalliance, no more hired lovers now. Then at last my vengeance shall be complete, my jealous anger appeased; thou shalt have a respite from my ill-will. So forgetful of thy youth, so obstinate in thy provocations,

what wonder if I pay thee what thou hast earned? the Lord says. Yet even now I have not required thee as thy most foul crimes have deserved.

Like mother, like daughter; so runs the proverb, and of thee it shall be spoken. Thou art thy mother's daughter, that was false to husband and child; false to husband and child were those sisters of thine; thy mother a Hethite, thy father an Amorhite, sure enough. Here was thy elder sister on thy left, Samaria, thy younger sister on thy right, Sodom, with daughter towns both of them. Didst thou follow their example, share their misdoings? Nay, that was not enough for thee; it should go hard but thou wouldst outdo them in their crimes. As I am a living God, the Lord says, never were Sodom and her daughter-guilty as thou and thine. Pride was the fault of her, this sister of thine; pride and a full belly; the peace and plenty she and her daughters had, with no thought for the poor that stood in need! So it was they rebelled against me, ever I must see foul deeds done, till I rid myself of them, as thou seest. Nor was Samaria in her turn half so guilty as thou. It remained for thee to outvie thy sisters in crime, till thy more abominable doings put them in countenance. Their lesser guilt, that somewhat excuses them, is the measure of thy shame; of that shame thou must bear the brand, while thy sisters go free. When I reverse the doom of exile against Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, then, in their company, thy own exiles shall return; a sorry boast for thee, that thou hast cheered, in such fashion, their loneliness! Only when Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, to their former state return, is there any hope for thy daughters and for thee.

Time was, when no mention of Sodom's name might soil thy proud lips; that was before thy own sins came to light, that now disgrace thee before Syria's daughters, Philistia's daughters, thy watchful neighbours north and south. Now it is thy turn,

¹ Literally, in the Hebrew text, 'And thou didst multiply thy harlotries to the land of merchants (or, of Chanaan), as if to the Chaldaeans, and even with that thou wast not satisfied'. The meaning can only be a matter of conjecture; the Latin version, 'thou didst multiply thy harlotries with the Chaldaeans in the land of Chanaan' is not likely to be right. ² Literally, 'thou didst pour out all thy bronze'. This can hardly mean money, which is never thus described in the Old Testament; if the text has been correctly preserved, it is perhaps best to suppose a reference to the accessories of heathen worship. But some would derive the word from a different root altogether, and give it the sense of 'thy favours'.

the Lord God says, to undergo the shame of thy guilt. And this is his doom: ¹ False to thy oath, thou hast forsworn our covenant, and thou shalt have the punishment thou hast earned. That covenant I made with thee in thy youth shall not be forgotten; nay, I will ratify it eternally, but humbled thou shalt be with memories of past days, when thou must needs take thy sisters, older and younger, to thyself. Daughters of thine they shall be, strangers to the covenant no longer. My covenant thus ratified with thee, thou shalt know my power at last; remembering still, shamefaced and tongue-tied still, even when I have pardoned all thy ill-doing, says the Lord God.

17 Word came to me from the Lord: A riddle, son of man, a parable for the men of Israel to interpret! This shall be thy message from the Lord God: A great eagle there was, strong of wing, long of limb; thick and gay his plumage. And this eagle flew to Lebanon, where he robbed cedar of cedar's very pith; tore away its crown of leaves and carried it off to Merchant-land;² set it down in Traffic City. Then back he flew to that same country, chose out both seed and seed-ground there; it was on a level lawn by a brimming stream he planted it. When the plant grew, it proved to be a spreading vine, low of stature, and ever branch curled inwards and root struck downwards, yet vine it was, with sprig that burgeoned, shoot that sprang. But now, here is a second eagle comes in sight, another great eagle, strong of wing, thick-plumed; and it seems as if the vine, in the garden where it grows, were stretching out its roots, waving its tendrils, to ask this second eagle for water instead. What, when it was planted in ground so fair, by waters so abundant, with such promise of leaf and fruit, a vine so destined to greatness! Will any good come of this? asks the Lord God. Nay, roots shall be plucked up, fruit ra-

vaged, branches left to wither; fade it must, nor is it like to need great strength or many hands for its unearthing. Take root is not thrive; rich soil or none, when the sirocco parches it, the vine must wither.

Then the Lord's word came to me, bidding me ask the rebel brood, Were they at a loss for the meaning of it? This tells how Nabuchodonosor came to Jerusalem, carried off the king and princes and took them away to Babylon; yet spared a prince of the blood royal, making a treaty with him and exacting an oath of allegiance. All the flower of the citizens he carried away; the kingdom should be submissive henceforward, and rebel no more, should keep troth with him loyally.³ Straightway the new king revolted from Nabuchodonosor, and sent envoys to Egypt, asking for horses, asking for the despatch of a great army in his support. Speeds he, finds he deliverance? Should broken faith avail him? As I am a living God, the Lord says, Babylon that made a king of him, Babylon that trusted in his false oath of allegiance, shall be the place of his death. Nor think that his enemy⁴ will need great strength, a great muster of men, to overcome him, mound here, trench there, and the loss of many lives; for the man that did so ill, held his faith a light thing and broke the bond he had set his hand to, there is no escape. This doom the Lord pronounces: As I am a living God, false troth and broken treaty shall be the undoing of him! My net is spread; I have him in the noose; Babylon for him! There I will call him to account for the dishonour he has done to my name by his treachery; and all that escape with him, nay, his whole army, must fall by the sword, or survive scattered to the four winds; you shall learn what manner of God you worship.

And here is a message from the Lord God: Pith of the tall cedar I will take and set it firm, young branch from its crest of branches I will snap off, and plant it on a mountain that stands high above the rest.

¹ *vv.* 59-63. The precise emphasis of this passage is a matter of dispute; the rendering given above assumes that the reference to 'thy older and younger sisters' alludes to the call of the Gentiles.

² 'Merchant-land'; the Latin version here transliterates, 'Chanaan', instead of translating. Chaldaea is evidently meant.

³ *vv.* 12-14. The Latin here, like the Septuagint Greek, has the verbs in the future tense. But the reference is clearly to the banishment of Joachin, which had already taken place, not to that of Sedecias.

⁴ In the original, 'Pharao'. But it seems probable that the text is at fault; Nabuchodonosor, not Pharao, was the enemy. And although the Hebrew text can be read as implying that Pharao with his great army will not be able to save Sedecias, this is not the sense required; cf. the parallel in verse 9 above.

23 High in the hill-country of Israel I will plant it, and there it shall grow into a great cedar-tree; no bird on the wing but shall find rest under its shade, nestle among its branches; till all the forest learns its lesson, 24 that I, the Lord, bring high tree low, raise low tree high, wither the burgeoning trunk, give life to the barren. What the Lord promises, the Lord fulfils.

18 Word came to me from the Lord: 2 Strange, that a proverb should be current in Israel, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are being set on edge! As I am a living God, 3 the Lord says, this proverb shall be current in Israel no more. What, is not every soul at my disposal, father and son alike? It is 4 the guilty soul that must die. Is a man loyal to me, does he live innocently and 5 uprightly? Is he one who never feasted at mountain-shrines, or looked for help to the false gods that are worshipped in Israel; never came between his neighbour's sheets or had commerce with a woman when she 6 was defiled? Does he keep clear of oppression, giving back the pledge he took from his neighbour, and seizing nothing by violence? Does he feed the hungry, 7 clothe the naked? Does he shun usury and extortion? Does he refuse the bribe, and judge honestly between man and man? 8 Does he follow my commandments, hold fast to my ordinances, as a true man should? Here is a loyal servant of mine; life for him, he shall live on, says the Lord God.

10 But now, what if son he begets that is a man of violence, a murderer; lends himself 11 to any of those practices which his father ever shunned? At hill-shrine eats he, 12 neighbour's wife wrongs he, the friendless poor oppresses; gets him ill gains, withholds the pledge, betakes himself to false god and foul rite; a usurer besides and an extortioner. Shall he live on? Nay, no life 13 for him; he must die the death his foul crimes have earned him. Son of his, in 14 turn, warned by such a father's doom, forswears that ill example. Not for him the hill-feast, the false gods of the country-side, 15 the adulterous bed; never a wrong done,

a pledge withheld, gain dishonestly come by; feeds he the hungry, clothes the naked, and keeps clear of oppression, and usury, 17 and extortion; what of him? Doer of my will, keeper of my law, he shall not die for his father's sins; he shall live on. His 18 father, a man of wrong and violence, that deserved ill of his countrymen, has paid for his guilt by death; would you have the 19 son, too, make amends for it? Nay, but here is a man upright and honest, that holds fast by decrees of mine and obeys them; he must live on.

It is the guilty soul that must die; not 20 for the son the father's punishment, not for the father the son's; good shall befall the good, evil the evil. It may be the 21 wicked man will repent of all his sinful deeds, and learn to keep my commandments, and live honestly and uprightly; if so, he shall live on; life, not death, for him. All his transgressions shall be forgotten, 22 and his uprightness shall bring him life. What pleasure should I find in the death of 23 a sinner, the Lord God says, when he might have turned back from his evil ways, and found life instead? It may be the 24 innocent man will lose his innocence, and begin to live as foul a life as that other in his wickedness; if so, shall he be spared? No, all his upright life shall be forgotten; a traitor, shall he not die in his treachery, 25 a sinner in his sins? And yet you say, The Lord is inconsiderate in his dealings! Listen, sons of Israel; it is your dealings that are inconsiderate, not mine. The innocent man loses his innocence, and lives 26 amiss; it is death I deal to him; he dies for his guilty deeds. The wicked man abandons his wicked ways, and learns to live 27 honestly and uprightly; he wins life by it. He bethinks himself, and turns away from his evil doings; there is life, not death, for him.

What, should the sons of Israel hold the 29 Lord inconsiderate? It is you who are inconsiderate, men of Israel, not he. Each 30 by his own life you shall be judged, men of Israel, the Lord God says. Come back, 31 and make amends for all this guilt of yours, that shall else be your undoing; away with them, your defiant rebellions against me;

¹ *vt.* 10, 11. The text of the Hebrew is somewhat doubtful, and the grammar of the Latin obscure. But 'which his father ever shunned' is probably the sense originally intended. The rendering 'though not all of them' is possible, but hardly attractive.

12 a new heart, a new spirit! Why must you choose death, men of Israel? Die who will, his death is none of my contriving, says the Lord God; come back to me, and live!

2 **19** ... Thine to raise a dirge over the princes of Israel: Prince, that mother of thine was a lioness indeed; where lions haunt, she made her lair, among their whelps nursed her brood.¹
 3 One cub she reared that grew to lion's estate, learned to bring down his prey, to eat men; the neighbours² heard of it, caught him, not scatheless, in their pit, and carried him off in chains to Egypt. Baulked of her hopes, she reared another, till it was a grown lion. This one, in turn, took his ease like a lion among the rest; learned to bring down prey, eat men, of women make widows, of cities a desert; dispeopled a whole land with his roaring. At that, folk came from far and near³ with nets to snare him, caught him in their cruel toils and caged him. This one they led off in chains to the king of Babylon; in Babylon he remained a prisoner, and his voice was heard on the hill-sides of Israel no more.
 10 Mother of that royal stock! Vine planted by the water-side, and in that neighbourhood leafy and fruitful both, was never so fertile. Here was a vine could yield sturdy boughs, sceptres for kings to govern with; high grew the leaves, fair the branching tendrils. But vengeance fell upon it, torn up and thrown away on the ground, the sirocco to wither its leaves; faded and dry those strong boughs, till at last fire consumed them! It is planted now far away, in the parched soil of a desert.
 14 Fire came out from those branching boughs, that consumed all the fruit of it; never a sturdy bough more, to be a king's sceptre. Make lament, then; here is good cause for lament.

2 **20** And now it was the seventh year, the tenth day of the fifth month. Some of the Israelite leaders had come to visit me, asking what was the Lord's will, and sat closeted with me. And this mes-

sage I had from the Lord: Son of man, tell the leaders of Israel this from the Lord God: Would you come to ask my will? As I am a living God, the Lord says, you shall have no answer. Arraign them, son of man, arraign them for their crimes; tell them what foul things their fathers did before them. This shall be thy message to them from the Lord God: Long ago I made choice of Israel, plighted to Jacob my troth, when I made myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to be their own God, swore that I would take them away to the home I had destined for them, a land all milk and honey, the best of lands. Only, I told them, his darling idolatries each man must set aside; not for you to be contaminated with the false gods of Egypt; I, the Lord, am your God. All was defiance and disobedience; idolatry still cherished, the worship of Egypt's gods still unforsaken. I was minded to let my anger have its way, glut my vengeance on them, there in Egypt. But no, I would be their champion, for my own honour's sake; the heathen all around, that had witnessed my coming to deliver them, must not learn to hold my honour cheap. So from Egypt I rescued them, and led them out into the desert.

There I gave them a law, made known to them the usages that bring life; bade them share my sabbath rest, that should be a token between me and them, a token that they were divinely set apart. What did Israel then? Defied my anger, disobeyed my law, life-giving commandments cast away, left my sabbath all unhonoured. Should I give vent to my anger, and make an end of them, there in the desert? And let the heathen see my work of deliverance half accomplished? For my honour's sake, I must not. But I swore, out in the desert, that the promised land, all milk and honey, best of lands, should never be theirs. My will defied, my law forsaken, my sabbath neglected, a heart set on idols, they should learn to rue; had not my pity spared them, they should have died there and then, swallowed up in those wastes. To their

¹ The two lions referred to are presumably Joachaz (IV Kg. 23. 31) and Joachin (IV Kg. 24. 15). The mother referred to is probably the kingdom of Juda. The absence of any rubric at the beginning of the chapter is curious, and it does not follow naturally on chapter 18; some words may perhaps have fallen out, or the whole chapter may have been accidentally misplaced.

² Literally, 'the nations'.
³ Literally, 'nations came from the provinces'. It is a habit of Hebrew authors to read the application of a parable into the parable itself.

sons, the desert-born, warning I gave: Not for you your fathers' example, your fathers' traditions, the contamination of the false gods they worshipped. I, the Lord, am your God; mine the laws you must follow, the usages you must cherish and obey; my sabbath you must honour, in token that the Lord is the God you worship. But they too, the sons, defied me; my laws forsook, my life-giving usages forgot, my sabbaths profaned. There in the desert I would have given vent to my anger, let my vengeance take its toll of them, but still I held my hand; for my own honour, the heathen must see my work of deliverance accomplished. But once more in the desert I bound myself by an oath...¹ I would scatter them among all the nations, spread them over the face of earth, men defiant of my will, contemptuous of my law, careless of my sabbath as ever, after the false gods of their fathers hankering still. Laws they should have, but for their harm, usages that brought, not life, but death; guilty, they should stain themselves with fresh guilt by the very offerings they made, when they consecrated their first-born to the fire; they must have proof of my power at last.²

They blasphemed me (tell Israel from the Lord God), those fathers of yours, and did me great despite. Scarce had I brought them into the promised land, when the sight of high mountain here, thick forest there, set them offering victims in honour of my rivals, burning incense, pouring libations! Well might I ask them, Whither resort you? And hill-resorts they are called to this day.³

Give the men of Israel, then, this message from the Lord God: Still the same ways your fathers went, still the same itch for things abominable? To this day, when you would make offering, you pass your sons through the fire; guilt of idolatry stains you yet, and shall I make answer to

you, men of Israel? As I am a living God, the Lord says, you shall have no answer from me! Never think I will allow you to worship wood and stone like other races of men, your neighbours; as I am a living God, the Lord says, I mean to reign over you, though it should need all the exercise of my constraining power, all the out-pouring of my vengeance. Rescued from many masters, summoned from many lands, you shall serve me perforce, my power constraining you, my vengeance threatening you. I will lead you out into a desert world, and there plead my cause against you, as I did with your fathers long ago, in the desert confines of Egypt. I will force you under my sceptre, chain you to my covenant. The rebels I will set apart, and though I summon them away from their banishment, they shall never return to the land of Israel; then you will know what manner of God you serve. Come, then, says the Lord God, let each man have recourse to his own idol, and pay it due worship! If that counsel you will not follow, nor drag my name in the dust with foul rites and false gods...⁴

On that holy mountain of mine, the Lord God says, that high mountain that looks down over Israel, all the race of Israel shall be my worshippers, favoured suitors in a favoured land; first-fruit and tithe, all your hallowings shall be awaited there. Rescued from so many masters, summoned from so many lands, you shall be a fragrant offering; all my dealings with you the heathen shall acclaim, and you yourselves shall recognize my power, restored to the land of Israel, the land I promised to your fathers. False paths and foul misdoings you shall remember yet, and think with loathing of what you were; my power you shall know, men of Israel, says the Lord God; and that I was your benefactor, not for your deserts, that erred and sinned, but for my own honour's sake.

¹ It seems possible there has been an omission here, such as is very likely to occur in a passage full of repetitions. Verse 24 seems to deal with an existing situation (not with a future situation, like Deut. 4. 27, etc.); and if so, the threat of dispersal would more naturally be uttered against a people already settled in Chanaan.

² *loc. cit.* 25, 26. This passage cannot mean that Almighty God commanded the sacrifice of children; cf. Jer. 32, 35. The prophet implies, by a kind of ironical exaggeration, that by refusing aid to his guilty people God drove them to become worshippers of Moloch, whose usages brought death instead of life. 'Laws they should have' 'they should stain themselves'; literally, 'I gave them laws', 'I stained them'.³ This verse contains a (probably fanciful) derivation of the usual Hebrew word for 'hill-shrines'. It is perhaps intended to emphasize the fact that the shrines were still used in the prophet's own day, in spite of all the punishments Israel had experienced. ⁴ It seems clear that there is an omission after this verse, unless indeed the text of it has been incorrectly transmitted.

45 Word came to me from the Lord: Look southward, son of man; pour out thy complaint towards the noon-day sun, and let the southern woodlands hear thee prophesy. To the listening forest give this message from the Lord God: I mean to set thee alight, burn up green tree and dry; unquenchable, that flame shall scorch the faces of all beholders, northward and south alike; plain enough it shall be for all the world to see that it was I, the Lord, set it ablaze, and there is no quenching it.

46 Alas for pity, Lord God, said I, they are complaining already that I speak to them only in parables!

21 So the Lord's word came to me, Why then, son of man, towards Jerusalem turn thee, pour out thy complaint sanctuarywards, and let the land of Israel hear thee prophesy. And this be thy message to the land of Israel: Have at thee! the Lord God says; here is my sword unsheathed to make an end of thy inhabitants, innocent souls and guilty. In token that all alike must perish, northward and south alike, all the world over, my unsheathed sword must go on its errand; drawn it is, plain for all the world to see, and there is no sheathing it. And therewithal I would have thee groan, as men groan that have an aching in the loins, very piteously in the public view; ask they the reason of it, thou wilt say, For ill tidings. Faint every heart shall be, when those tidings come, every hand shall hang listless; cowed every spirit shall be, every knee be weak as water. Those tidings are on the way, the Lord God says; there is no averting it.

8 Word came to me from the Lord: Tell them, son of man, the Lord God has this message for thee to utter: Whetted the sword is, polished the sword is, whetted for slaughter, polished to dazzle as lightning does. Never a tree but must fall at thy onset, woodman who art to overthrow the sceptre my son wield.¹ Polished, for the hand to grasp it well, the sharp sword, the bright sword, which the slayer must needs handle! Cry aloud, son of man, and bewail thee, that on my people this must fall, and all

the princes of Israel that are left; prince and people, doomed to perish by the sword; smite on thy thigh most dolorously. A tried sword, the Lord God says, and when yonder sceptre it has overthrown, brought to nothing...² Prophesy, then, son of man; smite hands together and call for a second stroke and a third of the avenging sword; a sword of massacre, that strikes men dumb, turns their hearts faint, and lays all in ruin. Havoc wrought at every gate by the sharp sword, the sword polished till it shines again, wrapped about the hilts for more ease of smiting! Sharp be thy blade; cut right, cut left, wherever thy lust beckons thee! I too will smite hands together, telling the tale of my vengeance; I, the Lord, command thee.

Word came to me from the Lord: And now, son of man, draw a picture. A picture of two roads, both leading from a common point, by which the sword of the Chaldaean king may travel. Here he is, planning his course at the sign-post, where two roads meet, a city at the end of either. Draw the two roads, one beckoning that sword to Rabbath, where the Ammonites dwell, one to Juda, and Jerusalem the impregnable. There stands the king of Babylon at the parting of the ways, taking omens; there is shuffling of arrows, consulting of deities, searching of entrails. Choose he the right, it is for Jerusalem; the battering-rams, the breach made ere the slaughter can begin, the cries of battle, the assault on the gates, the mound, the siege-works. Thy picture will shew him as a man baffled by the omens given him, that remains idle, as if he were keeping the sabbath rest.³ Then he remembers the guilt; shall a guilty race go free?

Ay, says the Lord God, still fresh is the memory of that guilt; open rebels you are, and never a thought in your hearts but shews vile; capture awaits you, that revive those memories still. And thou, perjured wretch that rulest Israel, thy time has run out; off with head-band, off with crown, symbols that honour the base, the noble degrade! I will wrest it this way, wrest it

¹ Like much else in this chapter, the second half of the verse is obscure, and probably corrupt, in the Hebrew text.

² Once more the Hebrew text gives us no help, and grammar can only be restored to the Latin by assuming that there has been an omission in the original.

³ The Hebrew text refers here not to keeping sabbaths, but to swearing oaths; the sense of it is extremely doubtful.

that, as it was never wrested yet;¹ at last one shall come that claims it of right, and to him I will give it.

28 Prophecy, son of man, and give a message from the Lord God to the men of Ammon, in answer to their taunts: Drawn be the sword, cried they,² whetted be the sword and bright for its work of slaying!
 29 Nay, sword of Ammon, it was but a vain dream, a lying augury, that it should be thy office to fall on the necks of yonder doomed
 30 sinners, whose time has run out. Back to thy sheath with thee, back to thy native soil; there, in the land where thou wast fashioned, I will call thee to account.
 31 I mean to pour out my vengeance on thee, blast thee with the fire of my anger; barbarian foes shall have the mastery of thee,
 32 that are skillful only to destroy. Fire shall feed on thee, earth run with thy blood, oblivion bury thy name; I, the Lord, have given sentence.

22 Word came to me from the Lord:
 2 Wilt thou not arraign them, citizens of this murderous place, wilt thou not
 3 arraign them? Confront them with their foul misdeeds, and give them this message from the Lord God: Here is a city that hastens her own end with open bloodshed, soils herself with idols to her own undoing.
 4 Blood-spilth and idol-filth have brought thy time nearer, shortened thy years; what marvel if I let the heathen reproach thee,
 5 a whole world mock thee? What marvel if men exult over thee, far and near, great only in thy misfortune, as thou art renowned only for thy shame? No better title now to Israel's nobility, than to fill
 7 those streets with blood! Home of wrong, where father and mother are despised, the stranger oppressed, widow and orphan ill-used!
 8 My sanctuary, how it is despised, my sabbath how profaned! Innocent lives sworn away, feasting at the hill-shrines,
 9 and foul deeds done besides; see where a father's bed is dishonoured, a woman

pleads her defilement in vain; neighbour
 11 comes lecherously between his neighbour's sheets, father beds incestuously with his son's wife, brother mates with sister sprung of the same blood! The murderer's
 12 hire, usury and extortion, gains won by violence; and of me, the Lord God says, never a thought! Well may I smite hands
 13 together, indignant at thy ill-gotten gains, thy murderous doings; will thy courage be
 14 so high, thy arm so powerful, when it is I that reckon with thee? What the Lord threatens, the Lord fulfils. Far will I
 15 banish thee, widely scatter thee, and bring the tale of thy shame to an end; so I will
 16 claim my rights over thee for all the world to see, and thou shalt learn at last my power.

And word came to me from the Lord:
 17 Son of man, where the race of Israel shews
 18 in the heart of the furnace, nothing I find but dross; all is copper, and tin, and iron, and lead; dross of silver where silver
 19 should be. This warning, then, the Lord
 20 God has for them: I mean to shut you up in Jerusalem, dross as you are; this shall
 21 be your furnace, silver and copper and tin and iron and lead, all together; and I will
 22 light a fire to smelt you. There my angry vengeance shall imprison you, and I will give you respite for a little, and then melt you down. Beleaguered there, with the
 23 fire of my anger to smelt you like silver in the furnace, you shall feel the force of the
 24 Lord's vengeance at last.

Then word came to me from the Lord:
 25 Son of man, tell the land of Juda that it is unclean, and, when my vengeance falls on it, rain it shall have none. What of the
 26 prophets? A sworn conspiracy; lions roaring for their prey, the lives of men; wealth and treasure they must have; there be widows everywhere. What of the
 27 priests? Priests, that despise my law, violate my sanctuary, cannot tell sacred from profane, count all one, clean or unclean; priests, that leave my own sabbath

¹ 'Symbols that honour the base, the noble degrade! I will wrest it this way, wrest it that, as it was never wrested yet.' Literally, the Latin version runs: 'Is not this the thing that has lifted up the low, abased the high? I will make it guilt, guilt, guilt (or perhaps, inequality, inequality, inequality). And this has not happened.' The Hebrew text appears to mean: 'This is not this! Lift up the low, abase the high! I will make it distortion, distortion, distortion. And this was not.'

² The words 'cried they', and 'sword of Ammon' in the next verse, are not in the original; they have been inserted above as being necessary for the understanding of what the passage presumably means. It appears that the Ammonites had hoped to profit by the misfortunes of Israel, instead of which they will be involved in a common ruin.

³ For 'prophets' the Septuagint Greek has 'princes', which may well be the true reading; only a difference of one letter is involved in the Hebrew, and the prophets are to be mentioned in verse 28 below.

unregarded; am I not defiled by their
 27 company? What of the nobles? Ravening
 wolves, all blood and murder, greedy for
 28 gain; and here are the prophets with their
 untempered mortar, their vain dreams and
 false auguries, crying a message from the
 Lord when message from the Lord they
 29 have none. Great wrong the citizens
 themselves do, robbing where they will,
 harrying the helpless poor, oppressing the
 30 stranger and denying him redress. Who
 would close the breach, intercede with me
 to spare the land from ruin? Never a man
 31 was found! What wonder if I have poured
 out my vengeance, burnt them up in my
 anger? It was but their deserts I gave
 them, says the Lord God.

23 Word came to me from the Lord:
 2 There were two women once, son
 3 of man, daughters of the same mother, that
 went to Egypt and played the wanton
 there, so wanton and so young! There
 those breasts surrendered to the attack,
 4 virginity was ravished. For their names,
 the elder was called Oölla, the younger
 Oöliba; both I espoused, and they bore me
 sons and daughters. (Samaria and Jeru-
 salem are the true names.)

5 What did Oölla? She played me false,
 love-sick for the Assyrians that dwelt hard
 6 by, her paramours. Gay gallants were
 these, princes and noblemen that went clad
 in purple, and proudly they came riding,
 7 for they were horsemen all. Among the
 flower of Assyrian chivalry was none but
 enjoyed her favours; and she, that courted
 all alike, soiled herself with their idolatry.
 8 Alas, still unforgetten her dalliance in
 Egypt; the lovers that bedded her in her
 youth, mishandled her virgin breast, plied
 9 her with their debauchery! Love-sick for
 new paramours, into their keeping she
 should be given up, the Assyrians should
 10 have the mastery of her. How they
 stripped and dishonoured her, robbed her
 of sons and daughters both, and then put
 her to the sword! Never fell such signal
 punishment upon womankind.

11 That sight before her, what did the other
 sister, Oöliba? Why, she outdid the first
 12 in her wantonness, more lascivious yet; she
 too cast shame aside, gave herself to the
 gallants of Assyria that came riding by,
 horsemen all, princes and noblemen in

their broidered cloaks, so young, so fair!
 Light women both; I knew them now. 13
 This other would set no bounds to her 14
 lust; her eye fell on some pictured wall,
 where the men of Chaldaea stood por-
 15 trayed, all in crimson. What girdles they
 had about their loins, these men of Ba-
 16 bylon, what gaily-coloured turbans they
 wore! Sure, they must be princes, all of
 them, in their own Chaldaean land! And
 with that, her eye fell a-doting on them,
 and she must send them a message all the
 way to Chaldaea. So the Chaldaeans, too, 17
 were her bed-fellows, dishonoured her
 with their embraces, till even she grew
 weary of dishonour. Weary was I too, as
 18 once of her sister; the open harlotry, the
 public shame! Must she still renew her 19
 unfaithfulness, hanker still after those old
 debaucheries in Egypt, when she was love- 20
 sick for gallants lusty as the wild ass, hot
 as stallions?

Alas, Oöliba, are they remembered still, 21
 the passions of thy youth, far away in
 Egypt, when those breasts surrendered to
 the attack, that virginity was ravished?
 This doom, then, the Lord God pro- 22
 nounces on thee: They shall be summoned
 to the attack, all those old lovers thou art
 wearied of, beleaguer thee round about;
 all those Chaldaeans from Babylon, noble- 23
 man and prince and chieftain, all those gay
 gallants from Assyria, captains and rulers,
 lords paramount and knights of renown!
 What rattling of chariot-wheels, what 24
 hordes of warriors in breastplate and
 shield and helmet, mustered about thy
 walls! These shall be thy judges; theirs
 the sentence thou must abide. Ministers 25
 of my jealous anger, they shall cut nose and
 ears off thee, and there shall be sword-
 strokes yet; carry off thy sons and thy
 daughters, and the fire shall have work to
 do yet. They shall strip thee of thy clothes, 26
 rifle thy proud ornaments; gone the me- 27
 mory of thy harlotries in Egypt, no hanker-
 ing for them now, no thought of Egypt
 now!

Weary thou art and disdainful of them, 28
 says the Lord God, but they shall have the
 mastery of thee; and they shall use thee 29
 cruelly enough; carry all thy harvest away,
 and leave thee stripped and humbled; lay
 bare the secret of thy shame. Lust it is and
 lechery of thine that has brought thee to 30

this pass; so wantonly didst thou court the heathen, till at last their idolatry infected thee. Thy sister's counterpart, the cup of thy sister's doom thou shalt inherit; deep thy cup shall be as hers, wide as hers; full of mockery and reproach, so much it holds, full of dizziness and dismay, full of despair and melancholy, the cup of thy sister Samaria. Drink it thou shalt, ay, drain it to the dregs, till thou art ready to devour cup itself piecemeal, or mutilate thy own breasts in thy madness.¹ Me thou didst forget; on me thy back was turned; wanton and faithless, thou shalt be held to account. Arraign them, son of man, the Lord God said to me; confront Oölla and Oöliba with the record of their foul deeds. Blood-stained those adulterous hands; false gods they have taken for their paramours, and to the greed of false gods sacrificed their own children and mine. Theirs to defile my sanctuary, profane my sabbath; no sooner had they done offering their sons to false gods, than my sanctuary must be violated; so would they treat me in my own house. And then they sent word to their paramours, summoning them from afar.

They came, those paramours; and thou, fresh from the bath, eyes painted, all thy ornaments hung about thee, didst await them, sitting on a fine bed with a table before it; incense of mine, oil of mine was there. What a stir was heard there, as of a great throng taking their ease! They had brought in a rabble of desert folk with them, and these must be given bracelets for their arms, fine garlands for their heads. And I wondered whether she would grant them her favours, even she, that had grown so old in unfaithfulness; but sure enough they went in, boldly as to a harlot's bed.²

Such lovers had Oölla and Oöliba, wantons both. Yet honest folk there be,³ that can judge their deeds as adultery should be judged and murder; adulterous they are and murderous both at once.

Muster me a company of such men, the Lord God says, and let them make a fearful example of these women, their prize. With stones from many hands, with swords from every side dispatch them; death for their children, the fire for their homes! Rid we the land of its guilt; of such harlotry let all women beware! Wantonness punished, idolatry's guilt uncondoned; you shall know the Lord's power at last.

24 And so the ninth year came, and the tenth month, and the tenth day of it. And the Lord gave me this message: Son of man, write down this day as The Day Itself.⁴ This day, this very day, the king of Babylon has closed his grip on Jerusalem. A riddle, a parable, for the rebellious brood! Tell them the Lord God this bidding gave thee: Set a pot on the fire, but filling it first with water; slice after slice goes in, all that is best; thigh and shoulder, the best joints of all, to fill the pot; and fat be the sheep that yields them. Pile high the fuel⁵ beneath; now boil pot, and see the stew, there in the heart of it! But ah, says the Lord God, what of the city that is stained with blood? It is no better than a pot covered with rust, that cannot be scraped off any longer; broken in pieces that must be cast away one by one; never shall the lot fall upon it.⁶ Blood plain for all to see, spilt on the polished rock, not on earth that might hide it away under the dust; rock, not earth, so I would have it; blood unconcealed, to warrant my angry frown, my avenging punishments!

Out upon the blood-stained city, says the Lord God, the great pyre I mean to kindle! Pile high the fuel for its burning! Why, how is this, meat wasted, the whole dish charred, the very bones calcined? Empty of water it must be set on the coals, till it is red-hot, and copper melts away, and the stain on it is burnt out, and it is rusty no more! Alas, it is but labour spent

¹ The text and meaning of this verse is doubtful.

² *vs.* 42-44. It can hardly be doubted that the Hebrew text as we have it is corrupt; no sense can be made out of it. The translation given above follows the Latin, which is somewhat less obscure.

³ This may refer (by a metaphor) to the Chaldeans, but more probably, in these concluding verses, the coming fate of Jerusalem is left out of sight, and appeal is made to the moral sense of the prophet's audience.

⁴ Literally, 'write down the name of this day, this very day'.
⁵ The word translated 'fuel', here and in verse 10, is the Latin 'bones'. The Hebrew text has 'bones' here and 'wood' in verse 10; the two Hebrew words differ only by a single letter. There is some likelihood that the original had 'wood' in both places.

⁶ The Hebrew text is obscure, and perhaps corrupt; as it stands, it must mean that the rusty pot was thrown away in pieces, not that it was emptied of the slices of meat. It is difficult to see why a 'lot' should fall upon it; unless indeed we are to think of it as so riddled with holes that it could not even be used as an urn for casting lots in.

in vain; so deep is that rust, even the fire
 13 will not drive it out.¹ A curse lies on this
 uncleanness of thine; purge thee I would,
 yet purged thou wilt never be, never till
 I have taken full toll of my vengeance on
 14 thee. Such is my divine doom; come it
 must, executed it needs must be; indul-
 gence is none, nor mercy, nor pity;
 I will pay thee what thy ill life, thy ill
 thoughts have earned.

15 The Lord's word came to me, Son of
 man, I mean to smite thee down, by taking
 away from thee what thou most lovest.
 Dole make thou none, nor lament, shed
 17 never a tear. Unmarked be thy sighing,
 with no funeral grief made; thy head
 covered, thy feet shod, no veil on thy face,
 18 no customary fare of mourners. And so it
 was; that morning I uttered my word to
 the people, and my wife died at set of sun.
 19 Next day, I did as the Lord bade me, and
 the people were all agog to know the
 20 meaning of what I did. Why, I told them,
 21 the Lord has spoken to me, giving me a
 message for the race of Israel: he means to
 profane his own sanctuary, that proud
 boast of yours, which you love so, trem-
 bling ever for its safety. Sons and daugh-
 22 ters of yours, left behind at Jerusalem, will
 die at the sword's point. As I do now, you
 will do then; no veils on your faces, no
 23 customary fare of mourners; heads cov-
 ered, feet shod, you will make neither
 dole nor lament, but languish ever under
 the load of your guilt, sighing each of you
 24 in his neighbour's ear.² In Ezechiel, says
 the Lord God, read your own doom; when
 that day comes, you will be at pains to do
 as he does now; you will have learned what
 power the Lord God has.

125 Yes, son of man, the day is coming when
 I will rob them of that citadel of theirs,
 that proud boast of theirs, so well loved,
 the comfort of their thoughts; rob them,
 126 too, of sons and daughters. And what of

thyself? Wait till a fugitive comes and tells
 thee the news;³ then, when he utters his
 28 message, utter thou thine, dumb no longer.
 So thou shalt be the presage of their doom,
 and they shall learn my power at last.

25 Word came to me from the Lord:
 2 Son of man, turn thy regard to-
 wards the Ammonites, and prophesy their
 doom. Give Ammon this message from
 3 the Lord God: Joy, joy! was thy cry when
 my sanctuary was profaned, Israel rav-
 aged, the men of Juda carried off into
 4 exile; what shall be thy reward? The
 eastern folk shall enjoy thy lands; sheep-
 cote of theirs, tent of theirs shall be found
 in thee, crop of thine they shall eat, milk
 of thine drink; camels lodged in Rabbath,
 5 and all Ammon a pasture-land of sheep!
 Thus you shall know what power is mine.
 For clapping of hand and stamping of foot,
 6 and heart that rejoiced at Israel's fall, that
 power shall be used in vengeance; all the
 world shall have the pillaging of thee, till
 thou art a nation no longer, a kingdom no
 longer; thy ruin shall teach thee what
 manner of God I am.

This doom, too, the Lord God pro-
 8 nounces: Boasted they, the Moabites and
 the men of Seir, that Juda had gone the
 way of other lands? I will lay open the
 9 valleys of Moab, that climb up from the
 cities, those frontier cities, fair Bethjesi-
 moth, and Beelmeon and Cariathaim;
 open them to the men of the east in their
 10 pursuit of the Ammonites, and all shall be
 overrun. Ammon shall be blotted out from
 the memory of mankind,⁴ and there is
 11 justice, too, awaiting the Moabites; they
 too shall learn my power.

And this: Ill did the Edomites to glut
 their malice, by taking their revenge on
 12 Juda. This doom the Lord God pro-
 13 nounces: My hand is raised to smite
 Edom, sparing neither man nor beast,

¹ *vs.* 10-12. No certainty can be attained about the meaning of this passage. The Latin, but not the Hebrew text, has the word 'empty' in verse 11; it is rendered above 'empty of water', on the assumption that we are meant to look back to verse 3. A cooking-vessel with no water in it—possibly because it has rusted away into holes—will char the meat that is put into it and afterwards be burnt through, so that it is left more useless than ever. But it is not clear that this is the meaning. ² *vs.* 22, 23. Various reasons have been suggested for this absence of public lament among the exiled community: fear of political consequences is perhaps the simplest explanation.

³ It seems to be implied that Ezechiel received no more revelations for his own fellow-countrymen during the two years of the siege. Cf. *vs.* 33, 21. ⁴ *vs.* 9, 10. Literally, 'Behold, I will open up the shoulder of Moab from the cities; from his cities, I say, and from his frontiers; (I will open up) those famous (cities) of the earth, Bethjesimoth, Beelmeon and Cariathaim, to the sons of the east with the sons of Ammon', etc. It seems probable that the whole prophecy against Moab has come down to us in a faulty text; the mention of Seir (Edom) in verse 8 comes too early, the mention of Ammon in verse 10 too late.

making a desert of it all the way from Teman in the south to Dedan, that shall be put to the sword. My own people of Israel shall execute this sentence against Edom, avenge for me the grudge I bear it; then it shall be seen how I punish my enemies, the Lord God says.

And this: Rancour of the Philistines, that murderous toll would take, old scores would settle! Against the Philistines, too, this hand is raised; executed they shall be, the executioners; the dwellers on the sea-coast, all that is left of them, I mean to exterminate. Great havoc I mean to make of them, unrelenting in my anger; such havoc as shall teach them to know what the Lord is.

26 In king Sedecias' eleventh year, on the first day of the . . . month, word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, what was the cry of Tyre over Jerusalem? Joy, joy, the toll-gate¹ of the world has been broken down! It is mine now; I shall grow fat on Jerusalem's ruin! This doom the Lord God pronounces: Have at thee, Tyre! I mean to bring hordes of nations marching on thee, like wave upon wave of the sea. Walls of Tyre they shall break down, and towers of her overthrow; all the soil I will scrape away from her, and leave her bare rock, doom her to be but an island where fisher-folk dry their nets; I, the Lord God, will give her over as a prey to all the nations. Daughter-towns that stand in her territory shall be put to the sword, and learn my power at last.

Here is Nabuchodonosor of Babylon, the Lord says, a king that has kings for his vassals, marching from the north with horse and chariot, with his knights and all his retinue, a great army of men, to put thy daughter-towns to the sword, compass thee with siege-works and raise a mound about thee. A barrier of shields he will raise under thy walls, ply engine and battering-ram against them, and bring down thy towers with grappling-irons. Of horses such a company, as shall cover thee

all with dust; with cries of horsemen and rattle of chariot-wheels entering thy gates, thy walls shall ring again like the walls of a breached city. Never a street of thine but must echo with hoofs; butchered thy citizens shall be, thy fair pillars cast down, thy wealth plundered, thy merchandise taken for spoil. Down shall come walls, palaces totter in ruins; stone and timber and mortar of thine shall strew the seas. Hushed the murmur of thy songs; never more the sound of harp shall be heard in thee. Bare rock thou shalt be, for fisher-folk to dry their nets on; there shall be no building thee again, says the Lord God.

This too: The very isles shall echo with the crash of thy fall, ring with the cries of the wounded dying in thy streets. Down from their thrones they shall come, all the lords of the sea-harbours, throw robe aside, brodered coats lay down; wrapped in dismay they sit on the bare ground, at the sudden fall of thee bewildered and amazed. And thus they shall sing thy dirge: What a doom was thine, sea-built city, far renowned! Mistress of the seas, mother of a race that all held in dread! Day of terror, that affrights the very ships, fills the islands with alarm, to see no ships leave thy harbour now!

This too: Desolate thou shalt be, thy place among the lost cities; higher and higher yet the fathomless ocean shall rise about thee, swallowing thee up under its waters. Among the dead thy place is, that go down into the grave, where time is not; entombed with those other ruined cities in the depths of earth, tenanted no longer. The living world shall see the glory of my presence, but thou shalt have no part in it, thou shalt no longer be; who searches for thee will search evermore in vain, says the Lord God.³

27 And word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, do thou thyself sing the dirge over Tyre. A message from the Lord God to the city that is built by the sea's gates, and trafficks with many

¹ 'The executioners'; that is, the Cerethites, a Philistine clan, 'cutters-down' both by the derivation of their name, and by the office they enjoyed under the early kings of Israel (II Kg. 8. 18; III Kg. 2. 28, 29).

² In the original simply 'the gate', but it is difficult to see how Tyre could have regarded Judaea as her rival, except in the sense that it lay on the trade route between the Gulf of Akabah (III Kg. 9. 26, 22. 49) and the Phoenician ports.

³ v. 19-21. Actually the siege of Tyre lasted for thirteen years (cf. 29. 18), and her commercial prosperity remained considerable for many centuries. Thus it seems clear that the sentence of overthrow, however well deserved in Ezechiel's time, was not literally executed, in the counsels of divine Providence, till much later.

peoples on many shores! Thine was the
 4 boast of perfect beauty, the embosoming
 sea thy frontier. A well-fitted ship thou
 wert, such as they build on yonder coast;
 5 of fir-wood from Sanir thy outer planks,
 6 of Lebanon cedar thy mast, oars shaped
 from Basan oak, thy thwarts of box-wood¹
 from the western islands, with marquetry
 7 of Indian ivory. Of broidered linen from
 Egypt the sails they spread for thee, awn-
 ing of blue and purple from the Grecian
 isles gave thee shade.

8 For thee, men of Sidon and of Arad
 manned the oar; thyself, Tyre, gavest men
 of skill, thy own citizens, to be helmsmen.
 9 For thy dockyards,² all the grey-haired
 wisdom of Gebal was at thy command, and
 for trafficking, never was ship or sailor in
 10 the world but visited thee. Warriors from
 Persia, from Lydia, from Africa, fought
 thy battles, with shield and helmet decked
 11 thy walls; men of Arvad ringed the battle-
 ments, thy defenders, and the Gamma-
 dim,³ too, were mounted on thy towers,
 on thy walls hung their quivers; lacked
 nothing for thy adornment.

12 And for the merchants that dealt with
 thee, how Carthage poured her wealth into
 thy market-place, of silver and iron, of tin
 13 and lead! What purveyors of thine were
 Ionia, Thubal, and Mosoch, with their
 slaves to sell thee, their urns of bronze;
 14 and the men of Thogorma, with horse and
 horseman and mule! The sons of Dedan
 15 were thy pedlars; riches came to thee from
 the islands far away; ivory and ebony thou
 couldst win by barter. Syria, too, for the
 16 multitude of thy wares, must trade with
 thee, exposing in thy mart carbuncles, and
 purple, and embroidery, and lawn, and
 17 silk, and rubies. Juda and Israel them-
 selves had their yield to bring thee, fresh
 wheat and balm and honey and oil and
 18 gum for thy stalls. Damascus, for thy
 many goods, had much to exchange, rare
 19 wines and brightly dyed wool; Dan and

Ionia and Mosel offered wrought iron for
 sale, with cassia and calamus supplied
 thee. Dedan brought thee saddles; Arabia
 20 and Cedar's chieftains were at thy call,
 driving in lamb and ram and goat for thy
 purchasing. The merchants of Saba and
 21 Reema were thy merchants too, with spices
 and precious stones and gold to shew in thy
 fairs; Haran, Chene and Eden, Saba,
 22 Assur and Chelmad, none of them but
 exchanged traffick with thee; and how rich
 24 the variety of it, the coverlets of blue, the
 embroideries, the treasure-caskets wound
 about with cords, the cedar-wood, all for
 thy profit!⁴

But the ships, they were thy pedlars in
 25 chief; the ocean-going ships, that gave
 thee thy wealth, gave thee thy sea-
 envired renown. Alas, that those oars-
 26 men of thine should have ferried thee out
 into deep waters, for the storm-wind to
 wreck thee, out in the heart of the sea! All
 27 thy wealth and treasure and merchandise,
 thy mariners and helmsmen, dockyard
 masters and captains, all the warriors thou
 hast, and the common folk that dwell in
 thee, must sink down to the sea's depths in
 this day of thy fall. Bewildered, all thy
 28 navy, with the helmsmen's shouts; down
 29 come the rowers from their ships, mariner
 and pilot line the shore. Loud they bewail
 30 thee, bitter their cry, as they throw dust
 on their heads and sprinkle themselves
 with ashes; heads are shaven, sackcloth is
 31 every man's wear; woeful hearts are all
 around, and woeful lament. And a sad
 32 dirge they shall sing as they mourn over
 thee: City was none like Tyre, that now
 lies forgotten in the depths of the sea!
 Peoples a many thy trafficking supplied;
 33 all the kings of the earth were richer for
 wealth of thine, enterprise of thine; and
 34 now the sea has swallowed thee up; buried
 in the deep waters all the prosperity that
 was thine, all the citizens that thronged
 thee. The island peoples, how they stood 35

¹ It seems almost certain that this word stood in the original, but, being rare, was wholly misconstrued. Thus our present Hebrew text speaks of 'the daughter of Assyria', the Septuagint Greek of 'forest-shrine habitations', and the Latin version of 'small country-houses'. For 'western' the Latin version has 'Italian', but this is only a guess; Balearic box-wood is probably meant. ² In the Hebrew text 'to caulk thy leaks'; in the Latin version 'for the administration of thy varied equipment'. ³ Who the Gammadim were, is unknown; some think they were the Cappadocians. The Latin version can hardly be right in identifying them with the pygmies.

⁴ *vs.* 12-24. There is considerable uncertainty, all through this section, about the identification of the nations mentioned and their wares. In verse 16 Aram (Syria) is probably a mistake for Edom, which resembles it in Hebrew script; the Edomite caravans would naturally bring eastern goods from the Red Sea. Syria, under the name of Damascus, has a separate mention below. The text at the beginning of verse 19 is almost certainly corrupt.

aghast at thy fall; the island kings, how
 36 wreck! How they hissed in derision, the
 traders of other nations! Only ruin is left
 of thee, for ever vanished and gone.

28 And word came to me from the
 2 Lord: Son of man, give this message
 from the Lord God to the prince of
 Tyre: An ill day for thee, when thy proud
 heart told thee thou wast a god, enthroned
 god-fashion in the heart of the sea! Mortal
 man, thou hast played the god in thy own
 3 thoughts. What if more than a Daniel thou
 wert for wisdom, no secret hidden from
 4 thee? Skill and craft have brought thee
 power, lined thy coffers with gold and
 5 silver; and this skill of thine, this pedlar's
 empire of thine, have made thee proud of
 6 thy own strength. This doom, then, the
 Lord God has for thee, man that wouldst
 7 play the god: I mean to embroil thee with
 foreign foes, a warrior nation as none else,
 that shall draw sword on that fair creature,
 thy wisdom, soil thy beauty in the dust!
 8 Dragged down to thy ruin, wounded to thy
 9 death, there in the heart of the sea, wilt
 thou still boast of thy godhead to the
 10 slayer, while his sword ungodd thee? Such
 my doom is for thee, death at an alien's
 hand, the uncircumcised for thy company.

11 This too: Son of man, sing a dirge over
 12 yonder king of Tyre.¹ This be thy message
 to him from the Lord God: The token,
 13 thou, of my considerateness.² How wise
 thou wast, how peerlessly fair, with all
 God's garden to take thy pleasure in! No
 precious stone but went to thy adorning;
 sardius, topaz, jasper, chrysolith, onyx,
 beryl, sapphire, carbuncle and emerald;
 all of gold was thy fair fashioning. And thy
 niche³ was prepared for thee when thou
 14 wast created; a cherub thou shouldst be,

thy wings outstretched in protection;
 there on God's holy mountain I placed
 thee, to come and go between the wheels
 of fire.⁴ From the day of thy creation all
 15 was perfect in thee, till thou didst prove
 false; all these traffickings had made thee
 16 false within, and for thy guilt I must expel
 thee, guardian cherub as thou wert, from
 God's mountain; between the wheels of
 fire thou shouldst walk no longer. A heart
 17 made proud by its own beauty, wisdom
 ruined through its own dazzling bright-
 ness, down to earth I must cast thee, an
 example for kings to see. Great guilt of
 18 thine, all the sins of thy trafficking, have
 profaned thy sanctuaries; such a fire I will
 kindle in the heart of thee as shall be thy
 undoing, leave thee a heap of dust on the
 ground for all to gaze at. None on earth
 19 that recognizes thee but shall be dismayed
 at the sight of thee; only ruin left of thee,
 for ever vanished and gone.

This too: Son of man, turn thy regard
 20 towards Sidon, and prophesy its doom.
 This message give it from the Lord God:
 21 Have at thee, Sidon! Barde-field thy ter-
 ritory shall be of my renown! In her, too,
 my power shall be made known, my sen-
 tence executed, my holiness vindicated.
 Plague I mean to bring down on her and
 22 blood-letting both; the sword everywhere,
 and wounded men dying in her streets, to
 prove what power the Lord has.

No more shall the Israelites have scorn-
 23 ful enemies round about, thorns and brier-
 to prick and hurt them; they shall know at
 last what manner of God they serve. When
 24 I restore the scattered race of Israel from
 its exile, the Lord God says, my holiness
 shall be vindicated for all the world to see.
 The land I gave to my servant Jacob shall
 be thenceforward its home; securely it
 shall dwell there, build houses, plant vine-

¹ v. 11. The 'king' of Tyre, to whom the foregoing ten verses were addressed, was doubtless a historical figure. But it is not certain that we ought to read verses 12-19 in the same connexion; the exaggerated phrases would suggest a rhetorical apostrophe to the Tyrian god Melkarth ('King of the City'). Further, it seems evident that the prophet identifies him (local king or local god) with Satan, or some other fallen angel; cf. the reference to Lucifer in Is. 14. 12.

² Literally, 'the seal of similitude'. The Latin, like the other versions, gives a literal rendering of a confessedly obscure phrase in the Hebrew. The noun translated 'similitude' occurs only here. It is the verbal noun of a verb meaning to regulate, to adjust, to put in a right proportion. There are nineteen occurrences of the verb in Scripture, and nine of these are in chapter 18 above or in chapter 33 below. It seems best, then, to assume that we have here a cross-reference. The equitableness or considerateness of Almighty God in punishing the just man who has turned sinner is illustrated by his treatment of the fallen Angel, who is therefore described as a seal or token of (his) considerateness.

³ Literally, 'holes' (or just possibly 'flutes'). If the text is right, a niche meant for a god's image is perhaps the nearest tolerable meaning. ⁴ Literally, 'stones of fire'. But no plausible suggestion has been made as to what 'stones of fire' could mean, and a very slight alteration in the Hebrew word would give the sense of 'wheels', readily understandable in view of numerous passages (e.g. to. 6 above).

⁵ Cf. Num. 33. 55; Jos. 23. 13.

yards, fear no attack. It shall see every scornful neighbour punished, and know at last what it is to have the Lord for its God.

29 It was the tenth year of Sedecias, on the eleventh day of its tenth month, when word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, turn thy regard towards Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and prophesy his and all Egypt's doom. This message give him from the Lord God: Have at thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, great dragon that liest couched between thy streams, boasting that yonder river is thy own, thou art a god, self-created! Trust me, I will bridle those jaws of thine, and all the fish in thy river I will fasten to thy scales! Out of the river, fish clinging to scales, I will drag thee, and leave thee aground in the desert, and thy fish too. None shall go out to search for thy corpse, or bring it home; carrion it shall be for beast on earth, for bird in heaven, and all the citizens of Egypt shall learn my power. This, because thou didst prove a staff of cane to the men of Israel; grasped they that staff, it splintered, and there was an arm wounded; leaned they on it, it broke, and their strength gave way under them.

This doom, then, the Lord God pronounces: For thee, the sword; man nor beast will I spare in thee; a lonely desert thou shalt be, till thou hast learned what my power is, thou that wouldst be river's lord and river's maker. Out upon thee, out upon those streams of thine; a desert Egypt shall be, devastated by the sword, from Syene's tower to the marches of Ethiopia; man nor beast shall set foot in it till it has lain forty years desolate. Land of Egypt shall be as the desert lands are, cities of Egypt as the ruined cities are, for forty years uninhabited; and the men of Egypt shall be scattered wide as earth among the nations.

This too: At the end of forty years I will bring the Egyptians back from their countries of exile, restore them from banishment, and in Phatures, the land of their birth, give them a home once more; there they shall be a kingdom of little

account. Least of the kingdoms Egypt shall be, no more hold up its head among the nations, too weak for empire now. No more shall it raise hopes among the men of Israel, and bring upon them the guilt of finding a refuge there; they shall learn that I, the Lord, am their God.

It was on the first day of the twenty-seventh year¹ that word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, here is great drudgery king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon has given his men in the assault upon Tyre; every head worn bald, every shoulder smooth, by the burdens they carried! A thankless service it was they did me there, he and his army; but now, says the Lord God, I will make use of Egypt to pay Nabuchodonosor his wages; all its great wealth he shall have, spoil for his spoiling, plunder for his plundering, and so his men shall have their reward. He has fought my battles, and Egypt shall be his recompense, the Lord God says. When that day comes, new life shall spring from the stock of Israel, and to the men of Israel thou shalt speak with unhampered utterance, to attest my divine power.

30 And again word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tell them their doom in the name of the Lord God, and bid them raise loud lament: Alas, alas the day! Nearer, nearer it comes, the Lord's reckoning day, dawning in cloud; it is the heathen's turn now. Egypt shall feel the sword, and Ethiopia tremble to see Egypt's warriors dying, Egypt's wealth carried away, the foundations of Egypt overthrown. Ethiop and Libyan and Lydian, all that motley host, men of Chub and men that hold their lands under treaty, by that same sword shall perish. Such doom the Lord God pronounces; gone, all the props that supported her, gone her proud empire; all that lies beyond Syene, the Lord says, ravaged by the sword! Land of Egypt shall be as the desert lands are, cities of Egypt as the ruined cities are; my power they will never learn till I have spread fire over their country, till all their allies have perished. When that day comes,

¹ Literally, 'thou didst make thyself', but some think the sense is 'thou didst make it (the river) for thyself', cf. verse 9. ² Cf. Is. 36. 6. ³ The other dates given in these chapters plainly refer to the reign of Sedecias, though this is not expressed in the original. Less certainty can be felt about the 'twenty-seventh year'; cf. note on 1. 1.

there will be ships carrying news of my onset, to daunt the courage of Ethiopia; Egypt's doom approaching, they shall know it and be afraid.

- 10 This too: I mean to make an end of Egypt's prosperity, through king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon; he and his army, in all the world is none fiercer, shall be let loose for the land's undoing, their swords drawn to fill Egypt with dead. I will dry up the course of its rivers, and leave the land at the mercy of its bitter enemies; nothing in it but shall be ravaged by alien hands; I, the Lord, have decreed it. Down shall come the idols of Memphis, the Lord God says, I will have no more false gods there, and prince in all the land shall be none. Such terrors Egypt shall know, 14 Phatures all in ruin, Taphnis afire, in Alexandria¹ my doom executed. Pelusium, her fortress, shall feel my vengeance, 16 Alexandria be laid waste; all Egypt shall be ablaze, such bitter throes Pelusium shall have, Alexandria such devastation, Memphis such hard straits day by day. 17 Their warriors put to the sword, Heliopolis shall be enslaved and Bubastis; dark days there shall be at Taphnis, when I crush the power of Egypt there, and all the pride of her empire is gone; a city in darkness, with all her women-folk carried off into exile. 19 Such doom I will execute upon the Egyptians, and they shall know my power at last. 20 In the eleventh year of Sedecias, on the seventh day of the first month, word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, I have left Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with his arm broken; bound up and healed it may not be, clout or bandage is none to wind about it and give it support, give it strength to hold sword again. Out upon Pharaoh, king of Egypt, says the Lord God; that strong arm of his, that broken arm of his, I will disable, strike the sword from his hand; 23 dispersed among the nations Egypt shall be, scattered to the winds. Strong arms I will give the king of Babylon, and a sword to wield, to Pharaoh broken arms, and the groans of dying men for all his comfort. 25 The king of Babylon strong, and Pharaoh

disabled; my power shall be known, when my sword, in Babylon's hand, hangs over Egypt; my power shall be known, when 26 the men of Egypt are scattered wide as earth among the nations.

31 That same year, on the first day of the third month, word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, here is a message for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and his retinue. Say to him, This greatness of thine, whose memory does it recall? Not less powerful once was the Assyrian² king, a very cedar of Lebanon. How fair its boughs, yonder tree, its leaves how overshadowing; what height, what thickness of growth about its top! Water nourished it, 4 water came up from the depth beneath to sustain it, washed about its roots and parted into runnels to feed the trees around. In all the country-side none rose 5 so tall, had covert so thick, branches so wide; none fed so deep. Among its boughs 6 the birds nested, the beasts in their travail sought its shade; proud nations a many under Assyria's shelter grew. So fair it 7 was, so tall and spreading, there by the brimming water's side, in God's own 8 garden cedar could not overtop it, fir-tree match it for height, or plane-tree for shade. God's garden itself could not shew such beauty: never a tree there, tree of Eden,³ 9 but must envy it the leafy loveliness that was my gift.

Alas, that he should aim too high, the 10 Lord God says; alas for youth's luxuriant promise, that swelled his heart with pride! I must needs hand him over to a conquer- 11 ing power, that should settle my reckoning with him; he, the goddess, homeless should be. Cut down, yonder tree, by alien folk, 12 heathen that pity have none, and left to lie on the hill-side, boughs choking the valleys, branches carried off by the mountain streams; vassal nations abandoned his shelter, and he was all alone. In the fallen 13 trunk birds nested, under torn branches the wild beasts made their lair; never again 14 should tree boast of its height, there by the river bank, overtopping the covert of the

¹ Alexandria' is an unfortunate guess of the Latin translators; the city referred to is Thebes. ² Some think that the name of Assyria has crept in through an error in the text, and that Egypt itself, not Assyria, is being compared to the cedar-tree. In verse 6, there is no mention of Assyria in the original; it has been introduced for the sake of clearness, on the assumption that the text of verse 3 has been correctly preserved. ³ Here, and in verses 16 and 18, the name 'Eden' has been translated 'pleasure' in the Latin version.

woods, never again should the waters nourish its pride. Death and the deep earth should await them all, mortal things to a mortal doom appointed.

15 Sad dirge was his, the Lord God says, at his down-going; the great depth was the shroud of him, its flooding streams hushed and stayed; mourned Lebanon, and all the
16 forest swooned away. How it echoed through the world, the crash of his fall! He too, like all mortal things, was for the earth at last; comfort for those others that were brought to earth like himself, trees of Eden like himself, so noble, so fair, so well watered! All alike must go down to the grave, the sword's way; his arm. . . .¹

18 . . . his shadow their protection against surrounding nations. And thou, in thy greatness and glory among Eden's trees so like him! Yet thou, like other Eden trees, must come down low as earth can bring thee; and the sword shall level thee with the uncircumcised in death. (Pharaos is meant, and Pharaos's retinue, the Lord God says.)²

32 And in the twelfth year, on the first day of the twelfth month, word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, sing a dirge for Pharaos, the king of Egypt, that counts for a lion among the nations: Monster thou art of the depths, holding up thy head in those rivers of thine, trampling them under foot, till their waters run foul!
3 This doom the Lord God pronounces: A net-work I have of many peoples that I will cast over thee, a seine that will bring thee presently ashore. High on the beach I will leave thee aground, for all the birds to perch on thee, all the beasts to take their fill of thee; flesh of thine shall strew the mountains, with blood of thine the gullies shall overflow, reeking blood that drenches hill and chokes valley with its stream.

7 Thy light when I quench, muffled the skies shall be, the stars dim, the sun beclouded, and the moon shall refuse her light; no luminary in heaven but shall go mourning for thee, and in that land of thine, the Lord God says, all shall be darkness.

Here shall be a challenge to many nations, in lands thou still knowest not, when I tell them the story of thy downfall; peoples a many there shall be that gape in bewilderment, kings that tremble and quake at the story of thee. My sword they shall see flashing before their eyes, and each for his own life shall tremble in the day of thy fall. Sword of the king of Babylon shall reach thee, the Lord God says; tried warriors thy thronging multitudes shall cut down, pitiless hordes that shall harry the pride of Egypt, scatter her wealth. The very beasts that roam beside your full stream I will destroy; never foot of man, hoof of beast shall sully it thenceforward; clear those waters shall be as never they were, smooth as oil the river's flow, the Lord God says; all Egypt, now, shall be desolate, all its busy life shall be still, when I smite the men that dwell in it, and teach them to recognize my power. Make dole, then; here is good cause; Egypt shall have the world for her mourner, none but shall mourn for Egypt and her lost greatness, says the Lord God.

And in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the month, this: Son of man, a dirge now for the common folk of Egypt; sing Egypt to her grave, and with her those other proud nations that must go down into the dark: Measure not thy beauty against another's; to thy grave get thee, and with the uncircumcised take thy rest. The sword carries off all alike; once loose it, she and all her multitudes must perish. From the tomb they greet the newcomer, those great warriors, men of the uncircumcised races, allies once, that now lie there, slain in battle.³ Here is the Assyrian king with all his muster-roll; how their graves ring him about, dead warriors all! Down there in the dark, his grave and theirs around him, dead now in battle, that once daunted the hearts of the living! Here are the Elamites, too, lying about their king, men uncircumcised that made themselves feared in life, and now lie in the pit beneath with all those others, stripped and shamed as they were left on the battle-field; (here

¹ There seems to have been either an error, or an omission, in the Hebrew text. The Latin rendering, 'the arm of each will sit under its shade' yields no good sense. ² According to the Septuagint Greek, the concluding words of the chapter should read 'So (it will be with) Pharaos and all his retinue'.

³ In this curiously repetitive passage, from here to the end of the chapter, the Latin version follows the Hebrew text, which is here so different from the Septuagint Greek as to suggest the possibility of a very early corruption in the manuscripts.

he lies, with his men about him for monument, once so feared; stripped and shamed they lie, Elamites uncircumcised, there in the dark, there amongst the slain).¹ Uncircumcised, too, the king of Mosoch and Thubal, with all his retinue buried around him, dead now and feared no longer; shall they not sleep on there with the slain warriors, with the uncircumcised, still armed, swords beneath their heads; their corpses lawless yet, and feared no longer?² Thy place too, the place of thy slain warriors, is with the uncircumcised in their ruin. King and chief of the Edomites³ lie slain among the uncircumcised, there in the dark; so do all the kings of the north, and the Sidonians, dismayed now and trusting no more in their own valour, stripped and shamed. Well may Pharaoh and his men be comforted by that sight over the multitude of their slain, the Lord God says. He too, in this living world, wielded my terrors; he too lies there, the Lord God says, slain in battle, with the uncircumcised about him.

33 Word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tell thy fellow-countrymen this: Plague I a country with war, some frontier-dweller is chosen by the citizens to be their sentry. Let such a man spy the invader's approach, and sound the alarm with his trumpet; whoever hears it must give good heed, or else the enemy may catch him, and none but himself to blame. What, hear trumpet, and pay no heed? The fault is his. More cautious, he should have found safety. But what if sentry, when he sees the invader coming, sounds no alarm to warn his neighbours? Here is some citizen overtaken by the enemy; well, his guilt deserved it. But for his death I will hold the sentry accountable.

So it is with thee, son of man; for the whole race of Israel thou art my watchman; the warning thou hearest from my lips, to them pass on. Sinner if I threaten with death, and word thou give him none to leave off his sinning, die he shall, as he deserves to die, but thou for his death shalt answer to me. If warning thou givest, and

he will not leave off his sinning, he dies by his own fault, and thou shalt stand acquitted.

This be thy word, son of man, to the race of Israel: Think you no hope of life is left, so burdened you are, so languish under the guilt of your sins? This message give them from the Lord: As I am a living God, the sinner's death is none of my contriving! I would have him leave his sinning, and live on. Come back, come back from your ill-doing; why must you choose death, men of Israel? And warn them, son of man, warn thy fellow-countrymen that, once the upright man falls a-sinning, his uprightness shall nothing avail him. Sinner that will leave his sinning, no harm shall he have; upright man that sins, no life shall his uprightness bring him. Promise I the upright he shall live on, he must not by his own uprightness be emboldened to sin; forgotten, all his good deserts, his guilt shall be his undoing. Threaten I the sinner with instant death, he has but to repent of his sins, do innocently and uprightly, restore the debtor's pledge, the ill-gotten gains, follow the life-giving law, forswear ill-doing, and it shall be life, not death for him. Forgotten, all his ill-deserving; innocent and upright, he shall live on. And yet they say, these fellow-countrymen of thine, that the Lord's dealings are inconsiderate, when in truth it is they that deal inconsiderately. Death for the upright that is upright no more, and turns ill-doer; life for the sinner that will leave his sinning, upright and innocent now! Will you still have it that the Lord's dealings are inconsiderate? Nay, men of Israel, each of you shall have his deserts.

It was in the twelfth year of the exile, on the fifth day of the tenth month, that a fugitive came to me with the news that Jerusalem had fallen. The night before this man reached me, the power of the Lord had visited me, to unseal my lips in readiness for his coming on the morrow; so now I could speak out, and was dumb no longer. And a message came to me from the Lord: Son of man, what are they saying, the folk that now inhabit yonder ruins

¹ This verse does not appear in the Septuagint Greek at all. ² It is difficult to attach any sense to this verse unless it is treated as a question, not a statement. ³ Their corpses lawless yet; literally, 'their lawlessnesses were upon their bones'; the absence of circumcision is perhaps referred to. ⁴ The mention of the Edomites (who practised circumcision) is unexpected. According to the Septuagint Greek, we return in this verse and the next to the Assyrians.

of Israel? Enough of us, they say, to be the true heirs of this land! Abraham was granted possession of it when he was all alone.¹ Tell them this from the Lord God: You, that cook your meat with the blood in it, that look to false gods for aid, that thrive by murder, the land's heirs! You, that live by the sword, that practise foul rites, that dishonour your neighbours' wives, the land's heirs! This is the Lord's message to them: As I am a living God, ruin-dwellers, the sword shall be your ruin! Or choose you the open country, you shall be a prey to the wild beasts; choose you mountain-fastness and cave, the pestilence shall take you. A lonely desert this land shall be, all its proud boast at an end; the hill-country of Israel shall lie desolate, untrdden by wayfarers; desert and desolate their land must be, in punishment of all their foul doings, before they learn to recognize my power.

And thou, son of man, listen to what they are saying of thee, as they stand close to wall, huddled under doorway. Each says to other, Come and find out whether the Lord has any message for us. Ay, they come crowding about thee, this people of mine, and sit here closeted with thee, listening to all thou sayest, but do thy bidding they will not. No, they will have thee sing in their own tune,² and all their thought dwells upon gains ill-gotten. As well had it been some tuneful air, sung excellently well; better listeners thou couldst not have, nor less achievement. But when thy words come true, as come true they shall, none shall doubt that they have had a prophet in their midst.

34 Word came to me from the Lord: Now, son of man, prophesy doom to the rulers of Israel, the shepherds of my flock. This be thy message from the Lord God: Out upon Israel's shepherds, that had a flock to feed, and fed none but themselves; the milk drank, the wool wore, the fat lambs slaughtered, but pastured these sheep of mine never at all! The wasted

frame went unnourished, the sick unhealed; nor bound they the broken limb, nor brought strayed sheep home, nor lost sheep found; force and constraint were all the governance they knew. So my sheep fell a-wandering, that shepherd had none; every wild beast fell a-preying on them, and they scattered far and wide. All over the high hills were scattered, this flock of mine, and no search was made for them, no search at all. This doom, then, the Lord pronounces on yonder shepherds: As I am a living God, I will have a reckoning for sheep of mine carried off, sheep of mine the wild beasts have preyed on, while they went all untended, with shepherds that would not go in search of them, shepherds that no flock would feed, but themselves only. A word, shepherds, for your hearing, a message from the Lord God: Out upon yonder shepherds! I will hold them answerable for the flock entrusted to them, and they shall have charge of it no more, feed themselves out of its revenues no more. From their greedy power I will rescue it; no longer shall it be their prey.

This is what the Lord God says: I mean to go looking for this flock of mine, search it out for myself. As a shepherd, when he finds his flock scattered all about him, goes looking for his sheep, so will I go looking for these sheep of mine, rescue them from all the nooks into which they have strayed when the dark mist fell upon them. Rescued from every kingdom, recovered from every land, I will bring them back to their own country; they shall have pasture on the hill-sides of Israel, by its water-courses, in the resting-places of their home. Yes, I will lead them out into fair pastures, the high mountains of Israel shall be their feeding-ground, the mountains of Israel, with soft grass for them to rest on, rich feed for them to graze. Food and rest, says the Lord God, both these I will give to my flock. The lost sheep I will find, the strayed sheep I will bring home again; bind up the broken limb, nourish the

¹ The contrast, 'Abraham was but one, and we are many' appears somewhat forced. It seems just possible that this paragraph is addressed, not to Jews, but to the heathen still living in Palestine, who were not descended from Abraham, and here express their intention of disputing his inheritance. It is perhaps worth noticing that the sin of eating meat with the blood in it (verse 25) is not elsewhere mentioned among the delinquencies of Israel.

² Literally, 'they turn them (thy words) into a song of their mouth'. The Hebrew text seems to mean 'they make loves in their mouths', but for 'loves' the Septuagint Greek has 'lies'.

wasted frame, keep the well-fed and the sturdy free from harm;¹ they shall have a true shepherd at last.

17 And what of you, my flock? I mean to do justice, the Lord God says, among the beasts themselves, give redress against the rams and the buck-goats. What, was it not enough to have stripped the pasture-lands with your grazing, drunk all that was purest out of the stream, but you must trample and foul all that was left? None but trampled fields must my sheep graze, none but fouled waters drink? This is what the Lord God says: I mean to see justice done between fat beast and lean. Thrust back with side and shoulder, gored with the horn, all the weaker of them have been driven away; but now I mean to protect this flock of mine against your greed, give beast redress against its fellow.

20 . . . They shall have a single shepherd to tend all of them now;² who should tend them but my servant David? He shall be their shepherd, and I, the Lord, will be their God, now that he rules them on earth; such is my divine promise to them. 23 Such a covenant I will make as shall grant them security; beasts of prey there shall be none, safe resting, now, in the desert, safe sleeping in the woods; on my hillsides they shall dwell, a blessed people in a blessed home, rain in its season fall on them, and blessings all the while. Wild trees their fruit, the earth its crops shall afford; undisturbed they shall dwell on their own lands, acknowledging my power at last, my power that severed strap of yoke, rescued them from the tyrant's hand. 28 Forgotten, the enemies that despoiled, the wild beasts that preyed on them; they will live sheltered from all alarms. Once more their renown shall burgeon;³ never again the land starve with drought, never the

alien's taunts be heard. None shall doubt that I, the Lord their God, am at their side, and they are my own people, the race of Israel, the Lord God says. Flock of mine, the Lord God says, flock of my pasturing, you are but men,⁴ yet I, the Lord, am your God.

35 Word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, turn thy regard towards the hill-country of Seir, and prophesy its doom. This be thy message from the Lord God: Have at thee, Seir! My hand is raised to smite thee; desert thou shalt be and desolate; when I have pulled down thy cities and left thee in ruins, thou shalt know my power at last. Relentless foe, didst thou not cut off Israel's retreat in its most need, when doom closed round it? As I am a living God, the Lord says, to bloodshed I doom thee, bloodshed shall hunt thee down, the very bloodshed that liked thee so little.⁵ Desolate and desert mount Seir shall be, none come and go there, every crest of it piled high with the slain. Slain they shall fall, thy warriors, by hill-slope and valley and ravine, till thou art left solitary for all time, thy cities uninhabited; so thou shalt witness my power. Two nations and two countries (thy boast was), and both are mine;⁶ to me is left the enjoyment of them! forgetting that I, the Lord, dwell there. As I am a living God, the Lord says, the rankling grudge that embittered thee thou shalt feel to thy cost; by the doom I execute upon thee, Israel shall learn to know me better; and thou too shalt learn that I, the Lord, was listening, when thy arrogance claimed its deserted hill-country for thy prey. I was listening to all those defiant blasphemies of thine, and now, says the Lord God, let all the world rejoice as it will, thou shalt lie deso-

¹ 'Keep. . . free from harm'; so the Septuagint Greek. The Hebrew text has 'destroy', probably through the miscopying of a single letter.

² The rest of the chapter, from this verse onwards, has a different setting and a different emphasis from what goes before; there may have been some omission or misplacement.

³ Literally, in the Hebrew text, 'I will raise up a planting for them for renown'. This is usually interpreted as implying a successful development of afforestation; the rendering given above perhaps makes the sentence less frigid.

⁴ Or possibly, 'you are men' (as opposed to dumb beasts). But in either case the contrast seems uncalled for, and there is some reason to doubt whether the text has been correctly preserved; the Septuagint Greek has simply, 'you are the sheep of my flock and I am your God'.

⁵ Literally, 'I have created thee (or appointed thee; in the Latin, I will hand thee over) to blood, and blood shall pursue thee; I swear that thou hast hated blood, and blood shall pursue thee'. The word 'blood' is not used in the Hebrew in the sense of 'kinship'; and it is not easy to see why the Edomites are rebuked for 'hating blood', unless possibly in the sense that they closed their frontiers at the time of Juda's defeat, to keep the war out of their own territory. But there is reason to suspect that the text is corrupt.

⁶ The 'two nations and two countries' are usually identified as Israel and Juda. But it may be questioned whether the reference is not to Israel (generally) and Edom; cf. Gen. 25. 23.

late. Ruined utterly they shall be, mount Seir and all Edom, that triumphed in the ruin of Israel; the Lord's power shall be made known at last.

36 And now, son of man, to the mountains of Israel address thy prophecy, and give them my divine message, comforting them, in the name of the Lord God, for the taunts of the enemy, that think to claim possession of their ancient strongholds. Thus shall thy word of prophecy begin: Desolate you lie, the Lord God says, and overrun by the invader; aliens have the lordship of you, and your name is on men's lips, a byword of common talk. Yet here is word for you, mountains of Israel, from the Lord God; word from him for crag and hill, ravine and valley and barren upland, ruined wall and deserted city, empty now and a mockery to their neighbours! On Edom, on all the Gentiles that fell to and feasted on lands of mine, marked them down for pillage, my jealous love pronounces doom. A promise, then, from the Lord God to every mountain and hill, every upland and valley in the land of Israel! Till now, the Lord God says, you have been put to the blush before your neighbours, but now my love and my indignation can contain itself no more. My oath upon it, the Lord God says, these neighbours of yours shall be put to the blush in their turn.

But you, mountains of Israel, must burgeon anew, and grow fruit for my own people to enjoy; their home-coming is not far off now. Watch for me, I am coming back to you; soil of you shall be ploughed and sown anew; and men, too, shall thrive on it, Israel's full muster-roll, peopling the cities, restoring the ruins. Full tale you shall have of men and beasts that thrive and multiply; I will make you populous as of old, more than of old my blessings lavish, and you shall not doubt my power. Masters you shall have, and those masters my people of Israel, your rightful lords; never shall they want lands or you lords again. Till now, the Lord God says, men

have called thee a land that starves folk and empties cradle;¹ henceforth, his will is that thou shouldst starve thy folk, bereave thy folk, no longer; scoff and taunt of heathen neighbours thou wilt have none to bear, he says, nor lack men to till thee henceforward.

This too: Son of man, how the race of Israel profaned this country of theirs, when they still dwelt in it, by their lives and their likings! Cast clouts of woman were less defiling. What marvel if my vengeance was let loose on them for all the blood that stained it; all the idols that polluted it? What marvel if I drove them out among the nations, scattered them wide as earth, as lives and likings of theirs had deserved? But alas, wherever they went among the heathen, they brought my holy name into ill repute; These are the Lord's people, folk said, and here they are, exiled from the land he loves! Should I let my holy name go unhonoured, among the heathen that harboured them?

Give Israel, then, this message from the Lord God: It is not for your own sakes, men of Israel, that I come forward as your champion; it is for the sake of my holy name, brought into disrepute among the Gentiles who have crossed your path. That great renown of mine I mean to vindicate, that is now dragged in the dust among the Gentiles, dragged in the dust because of you. The very Gentiles will recognize my power, the Lord God says, when I proclaim my majesty in their sight by delivering you.² I mean to set you free from the power of the Gentiles, bring you home again from every part of the earth. And then I will pour cleansing streams over you, to purge you from every stain you bear, purge you from the taint of your idolatry. I will give you a new heart, and breathe a new spirit into you; I will take away from your breasts those hearts that are hard as stone, and give you human hearts instead. I will make my spirit penetrate you, so that you will follow in the path of my law, remember and carry out my decrees. So shall you make your home

¹ Literally, 'Thou art a devourer of men, that bereavest (in the Latin, stiffest) thy population'. This was perhaps a proverbial saying about Palestine (Num. 13, 33). The suggestion here is probably that it was not fertile enough to support a large number of inhabitants. But the reference may be to the misfortunes of Israel in general. ² *vv.* 20-23. The suggestion is, not that the Israelites in exile brought disgrace on the true religion by their sinfulness, but that the heathen looked with contempt on a God who seemed unable to protect his votaries.

in the land I promised to your fathers; you shall be my people, and I will be your God.
 29 I will set you free from the guilt which stains you; I will send my word to the harvest, and bid it come up abundantly,
 30 from dearth spare you; yield of tree and crop of earth I will multiply, and the heathen shall taunt you no longer with
 31 your starving lot. Well may you think with loathing of what you were, as your minds go back to false paths and crooked aims
 32 you once followed! Be assured of it, the Lord God says, it was for no deserts of yours I delivered you; blush still, men of Israel, for your crimes, hang your heads still!

33 This too: A time is coming when I will set you free from the guilt which stains you; when I will people your cities, rebuild
 34 your ruins; when the deserted land shall be tilled anew. Desolate the passers-by
 35 saw it once; now they will say, Why, it is a very garden of Eden, the country-side which once lay all uncultivated; the empty towns, all gone to rack and ruin, are walled
 36 and populous! And the heathen shall know, such heathen as are your neighbours still, that I, the Lord, rebuild ruin and plant wilderness; what the Lord promises,
 37 the Lord fulfils. This boon, says the Lord God, Israel shall yet have of me, as a flock
 38 thrives their manhood shall thrive. See how the victim-herd throngs the streets of Jerusalem on her feast-days! Yonder empty cities shall be thronged, too, but with men; the proof of my divine power.

37 ... The Lord's power laid hold of me, and by the spirit of the Lord I was carried away and set down in the midst of the plain, which was covered with
 2 bones.² Round the whole extent of them he took me, where they lay thick on the
 3 plain, all of them parched quite dry. Son of man, he said, can life return to these bones? Lord God, said I, thou knowest.
 4 Then he bade me utter a prophecy over the bones: Listen, dry bones, to the word of
 5 the Lord. A message to these bones from the Lord: I mean to send my spirit into you, and restore you to life. Sinews shall

be given you, flesh shall grow on you, and
 6 skin cover you; and I will give you breath to bring you to life again; will you doubt, then, the Lord's power?

So I prophesied as he had bidden me,
 7 and as I prophesied a sound came, and I felt a stirring, and the bones came together, each at its proper joint; under my
 8 eyes the sinews and the flesh clothed them, and the skin covered them, but there was
 9 no breath in them even now. Son of man, he said, prophesy now to the breath of life; give the breath of life itself this message
 10 from the Lord God: Come, breath of life, from the four winds, and breathe on these slain men to make them live. So I
 11 prophesied as he had bidden me, and the breath of life came into them, so that they lived again; and all rose to their feet, host
 12 upon host of them. Then he told me, Son of man, in these bones here thou seest the
 13 whole race of Israel. They are complaining that their very bones have withered away, that all hope is lost, they are dead men. It
 14 is for thee to prophesy, giving them this message from the Lord God: I mean to open your graves and revive you, my
 15 people; I mean to bring you home to the land of Israel. Will you doubt, then, the
 16 Lord's power, when I open your graves and revive you? When I breathe my spirit
 17 into you, to give you life again, and bid you dwell at peace in your own land? What the
 18 Lord promises, the Lord performs; you will know that, he tells you, at last.

And word came to me from the Lord:
 19 Son of man, take two pieces of wood, and write on one, For Judah, and the tribes of Israel that take part with him; on the other,
 20 that is the stick of Ephraim, write, For Joseph, and all the tribes of Israel that take part with him. Then join them together
 21 into the form of a single stick, so that they are united in thy hand. And when thy
 22 fellow-countrymen would have thee tell them what thou meanest by all this, give
 23 them this message from the Lord: Here is this stick of Joseph and his confederate tribes, with Ephraim at their head; I mean
 24 to join it with Judah's and make one stick of it; one stick now, and in my hand.³

¹ Literally, 'I will save you from your stains'; but in verse 33, 'I will cleanse you from your guilt'.
² We should expect to find the date or place of the vision specified, and some think there is an omission in the manuscripts. ³ The Latin version gives 'in his hand', but probably meaning 'the Lord's hand', and assuming a break in the quotation. The Septuagint Greek has 'in Judah's hand', that is, 'with Judah at their head'.

20 And while thou art still holding the
 21 inscribed sticks, there in the presence of
 thy fellow-countrymen, say this: A mes-
 sage from the Lord God! I mean to recall
 the sons of Israel from their exile among
 the Gentiles, gather them from every side
 22 and restore them to their home. And there,
 in the hill-country of Israel, I will make one
 nation of them, with one king over them
 all; no longer shall they be two nations
 23 under two crowns. No more shall they be
 contaminated with idol-worship, and foul
 rites, and forbidden things a many; I will
 deliver them from the lands¹ that were
 once the haunts of their sinning, and make
 them clean again; they shall be my people,
 24 and I will be their God. They shall have
 one king over them, a shepherd to tend
 them all, my servant David; my will they
 shall follow, my commands remember and
 25 obey. And their home shall be the home
 of your fathers, the land I gave to my
 servant Jacob; they and their children shall
 enjoy it, and their children's children, in
 perpetuity, and ever my servant David
 26 shall be their prince. My covenant shall
 pledge them prosperity, a covenant that
 shall never be revoked; I will make
 them . . .² and give them increase, and set
 up my sanctuary in their midst for ever.
 27 My tabernacle over them; they my people,
 28 and I their God; proof to all the world that
 I, the Lord, have set Israel apart, I that
 dwell apart in their midst for ever.

38 Word came to me from the Lord:
 2 Son of man, turn thy regard now
 towards Gog, Magog's country, that has
 the lordship of Mosoch and Thubal, and
 3 prophesy its doom.³ This be thy message

to it from the Lord God: Have at thee,
 Gog, that hast the lordship of Mosoch and
 Thubal! Trust me, I will turn thee about
 4 this way and that, bridle those jaws of
 thine! I will bring thee out to battle, with
 all thy army; with horses and mailed
 cavalry, with a great company that ply
 spear and shield and sword. Persians shall
 5 be there, and Ethiopians, and Libyans, all
 with shield and helmet, Gomer with his
 hordes, the men of Thogorma from the
 northern fastnesses, mustered in full
 strength; what an array thou hast about
 7 thee! Now hold thyself in readiness, mar-
 shal thy own strength and the hordes that
 follow thee; thine is the leadership.

Long hence thy turn shall come; long
 8 years must pass before thou dost march on
 Israel; a land, now, recovered from its
 blood-letting; its hills, desolate till now,
 are re-peopled with exiles from many
 shores, come back to dwell there in se-
 9 curity. Storm never rose so suddenly,
 cloud-wrack never darkened it so fear-
 somely, as thou with that host of thine,
 those confederate hordes. What thoughts
 10 will be in thy heart that day, the Lord God
 says, what foul design will be a-brewing?
 Why, thou wilt think to march on a land
 11 unfortified, a people dwelling free from all
 alarms, that walls about them have none,
 bolt nor bar to shut them in; spoil for thy
 12 spoiling, plunder for thy plundering.
 Easily enough they are like to fall into thy
 hand, the ruins so lately rebuilt; the men
 restored from exile, that hold but the heart
 of the country,⁴ and are already enriched!
 Small wonder if the traders of Saba, Dedan
 13 and Tharsis, ravenous lions all, would
 know whether it is plunder thy heart is set

¹ The word means 'dwelling-places' or 'places of assembly', and is used in 8. 3 above for an idol's pedestal. But probably those critics are right who think that, by a slight error of copying, our text gives us 'dwelling-places' instead of 'apostasies', which is the reading of the Septuagint Greek.

² Or perhaps, 'I will give them'; in either case, it seems as if there had been an omission in the manuscripts. The Latin version renders, but inexactly, 'I will found them'.

³ If our text, in this verse and the verse which follows, has been correctly preserved, we are here meant to think of Gog as a people, not as a person; if any individual is mentioned, it is Magog. Mosoch and Thubal appear to be the Moschi and Tibareni, from the southern shores of the Black Sea; a general descent of barbarians is clearly envisaged, comparable to the Scythian invasions of B.C. 630. But the nations mentioned in verse 4 suggest that the picture is one of allegory, rather than of history, and the identifications of 'Gog' with the Persian emperor Cambyses or with Antiochus Epiphanes are probably misplaced ingenuity. What is meant by the 'prince-head' or 'prince of the head' is not clear; the expression is not elsewhere found, and it is perhaps worth observing that it might easily be a false reading in the Hebrew for 'one who lifts the head' (i.e. restores the fallen fortunes) of a man or a community (Gen. 40. 13, IV Kg. 25. 27, Zach. 1. 21). Thubal and Mosoch are undergoing a kind of resurrection, cf. 32. 26 above.

⁴ Literally, 'that are inhabitants of the navel of the land (or, earth)'. For the phrase, cf. Jg. 9. 37; the suggestion seems to be that the newly-returned people is too small in numbers to occupy more than the central portion of its territory. There is no reason to think that Jerusalem is here being described as the centre of the habitable globe, although 5. 5 above would help to justify such language.

on? Such a muster of men, it can but mean spoil; silver and gold to rifle, stock and stuff to carry away, ay, there is spoil behind this, and spoil worth the taking!

14 Prophecy, then, son of man, and make known to Gog this divine message: None better ware of it than thou, when my people of Israel is living at peace, free from alarms! Then it is thou wilt come down from those northern fastnesses, with thy hordes about thee, thy troops of cavalry, 15 a great muster, an army irresistible, sweeping down on my people of Israel like a cloud that overshadows the land. Offspring of that later age, thou shalt march on yonder land of mine, so that in Gog's doom my power may be vindicated, and 16 the heathen may learn what I am. Long years ago, the Lord God says, there were servants of mine that foresaw my will concerning thee, and even then warned Israel, in my name, of thy coming.

18 When Gog marches against Israel, the Lord God says, my indignation will contain itself no longer; jealous love and fierce anger of mine, I swear it, shall throw all the land of Israel into commotion. Fish in sea, bird in air, beast on earth and all the creeping things of earth shall tremble at my presence, and the world of men, too, shall tremble; mountains be overthrown, defences totter, walls come toppling to the ground. All through this hill-country of mine my word shall run. The sword! And with that, the Lord says, friend shall turn 19 his sword against friend; ordeal they shall have of pestilence and of blood-letting, of lashing storm and great hail-stones; fire and brimstone I will rain down upon them, all that great army and the hordes that 20 follow with it. My greatness, my holiness, shall then be displayed for a world of nations to see, and they will recognize my power at last.

39 Prophecy, then, son of man, the doom of Gog; be this the divine message thou givest him: Have at thee, Gog, that hast the lordship of Mosoch and 2 Thubal! This way and that I will turn thee, whistle thee on and bid thee leave thy northern fastnesses, to march against the hill-country of Israel; then I will strike yonder bow from thy left hand, spill the 3 arrows from thy right! Host and horde of

thine shall fall with thee on the mountains of Israel, carrion for every bird in air, every 5 beast on earth; cast away on the bare ground thou shalt lie, such is my doom for thee, the Lord God says. Such a fire I will 6 light as shall reach Magog, and others besides, island-dwellers far away that have no thought of peril; they too shall know my power. Among my own people of 7 Israel my renown shall spread, and never more shall my holy name be dragged in the dust; the heathen shall know what manner of God it is that dwells apart in Israel.

When all is over and done, and my day 8 of doom past, the townfolk of Israel will come out to gather kindling-wood and fire-wood out of the spoils that were left; shield and spear, bow and arrow, staff and pole; and they will be seven years a-burning. All that time, faggots will strew the coun- 9 try-side ungathered, and never axe will be laid to forest tree; weapons of war shall be all their fuel, spoil of the spoiler, plunder of the plunderer, the Lord God says. 10 Then, too, Gog shall have a burying-place named after him, there in Israel, none other than the Valley of the Wayfarers, east of the Dead Sea; a thing of wonder to all that pass by. There they shall bury Gog with all the rabble that came after him, and Valley of Gog's Rabble the place shall be called. Seven months' work Israel shall 11 have burying them, and cleansing the land from its defilement; all the citizens shall take part in it, and shall commemorate that day as the day on which I was vindicated, says the Lord God. Even when the seven 12 months are over, some there will be whose office it is to search ever the country-side, finding those remains and burying them. to rid the land of defilement; still they will 13 be scouring those plains, and setting up a mark where they see men's bones lie, for the grave-diggers to bury them, there in the Valley of Gog's Rabble; from this the city of Amona, Rabble, shall take its name. 14 And so the land shall be cleansed.

This too: Son of man, here is a message 15 for every bird in air, every beast that roams the earth: Come all, come with haste, gather from every side for the sacrificial feast I am making for you, a great feast on the uplands of Israel, flesh to eat, blood for your drinking! Flesh of fighting men, 16 blood of the world's great ones; never was

ram or lamb, never was goat or bull, food
 19 so rich or so dainty! Glutted with fat,
 drunk you shall be with blood, at this feast
 20 of mine; horse and brave rider, warriors
 of high rank and low, are the cheer they
 shall have at my table, says the Lord
 God.

21 In glory I will reveal myself to the Gen-
 tiles; the doom I have executed, the power
 22 I have exerted, shall be for all to see; nor
 shall Israel doubt thenceforward that I, the
 23 Lord, am their God. All the world shall
 know why it was that Israel went into
 banishment, why I turned my back on
 them and gave them up to massacre; that
 it was because they wronged me and de-
 24 serted me; that it was foul crime of theirs
 bade me disown them. I mean to restore
 Jacob from exile, the Lord God says, and
 extend my mercy to the whole race of Is-
 25 rael; the honour of my name demands it.
 26 The disgrace, the punishment of all their
 guilt, they needs must bear...¹

...when they are dwelling safely in
 27 their own land, free from all alarms; when
 I have brought them back from banish-
 ment among strangers, in hostile countries,
 and so, before the whole world's eyes,
 28 retrieved my honour. They shall know at
 last that I, the Lord, am their God: if it
 was I that drove them into captivity, it was
 I, too, that restored them to their home,
 29 not a man of them left in exile. And I will
 turn away from them no longer, I, that
 have poured out my spirit on the whole
 race of Israel.

40 It was the tenth day of the month;
 the twenty-fifth year of our banish-
 ment, and the fourteenth since the fall
 of the city, was just beginning. This was
 the precise day upon which the Lord's
 power came over me, and I fell into a
 2 transport; in which transport, so the divine
 revelation would have it, I was carried off
 to the country of Israel. There, I found

myself on the top of a very high mountain,
 that seemed to have a city built on it,
 sloping away towards the south. Into this
 3 city I was taken, and there met a man
 whose look dazzled the eye like bronze; he
 stood there in the gateway, holding a flaxen
 cord and a measuring-rod. The open eye,
 4 son of man, said he, the open ear, and
 mark well all I shew thee! Thou wast
 brought here to see, and tell the men of
 Israel what thou seest.²

There was an outer wall that ran round
 5 the whole building, which he measured
 with his rod, that was six cubits and a
 palm³ in length; a rod's thickness there
 was in the wall, and a rod's height; when
 6 he came to the gate at the eastern approach
 and had mounted the stairs of it, the
 entrance-way was spanned by a single rod;
 each entrance was of a rod's thickness.
 7 Within were guard-chambers, six cubits
 square and five cubits apart; then came an
 inner gateway, a rod's length deep; then
 8 an inner entrance-hall, measuring eight
 cubits across, with pillars two cubits thick.
 9 This eastern gateway had three guard-
 chambers on each side, alike in size, and
 alike in size the pillars between them. 11
 The entrance of the gateway was ten cubits
 across, and the span of the gateway itself
 thirteen cubits; on either side the six-cubit
 12 guard-chamber was set a cubit back. From
 gable-window of guard-room to gable-
 13 window of guard-room opposite was
 twenty-five cubits.⁴ (And he made the
 14 whole length of the colonnade sixty cubits,
 but this was measuring right up to the
 pillars which stood out round the gate-
 way);⁵ the distance from the outer gate to
 15 the inner was fifty cubits. . . and slanting
 16 windows in the guard-chambers and in the
 thickness of the walls that separated them,
 all round the gateway; the hall, too, within
 had its windows all round, and there was
 a pattern of palm-trees on the pillars
 between them.

¹ If the text has been correctly transmitted, it seems clear that some words (perhaps not many) have dropped out. But it has been suggested that the word 'they must bear' might be a scribe's error for 'they shall forget'.

² All through this chapter, the descriptions are very obscure, and their interpretation is largely a matter of conjecture.

³ The extra palm gives rise to some difficulty, unless it was a mere handle to hold the rod by. As a measure, the rod was equivalent to six cubits only (verses 7 and 12). The Hebrew text probably means that each cubit was the length of a forearm and a palm (cf. 43. 13 below).

⁴ Literally, 'And he measured the gate from roof of guard-chamber to roof of guard-chamber, a width of twenty-five cubits, door against door (or, opening against opening)'.⁵ The rendering given above seems preferable to one which would suddenly introduce us to pillars sixty cubits high. But it does not look as if the text had been correctly preserved; we have been told nothing of these projecting columns, and there is no reason to think that the Hebrews used the expression 'he made' in our modern sense. It seems as if there must be a gap in the manuscripts at the end of verse 15.

17 So he led me into the outer courtyard, which was surrounded by parlours, that had the ground about them paved with stone; there were thirty parlours standing in this strip of pavement. It stretched up to the gateways, and was broad as they were long; like them, it was on the level of the ground. And now he measured the distance from the eastern gate to the inner courtyard, where they stood fronting one another; it was a hundred cubits.¹

20 As with the east, so with the north; length and breadth he must measure of the outer gate that looked northwards. This, too, was fifty cubits long and twenty-five broad; it had guard-chambers, three on each side, pillar and hall like the other. Hall and windows and palm-tree pattern differed nothing from those of the eastern gate; all was the same, from the seven steps of the approach to the hall within. As on the east, so on the north, the inner court had a gateway matching it, a hundred cubits distant. And next he took me to the south, where there was a fresh gate, which he measured, pillar of it and hall of it, as before; the same windows about the hall, the same length and breadth;² the seven steps, the hall at the further end, the pillars with a palm-tree patterned on either side. Here, too, a hundred cubits away, was a gateway on the south side of the inner courtyard.

28 It was through this southern gateway of it that he led me into the inner courtyard itself; a gateway with the same measurements as before, guard-chamber and pillar and hall. It had the same windows and window-pillars, the same length and breadth, and the porch round it was twenty-five cubits long, five cubits broad.³ The pillars had the same pattern, but this time the hall was on the outer side of the gateway, and there were eight steps instead of seven. Then he took me to the east side of the inner court, with the same

measurements, guard-chamber and pillar and hall, window and window-pillar, length and breadth; the pillared hall again facing the outer court, the steps eight in number. And next to the northern gate, with the same measurements still, guard-chamber and pillar and hall and windows and length and breadth; the pillared hall facing outwards, the eight steps.

...and each ante-chamber had a door, between pillars. This was where they washed the victims for burnt-sacrifice; and in the hall of the entrance-way there were two tables on each side, for the slaying of the victims, whether it were a burnt-sacrifice, or some offering for a fault or for a wrong done. On the outer side of the gateway, towards the north gate, and again on the opposite side, there were two more tables, close to the hall. Thus altogether there were eight tables ranged along the side of the entrance-way, all for sacrifice. And for the burnt-sacrifice there were four other tables of hewn stone, a cubit and a half square, and a cubit in height; here they laid the instruments needed for sacrifice and offering; they had ledges, too, curving upwards all round, a palm in breadth, for these tables must also hold the flesh of the victims.

In the inner court itself, beyond the gateway, the singers had their lodging, on the north side, facing south. There was a parlour, too, at the side of the eastern gate, facing... north;⁴ the one facing south, he told me, was for the priests who kept watch over the temple, the one facing north for the priests who are busied with the service of the altar, Sadocite Levites, that were the Lord's privileged ministers. The court, with the altar standing in it, was a hundred cubits square.

Then he led me to the porch of the temple; the jamb on either side was five cubits deep, and the width of the gate... three cubits on either side;⁵ the porch

¹ 'The eastern gate'; this description is given for the sake of clearness; in the original it is 'the lower gate', because (as the foregoing verse has explained) the whole outer court was lower (by eight steps) than the inner court. At the end of this verse, the original has 'eastwards and northwards'; the only possible rendering of the words appears to be that given at the beginning of the new paragraph.

² This verse is very difficult. The word 'porch' is the same as that elsewhere rendered 'hall'; but the hall or lobby of each gate was not of the measurements here stated; a portico jutting out from the building seems the only explanation of the text as it stands.

³ Here, and in verses 29, 33 and 36, the Hebrew forms have been recast for the sake of brevity.

⁴ 'Facing... north'; the context seems to imply an omission. The prophet must surely have written, 'facing south, and a corresponding parlour facing north'.

⁵ According to the Septuagint Greek, we should read 'the width of the gate fourteen cubits, leaving a blank piece of wall on either side, three cubits in width'.

itself was twenty cubits long and eleven
 49 broad. As we climbed up the eight steps to
 it, there were columns facing us, one on
 either side.

41 So he brought me into the temple,
 between pillars that were six cubits
 2 square by tabernacle measure.¹ The door
 was ten cubits across, the recess behind the
 doorway five cubits on either side; the
 whole length of the outer temple was forty
 3 cubits, and the width twenty. Then he
 went into the inner sanctuary, measuring
 the doorway, two cubits thick, the door,
 six cubits across, and the width of the
 recess behind the doorway, seven cubits.
 4 Each side had the length of the side next
 to the outer temple, twenty cubits. This,
 said he, is the innermost sanctuary.
 5 Then he measured the temple wall,
 6 which was six cubits thick; it was flanked
 all round by rooms four cubits square.
 There were sixty of these rooms, in three
 storeys one on the top of another; and their
 upper storeys jutted out all round the
 temple wall, but keeping apart from it; the
 7 temple wall must not be touched. And
 there was a round stair-case which went up
 in a spiral to this upper loft of the temple
 building, which projected outwards for
 that very reason; there was thus an easy
 passage from the lower to the middle, and
 8 from the middle to the upper storey.² The
 building, I saw, was all raised above the
 ground; the rod shewed that the ground
 9 level of the rooms was six cubits up. The
 rooms were at a distance of five cubits
 beyond the temple wall, and they enclosed
 10 it all round;³ and there was a close of
 twenty cubits' width between these and a
 line of parlours which flanked the temple.
 11 The doors of the inner rooms let out, to
 north and south, on a praying-walk,⁴ five

cubits in width, which ran round the
 temple.

Round this again was the close of twenty
 12 cubits, and beyond that, on the west, a
 pavilion seventy cubits by ninety, with a
 wall five cubits thick. He shewed me that
 13 the temple was a hundred cubits long; the
 close with the pavilion beyond it, including
 its walls, a hundred cubits long; the
 14 eastern face of the temple, with the close
 on each side of it, a hundred cubits long;
 and the breadth from side to side of the
 15 pavilion beyond the close (with its gal-
 leries) a hundred cubits long. . . .⁵

. . . and the inner sanctuary, and the
 16 halls that gave on to the courtyard, the
 doorways, the slanting windows, the gal-
 leries that went round on three sides, over
 the several doorways; all were completely
 panelled in wood. The panelling ran right
 up to the windows, which it framed, right
 up to the top level of the doorway; ran all
 17 the way round to meet the inner sanctuary,
 keeping the same height within and with-
 out it. The design was of alternate cherubs
 and palm-trees, and each cherub had two
 18 faces, shewing like a man towards one
 palm-tree and like a young lion towards
 the other; the same pattern ran all through
 the building, carved cherubs and palm-
 20 trees on each wall from ground level to the
 height of the door's lintel.

The entrance of the temple stood
 21 square, facing the inner sanctuary; facing
 the altar, which was of wood, three feet
 22 high, and two feet across; corners and slab
 and sides were all of wood. This, he told
 me, is the table that stands in the Lord's
 presence.⁶ Outer temple, inner sanctuary,
 23 had two doors each; and either door had
 leaves that folded together, two leaves on
 24 each door, with the same pattern of
 25 cherubs and palm-trees that the walls had.

¹ This whole chapter is even more obscure than the last, and it is difficult to believe there have not been omissions, if not faults of copying, in the text.

² *vv.* 6, 7. Cf. III Kg. 6. 5, 6; here, as there, it seems clear that the rooms at the side must have no architectural connexion with the sacred walls of the temple itself; beyond that, nothing is clear. The rendering above assumes the accuracy of the Latin version; it differs widely both from the Hebrew text and from the Septuagint Greek, which are unintelligible. It is not easy to see why projecting upper storeys should have matched especially well with a spiral stair-case. According to the Hebrew text, there were three storeys of thirty rooms each; the Latin version may imply three storeys of twenty rooms, or two storeys of thirty-three rooms each.

³ The Hebrew text seems to imply that there was a five-foot wall outside the rooms all round, as well as a six-foot wall inside. But it is not likely that so many rooms should have been made receiving no light whatever.

⁴ In the Hebrew text simply 'an open strip of ground'. This seems to have been a narrow strip at the edge of the raised platform; the twenty-cubit close was on ground level.

⁵ It looks as if there must have been an omission here, to account for the sudden change of subject. 'With its galleries' is difficult to explain; we should have expected 'including its walls'.

⁶ This was presumably the altar of incense; some, however, identify it with the table on which the sacred loaves were exposed (Ex. 25. 23, 30. 1).

To match this, the outer porch was faced with thick beams¹ reaching up to the level of the slanting windows; thick beams figured with palm-trees in either recess . . . matching the width of the rooms and of the temple walls.

42 Then he took me into the outer court again, the northern part of it, and would have me enter the parlours that lay there, close to the pavilion and to the northern side of the temple.² The long side of them, facing the north door, was a hundred cubits, the breadth fifty; between the twenty-cubit close of the inner court, and the paving of the outer, they rose, gallery upon gallery, three storeys in all. In front of them was a walk ten cubits wide, encroaching on the inner court by one cubit;³ all their doors faced the north. Here, the top rooms were narrower, since they must make room for porticos at the side, built out over the two lower storeys; these three-storeyed parlours had no columns in front of them, like the parlours in the outer court,⁴ but made up for it by porticos that rose from the roof of the first two floors, filling in the width of the fifty cubits. Inner parlours faced outer only with fifty cubits of their wall's length; in the outer court, the parlours were but fifty cubits long, whereas those beside the temple were a hundred. These inner parlours were entered from below at their eastern end, from the outer court. . . . in the thickness of the court's eastern wall . . . opposite the pavilion, and here too there were parlours close to the pavilion.⁵ Southern parlours, like northern, had a walk in front of them; had the same length and breadth, were entered by doors of the same kind; the doors of these parlours opened on a walk along their southern side, and the main entrance was approached at the eastern end, from the walk that faced the hall and the close.

13 These parlours, he told me, built to

north and south beside the pavilion, are hallowed precincts, where the priests who sacrifice to the Lord may eat what is set apart for holy uses. All that is set apart, all the offerings made for fault and for wrong done, shall there be laid out, as on holy ground. Nor, entering it, shall the priests leave it for the inner court all at once; here they must lay aside their vestments, for these, too, are hallowed, and put on other clothes before ever they mingle with the people.

With that, he made an end of measuring the precincts within, and led me through the eastern doorway, to measure them from without. Along the eastern side his reed measured five hundred cubits; five hundred cubits along the northern side, and five hundred cubits along the southern; westwards, too, the measure of it was five hundred cubits. All round the four quarters of the wind he would measure it, five hundred cubits in length as in breadth. This boundary between things sacred and things profane.

43 Then he took me to the eastern gate; and all at once, from the sun's rising, the bright presence of the God of Israel made entry there. Like the sound of waters in deep flood his voice was, and earth was lit up with the splendour all around. Such was the appearance I had seen of him, when he came bent on the city's destruction, when I saw my vision by the banks of Chobar; down fell I, face to earth. In it came through the eastern gateway, the splendour of the Lord himself; and with that, a transport seized me, carrying me off into the inner court, where already the brightness of the Lord's presence filled the temple. Thence it was I heard his voice speaking to me; and the man who stood at my side passed on the message.

Son of man, he told me, here is my throne; here eternally, in the heart of

¹ The Hebrew word translated 'thick beams' is of very doubtful significance. The last words of the chapter are difficult to understand, whether in the Hebrew, in the Greek, or in the Latin; if the text of them is right, it looks as if there had been a fresh omission.

² *vv.* 1-12. Once more the original is very obscure, and the interpretation of it far from certain.

³ Literally, 'looking towards the inwards of a way of one cubit', an expression from which it is hard to derive any definite meaning. The Septuagint Greek has, 'of a hundred cubits in length', but this is probably a guess.

⁴ The outer parlours are those mentioned in 40. 17; where, however, perhaps through some omission in the manuscripts, there is no mention of a colonnade.

⁵ It can hardly be doubted that there is some serious disturbance in the text. At the end of the verse, it is clear that the prophet and his guide have gone to measure the southern parlours, corresponding to the northern parlours already described.

Israel, is my resting-place. No more shall Israel's folk, Israel's kings, drag my name in the dust with their infidelities, with the dead gods they served, with their hill-sanctuaries.¹ Door next to door of mine, pillar to pillar, only a wall between us; and for the foul doings that dragged my name in the dust, my vengeance took full toll of them.² Bid they those infidelities, those dead gods farewell, I will make my eternal home here in the midst of them. Thine, son of man, to shame the men of Israel by the sight of yonder temple; who measures the fabric of it, shall learn to blush for his misdeeds. Form and fashion of the temple, gates that lead in and out, all the plot of it do thou make known to them; and what observances they are that govern the ordering of it. All this they must see in writing, and so learn to keep its pattern ever unaltered, its laws ever to fulfil.

Wouldst thou know what the temple's charter is? No part of the mountain top that lies within its bounds but is my inmost sanctuary; that, nothing less, is the charter of the temple.

These measurements the altar had,³ measured by the true cubit, that is the width of a fore-arm and a palm; first came a gutter, of a cubit's depth and a cubit's width, ending in a lip a span broad all round; thus the altar was drained. Above this gutter, which was at ground level, came the lower base, two cubits high and a cubit across; the upper base rose four cubits above it, and was again a cubit wide. The altar proper was four cubits high, with four horns projecting above it, and the sides of it were square, twelve cubits by twelve. The base was also square, fourteen cubits by fourteen, and had a projecting rim half a cubit across; the groove under this was a cubit in height. The steps of the altar faced eastwards. . .

Son of man, he told me, when the altar

is set up, ready for burnt-sacrifice and for blood-sprinkling, these ceremonies the Lord God would have thee observe. A young bullock the priests must have, those priests of Sadoc's line that are my true ministers, for a transgression-victim. Horns of the altar, and the four corners of its base, and the rim round about it, thou shalt smear with the victim's blood, to cleanse them and purge them of fault, then take the victim itself to a place apart, beyond the temple precincts, and there burn it. Next day, the transgression-victim shall be a male kid, without blemish; with this, as with the calf, the altar must be purged; and when the purging is over, bullock and ram must be offered, these too without blemish; when they have been brought into the Lord's presence, and the priests have sprinkled them with salt, they must be given to the Lord in burnt-sacrifice. Each day, for seven days, goat and bullock and ram must be offered, all unblemished; purged and cleansed and hallowed the altar must be for seven days, and when these are over, on the eighth day and ever afterwards, the priests may use it for burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering of yours, and I will look favourably on you, the Lord God says.

44 Then he brought me back to the eastern gate of the outer precincts, that was fast shut. Shut this gate must ever be, the Lord told me, nor open its doors to give man entrance again, since the Lord, the God of Israel, entered by it. Access to it is none, even for the prince himself; sit there he may, to eat his share of the welcome-offering, but it is through the hall at the other end of the gateway he comes and goes.

And so he took me towards the northern gate, in full view of the temple; and all the temple was filled with the brightness of the

¹ Literally, 'with their fornications, with the ruins of their kings, and with their hill-sanctuaries'. St Jerome understands this as meaning that worship at the hill-sanctuaries brought the kings of Juda to their ruin. But the word used in the Hebrew text means carcasses, not ruins; 'with the carcasses of their kings, their hill-sanctuaries', or possibly, 'with the carcasses of their kings when they died'. It has been supposed that Ezechiel is protesting against the burial of kings close to the temple, as a profanation. But no such protest is found elsewhere, and we have no evidence that the practice existed. The rendering given above assumes that 'kings' is used for 'gods', as (apparently) in Am. 5. 26. 'Dead gods', either in the sense of 'dumb idols', as in Lev. 26. 30, or possibly in reference to the worship of Adonis (see 8. 14 above). But it seems likely that the manuscripts may have been at fault, some copyist writing the word 'their kings' twice over by accident. ² The prophet is complaining, not that the royal palace adjoined the temple, but that profane rites were celebrated just beyond its walls; see 8. 8 above. ³ *vv.* 13-17. It seems possible that this passage has been accidentally misplaced. The terms used in it are of very doubtful interpretation.

Lord's presence, a sight that brought me
 5 to my knees, face to earth. Give good
 heed, son of man, the Lord said to me; the
 open eye, the open ear! Rule and observance
 of the Lord's house I mean to tell thee;
 of the temple, and who may approach it, of
 my sanctuary, and the manner of leaving it.

6 This message deliver, from the Lord
 God, to the rebel brood of Israel: Will you
 never have done with insult, men of Israel,
 7 letting alien folk, that in mind and body
 circumcision have none, profane my house
 by entering the sanctuary? What avails it,
 to offer me bread, and fat, and blood, when
 all the while these foul doings of yours
 8 violate my covenant? The sacred charge
 committed to you went for nothing; guard-
 ians of my own worship, in my own sanctu-
 ary, should be men of your choosing!
 9 Place the alien may have, though body and
 mind be both uncircumcised, in the com-
 monwealth of Israel, the Lord says; place
 10 in my sanctuary he has none. There be
 Levites that have forsaken the following of
 me, when all the race of Israel went
 a-straying; that have betaken themselves
 to false gods, and must needs do penance
 11 for their fault. What forbids they should
 be sacrists and door-keepers of mine,
 temple attendants to prepare burnt-
 sacrifice, slay victim, and stand ministering
 12 in the people's presence? Ministers of
 false worship, that betrayed Israel into
 guilt, they have made me their sworn
 enemy, and must be held to account for it;
 13 never may they come before me as priests,
 never touch consecrated gift that is set
 apart for holy uses; disgraced they must
 needs be, penance must needs bear; yet I
 would have them keep the doors of my
 house, and be charged with all the menial
 offices that belong to it.

15 The priests, the true Levites, shall be
 those sons of Sadoc that held fast by my
 temple worship when Israel left the fol-
 lowing of me. Theirs to come forward as
 my ministers; theirs to wait upon my pre-
 sence, offering me fat and blood of victims,
 16 the Lord God says; theirs my sanctuary
 to enter, my table to approach, servants of
 mine that shall keep the charge I gave
 17 them. Come they within the inner gate,

they shall be all vested in linen; nothing
 of wool shall clothe them, when they serve
 me in the intimacy of the inner court; 18
 mitres of linen on their brows, breeches of
 linen about their loins, with no such habi-
 ting as may bring them out in a sweat.
 19 These vestments of office they must lay
 aside, and put away in the temple sacristy,
 when they go out to mingle with the people
 in the outer court; that holy contact is not
 for common folk; it is time they put on
 their workaday clothes instead.

They shall be at pains to cut their hair, 20
 not grow it long; yet cropped their heads
 must not be. As for wine, a priest may not 21
 drink it when he is soon to enter the sanctu-
 ary. Wed he, it must be a maid he weds, 22
 of Israelite birth; not rejected wife or
 widow, save it be the widow of another
 priest. Their office it is, to teach the people 23
 what is clean and unclean, what is holy and
 what profane; when dispute arises, to take 24
 their place at my judgement-seat and give
 award; my feasts with due rite and ordi-
 nance to observe, my sabbaths to keep
 holy. Never shall they defile themselves 25
 with dead body's contact, save only it be
 father or mother, son or daughter, brother
 or unwedded sister of theirs. Cleansed 26
 though he be after such contact, a priest
 must wait for seven days yet, nor enter the 27
 inner court to do service in my sanctuary,
 the Lord God says, till he has made an
 offering in amends for his fault. And for 28
 the priestly tribe, it must have no patri-
 mony assigned to it; I am their patri-
 mony, nor needs he portion, whose portion
 is his God. Bloodless offering they shall 29
 eat, and the victim that is offered for a fault
 or a wrong done; theirs every gift an Is-
 raelite vows to me, theirs the first of all 30
 first-fruits, and the residue of all you offer;
 and the first batch of your baking you must
 give to the priest, to win his blessing for
 you and yours. Bird or beast that drops 31
 dead, or has been a wild thing's prey, the
 priest may not eat.

45 When you set about the allotment
 of your territory, one strip you
 must leave out, twenty-five thousand cub-
 its by ten thousand,¹ a hallowed strip of

¹ 'Cubits'; the word is not expressed in the original, and some think that all through this paragraph, except in the last clause of verse 2, the unit of measurement is not the cubit but the angel's rod, six cubits long. But since we know that the temple precincts were five hundred cubits each way (42. 20) and they

land that is to be the Lord's peculiar, all the length and breadth of it hallowed. 2 (Hallowed entirely one plot in it shall be, a square plot of five hundred cubits each way, with fifty cubits' space for approach 3 all about it.¹) Within the Lord's domain, a space of twenty-five thousand cubits by ten thousand, surrounding temple and 4 sanctuary, must be measured out as dedicated to the priests, that serve the sanctuary and worship in the Lord's presence; this shall be their home, this their sacred enclosure. And for the Levites that serve the temple another like space is to be measured out; twenty cells they shall have 6 there. Marching with the sacred enclosure, there shall be a strip of twenty-five thousand cubits by five thousand, where the common folk of Israel shall have their 7 city and their city's lands. And at either end of the enclosure, and of the city lands, the prince shall have his domains, adjoining either end, and stretching away to west and east as far as each of the tribal allotments stretches westwards and eastwards. 8 He shall enjoy his own possessions on Israelite soil; there shall be no more encroaching on the public rights; each tribe shall be given its own territory, to have and to hold.

9 Will you never have enough, princes of Israel? the Lord God says. Must it always be wrong and robbery, never right and redress? Right of king and right of people 10 he bids you determine once for all. Let us have true scales, a true ephi, a true bate; 11 let ephi and bate match, a tenth part of a cor either of them; by the standard of the cor they shall be measured. Let twenty 12 obols go to the sicle, twice twenty sicles and fifteen besides go to the mina. And so 13 let these be the tithings you pay; a sixth of an ephi for every cor of wheat or barley, 14 and a tenth of a bate for every cor of oil, tenth of bate or hundredth of cor, since 15 the cor is to measure ten bates;² and one ram you must contribute out of every two hundred that feed in Israel's pasturelands. That each may pay his scot, for bloodless offering or burnt-sacrifice or

welcome-offering, the Lord says, this tax 16 the whole land of Israel owes to its prince. And he, on Israel's behalf, shall defray the 17 cost of burnt-sacrifice, and bloodless offering, and libation, on feast-day and new moon and sabbath, whenever the folk of Israel keep holiday; transgression-victim, 18 and burnt-sacrifice, and welcome-offering, he must provide them all.

On the first day of the year, the Lord 18 God says, the sanctuary must have a calf, without blemish, sacrificed for its purging. Door-posts of the temple, corners of the altar's base, door-posts of the inner court, the priest shall smear with blood of the transgression-victim. And the like must 20 be done again on the seventh day of that month, for faults committed unwittingly, through inadvertence; and so the temple shall be purged clean. On the fourteenth 21 day of the first month you will keep the paschal feast, and for a week eat bread without leaven. On the feast itself, 22 the prince must provide a calf, in amends for fault of his own, fault of his people; and 23 every day during the week seven calves and seven rams without blemish; every day, too, a goat for a transgression-victim; with 24 each ram or goat a bushel of flour, and with each bushel of flour a gallon and a half of oil. The same provision he must make, 25 of transgression-victim, burnt-sacrifice, bloodless offering, and oil, for the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and its week of holiday.

46 Eastern gate of the inner court, the Lord God says, must be shut on the six working days, open on the sabbath; on the day of the new moon, too, it shall be opened. When it is opened, the prince shall 2 come in by way of the outer hall, and wait in the entrance till the priests have done presenting burnt-sacrifice of his, welcome-offering of his; there on the threshold he shall do reverence, and go his ways, but the gate shall not be shut after him, not till the evening. On sabbath days, and when 3 the moon is new, before this gate the people also shall do reverence. Six lambs 4

are described as 'five hundred each way' in verse 2 here, it seems best to assume the cubit-standard throughout. ¹ By ten thousand'; the Septuagint Greek gives twenty thousand, which would include the enclosure of the Levites (verse 5).

² Some think this verse has been misplaced, and should come after verse 4.

³ The Hebrew text has probably suffered from corruption in this verse; the Septuagint Greek gives ten per cent, not one per cent, as the rate of the oil-tithe. The Latin does not yield any acceptable sense.

and a ram, without blemish, are the prince's burnt-sacrifice to the Lord every sabbath, with a bushel of flour for the ram, and for the lambs what bloodless offering he will; and of oil a gallon and a half to the bushel. And when the moon is new, the same victims, and a bullock besides, unblemished as they; with the bullock, too, a bushel goes as bloodless offering, and the rest shall be as before. Through the outer hall of the gateway the prince comes and goes; but on feast-days, when a great throng comes into the Lord's presence, they must enter by one gate and leave by the opposite, from north to south or south to north, and the prince, that worships in their midst, shall enter and leave as they.

And for the bloodless offering, come feast-day, come holiday, it shall be made as aforesaid. Will the prince make burnt-sacrifice or welcome-offering of his own free will, the eastern gate shall be opened for him, as on the sabbath, till burnt-sacrifice or welcome-offering is done; but when he goes out, the gate shall be shut behind him. And there shall be daily burnt-sacrifice; morning by morning he shall offer one of that year's lambs, unblemished; of flour, morning by morning, the sixth part of a bushel, and half a gallon of oil mingled with it; ever this bloodless offering is the Lord's due, continual and unalterable. Lamb and flour and oil, morning by morning, an eternal sacrifice.

If the prince will make a gift of land to sons of his, the Lord God says, their patrimony it is, held by right of inheritance; crown lands he cannot alienate to any of his servants beyond the year of jubilee, when they must needs return to him; the crown lands are entailed upon his sons.

And at no time shall he rob the people by violence of their rightful patrimony; if he will endow his sons, out of his own patrimony let him do it; my people must not be disinherited.

And now he took me through an entry close by the side of the gate, which led to the northern row of priests' rooms round the sanctuary. Where this reached its western end, there was a kitchen, which the priests used, he told me, to boil the flesh of victims for a fault or a wrong done, to bake the bloodless offering. They must

not be carried out into the courtyard; such holy contact was not for the people. Afterwards he took me into the outer court, round all the corners of it in turn, and shewed me that there was a little garth in each of them; no corner but had its garth; in each, there was a space of forty cubits by thirty, perfectly matched. The wall enclosed them, and here, under an open roof, kitchens were built. These kitchens, he told me, were used by the temple attendants for cooking the welcome-offerings made by the people.

47 And last, he took me to the door of the temple itself, and shewed me where a stream of water flowed eastwards from beneath the threshold of it. Eastward the temple looked, and eastward these waters flowed, somewhat to the temple's right, so as to pass by the southern side of the altar. Through the northern gate he led me, and round the walk that passed the outer gate, taking the eastern sun; and here, to the right of the gate, the water gushed out. Eastward then he faced, the man of the measuring-rod; measured a thousand cubits, and led me across a stream that reached my ankles. Another thousand, and when I crossed the stream it reached my knees; another thousand, and it was up to my waist, another thousand, and now it had become a torrent I might not cross any longer, so high the waters had swelled, out of my depth. Mark it well, son of man, said he; and with that he brought me out on to the bank again; when I reached it, I found that there were trees growing thick on either hand.

This stream, he told me, must flow eastward to the sand-dunes, and so fall into the desert; pass into the Dead Sea and beyond it, cleansing those waters by its passage. Wherever it flows, there shall be teeming life once again; in the Dead Sea itself there will be shoals of fish, once this stream has reached it, this stream that heals all things and makes all things live. Fisher-folk will line the shores of it, and there will be drying of nets all the way from Engaddi to Engallim, and fish there will be in great shoals, varied in kind as the ocean fish are. Only the swamps and marshes about it there is no cleansing; these shall turn into

12 salt-pits. And on either bank of the stream fruit-trees shall grow of every kind; never leaf lost, never fruit cast; month after month they shall yield a fresh crop, watered by that sanctuary stream; fruit for man's eating, and medicinal leaves.

13 This message, too, the Lord God has for you, about the frontiers of the territory you are to divide among the twelve tribes; twelve, because Joseph must have a double
14 portion. I promised it to your fathers long ago; This land, I told them, shall be allotted to you.¹ And you must allot it among
15 yourselves in equal shares. These are to be its boundaries on the north; from Hethalon, on the Great Sea, across the pass which
16 leads to Sedada and Emath, by Berotha and Sabarim (where Emath marches with Syria) and Hazar Tichon (near the Hauran country) to the Syrian frontier-town of Hazar Enan, its extreme limit inland. Ever
17 northward it stretches, this northern frontier of yours, till it reaches Emath. The eastern frontier is to be drawn between Hauran and what is now Syria, between Galaad and Israel proper, down the line of
18 the Jordan to the Dead Sea. Towards the south and the noon-day sun, the line stretches from Thamar to the Waters of Challenge at Cades, then follows the Brook
19 of Egypt to the sea; and on the west, it runs straight from the Egyptian border to the
20 Emath pass.² All this territory must be apportioned between the tribes of Israel;
21 then you will divide it up among yourselves. Aliens will have their share in it, such aliens as have thrown in their lot with yours and bred amongst you; native Israelites you shall count them, and allot their portions in this tribe or that.
22 Amidst the tribe which has given him shelter, each shall find a home, the Lord God says.

48 And here is a list of the tribal domains. First Dan, with its northern frontier on a line from Hethalon, across the Emath pass, to the Syrian frontier-town of Hazar Enan, and march-

ing with Emath all the way; its eastern limit...the sea.³ Next, stretching from Israel's eastern frontier to the sea, Aser; next, in like manner, Nephthali; next, in like manner, Manasses; next, in like manner, Ephraim; next, in like manner, Ruben; next, in like manner, Juda.

Next, in like manner, comes the strip of dedicated land you are to set apart; in breadth, twenty-five thousand cubits, in length, stretching from Israel's frontier to the sea like the rest; and in the heart of it, the sanctuary. The Lord's own domain will be twenty-five thousand cubits by ten thousand; and in this holy plot, measuring twenty-five thousand cubits north and south, ten thousand cubits east and west, the priests are to dwell, with the sanctuary in their midst. Priests, I say, of Sadoc's line, that held fast by my observances and never went a-straying with strayed Israel, as the other Levites did; first-fruit of the first-fruits their domain shall be, the domain of the Levites marching with it. This neighbouring strip will be of the same size, twenty-five thousand cubits by ten thousand; sell their land they may not, nor exchange it; the consecrated ground is unalienable. The remaining strip of five thousand cubits' breadth shall be for city's buildings and city's lands; the city itself standing in the middle; north, south, east and west it shall measure four thousand five hundred cubits; north, south, east and west it shall have purlieue two hundred and fifty cubits deep. In length, it will fall short of the Lord's domain by ten thousand cubits on the east, and as much on the west; but this remaining space will be city lands, like the sanctuary lands, growing food for the needs of labouring men in the city; these shall have the right to cultivate it, come they from what tribe they will. All the length and breadth of this square of territory, twenty-five thousand cubits either way, shall be sanctuary enclosure and city lands; beyond this square of sanctuary and city, all that is left of the dedicated domain, eastwards to the Jordan and

¹ The quotation is from Num. 34. 2; the subject-matter of that chapter is the distribution of Chanaan between the tribes in the first instance. ² *vv.* 15-20. The text here is awkward, and perhaps partly corrupt; several of the place-names remain unidentified. What seems clear is that the length of the new kingdom (from north to south) is that of David's kingdom, including Syria ('Damascus' in the original) but not Emath on the north or Hauran on the east; the breadth of it is curiously shrunken, the whole of Transjordan being abandoned. ³ It seems probable that the original text ran, 'Its eastern limit the eastern limit of Israel, its western limit the sea'.

westwards to the sea, shall belong to the prince; the hallowed plot that surrounds the temple shall divide his lands in two.

22 Royal lands and Levite lands shall march with Juda, royal lands and city lands with Benjamin.¹

23 For the rest of the tribes, Benjamin comes first, stretching from Israel's frontier on the east to the sea on the west; next, 24 in like manner, Simeon; next, in like manner, 25 in like manner, Simeon; next, in like manner, 26 Issachar; next, in like manner, Zabulon; next, in like manner, Gad. Gad shall 27 be the southernmost, facing the noon-day sun, with a frontier running from Tamar 28 to the Waters of Challenge at Cades, and along the Brook² to the Great Sea. Such 29 shall be the territory allotted to Israel's

tribes, the Lord God says, and thus allotted they shall be.

And these are the city's limits; on the 30 north side, measure four thousand five hundred cubits; and here (for all must be 31 named after Israel's tribes) are three gates named after Ruben, Juda and Levi. As 32 many on the east, and here are gates named after Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan. As 33 many on the south, and here are gates named after Simeon, Issachar and Zabulon. As many on the west, and here are 34 gates named after Gad, Aser and Nephthali. The whole circumference is one of 35 eighteen thousand cubits. THE LORD IS THERE; such is the name by which the city will be known ever after.

¹ The order of the words in this verse implies, what is not clearly stated elsewhere, that the Levite domain was on the north of the sacred enclosure, the city lands on the south of it. ² As in 47. 19; the Latin version has misread the word 'brook' as 'portion'.

THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

WHEN Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, marched against Jerusalem and laid siege to it, in Joakim's third year as king of Juda,¹ the Lord gave him the mastery. Not only Joakim fell into his hands, but... some of the temple treasures,² which he carried off to Sennaar as offerings to his own god, and there, in the treasure-house of his own god's temple, bestowed them. Meanwhile, he had a command for Asphenez, his head chamberlain. He was to take under his charge certain young Israelites, of royal or princely stock, in body well formed, handsome of mien, so well versed and grounded, so keen of wit, as they might be taught lore and language of the Chaldaeans, and have places at his court. For three years they should have daily allowance of the king's meat and wine; then he would send for them. Among these were four tribesmen of Juda, called Daniel, Ananias, Misael and Azarias; the chamberlain had given them fresh names, to Daniel Baltassar, to Ananias Sidrach, to Misael Misach, and to Azarias Abdenago. Daniel had resolved, neither meat nor wine from the royal table should sully his lips; and for this abstinence he hoped to get leave from the head chamberlain; with such kindness and pity God had touched his heart. But this would not serve; Nay, said he, what of the charge my lord king gave me, that you should have food and drink? It were as much as

my life is worth, if he saw you haggard-cheeked beside others of your own age. Hereupon Daniel went to Malasar, one of the other chamberlains, to whose care Asphenez had entrusted all four of them.³ Sir, said he, be pleased to put us on our trial. For ten days, give us nothing but pulse to eat, water to drink, then compare our looks with the looks of those others who have fed on the king's bounty; judge by what thou seest, and do with us what thou wilt. The challenge was accepted, and the ten days' trial began; when it was over, never a one of the king's pensioners shewed healthy and well nourished as they. After that, Malasar had their allowance of meat and wine, and they pulse.

Meanwhile, in all lore and learning, God made apt pupils of these four; and of visions and dreams especially Daniel was master. And now, the time of their probation over, Asphenez presented his pupils before Nabuchodonosor, who had speech with all of them; and no match was found for Daniel, Ananias, Misael and Azarias; all must have places at court. Never a question the king could propound, to make trial of their learning and their quick wits, but they could answer it ten times better than any diviner or sage in his kingdom. And still, up to the beginning of Cyrus' reign, Daniel was...⁴

2 In the second year of his reign,⁵ Nabuchodonosor had a dream; and

¹ The capture of Jerusalem in Joakim's reign is vouched for by II Par. 36. 6; the corresponding passage in IV Kg. 24. 1 is perhaps defective. The dating here gives rise to difficulties; Nabuchodonosor had not yet acceded to the throne in the third year of Joakim (Jer. 25. 1). Some think he is called 'king', although still crown prince; others, that the 'reign' of Joakim is only dated from his revolt against Babylon, his position up to that time having been merely that of a viceroy.

² It seems probable, from what follows, that there has been an omission, and that the original text contained some account of persons (including Daniel and his companions) being removed to Babylon.

³ The Septuagint Greek seems to preserve a different account of this incident, in which Malasar disappears from the story and it is Asphenez, alter all, who grants Daniel's request.

⁴ It seems probable that a few words have dropped out at the end of the chapter, telling us that Daniel was 'in high favour', or something of the kind. The phrase 'Daniel was until the first year of Cyrus' is quite without parallel in the Old Testament. Some, by a slight change in the text, would read 'Daniel lived'; but it appears Daniel was still alive in the third year of Cyrus (10. 1 below).

⁵ It is difficult to see how Nabuchodonosor should still have been in the second year of his reign, when Daniel and the others had already undergone three years of training. The difficulty disappears if we suppose that he was only crown prince when he marched on Jerusalem (see note on I. 1). But some think that the years are computed in two different ways, chapter 1 reckoning from the day of the king's accession and chapter 2 from the beginning of his first complete year.

his mind, between sleep and waking, was all distraught.¹ Diviner and sage, soothsayer and astrologer must be summoned without more ado, to pronounce on the royal dream; and when they were admitted to his presence, he said to them, I have had a dream, but my mind is so distraught, I cannot tell what it was. And the astrologers gave him an answer.

IN ARAMAIC²

Long life to the king's grace! Be pleased to tell us what the dream was, and it shall be interpreted. Why, said the king, I know no more than this; dream and interpretation both you must needs tell me, or else your lives must be forfeit, and your houses put to public use. Gifts and great honour shall be your reward, if you will but tell me both. Come now, what dreamt I, and what meant my dream?

Once again they demurred; would the king be pleased to recount his dream to them, interpreted it should be forthwith. Nay, said the king, I see how it is, you are trying shifts with me. You know well there is but one way to it; dream of mine or doom of yours it must be. Some lying story you have ready, that will suit your turn; how shall I know your interpretation is right, if you cannot tell me what dream I saw? Nay, said they, never a man on earth could do what the king's grace asks. Princes and great rulers there have been a many, but none of them yet, from diviner, sage or astrologer, expected so much! Here is riddle indeed thou wouldst have us read for thee, lord king; where is counsellor can tell thee the secret? Unless it were the gods only, and they walk not with men.

At this, the king was in such a taking of fury that he would have all the wise men of Babylon put to death; and, once the warrant was out for the extinction of them, there was hue and cry against Daniel and his fellows. Arioch it was, the captain of

the king's guard, that was commissioned to rid Babylon of all its wise men, and from him Daniel would have the why and wherefore of it; here was cruel work committed to him; what moved the king's grace to be so absolute? And, when Arioch had made all clear to him, into the king's presence he went, asking for more time to answer the royal question. So, returning to his fellows, Ananias, Misael and Azarias, he made all known to them, and would have them cry out upon the God of heaven for better knowledge of his secret, without which both he and they should perish in the general massacre of the wise men.

Then, in a vision by night, the secret was revealed to Daniel, and he fell to praising the God of heaven, with such words as these: Blessed be the Lord's name from the beginning to the end of time; his are the wisdom and the power; change and chance of our mortal life he rules, crowns one man and discrowns another. Wisdom of the wise, skill of the skilful, what are they but his gift? The hidden depths he can lay bare, read the secrets of the dark; does not light dwell with him? God of our fathers, I give thee thanks and praise for thus enabling, thus enlightening me; for prayer answered, doubt resolved, and the king's thought revealed.

With that, he betook himself to Arioch, that was to slay the wise men, and made suit to him, slay the wise men he should not. Thou hast but to take me into the king's presence, said he, and the riddle shall be read. Without more ado, Arioch granted his request; here was an exile from Juda, he said, that would answer the royal question. Is this true? the king asked of Daniel. Canst thou, Baltassar, tell me the dream and its meaning both? And Daniel spoke out in the royal presence, Never wizard or sage, never diviner or prophet, that can give the king's grace an answer!

¹ 'Between sleep and waking, was all distraught'; literally, in the Hebrew text, 'his spirit was bewildered, and his sleep took place upon him' (which is explained as meaning, 'was all over for him'). The Septuagint Greek has, 'his sleep was away from him', the Latin version, 'his dream fled from him'. The Latin perhaps implies that Nabuchodonosor had really forgotten his dream; but this is unnecessary to the story.

² It is, of course, possible to render, 'And the astrologers gave him his answer in Aramaic', but no plausible reason has been suggested for this sudden philological digression. Meanwhile, it is certain that, from this point up to the end of chapter 7, the text given in the Hebrew Bible is not written in Hebrew properly so called, but in the dialect called Aramaic (also used in I Esdras); hence it seems likely that the two words given above in capitals are merely a note intended to warn the reader. The most probable account of this circumstance is that two versions of the original text were current, one Hebrew and one Aramaic, and that certain chapters which were lost in one had to be supplied from the other.

28 But there is a God in heaven, king Nabuchodonosor, that makes hidden things plain; he it is that has sent thee warning of what must befall long hence. Let me tell thee what thy dream was, what visions
 29 disturbed thy sleep. As thou wast lying there abed, my lord king, thy thoughts still turned on future times; and he that makes hidden things plain revealed to thee what the pattern of those times should be.
 30 If the secret was disclosed to me also, it is not that I have wisdom beyond the wont of living men; I was but the instrument by which the meaning of it was to be made known, and a king's thoughts unravelled.
 31 A vision thou hadst of a great image; what splendour, how terrible an aspect it was that confronted thee! Of fine gold the head, breast and arms of silver, belly and
 32 thighs of bronze; of iron the legs, and of the feet, too, part was iron, part was but
 33 earthenware. And as thou wert watching it, from the mountain-side fell a stone no hands had quarried, dashed against the
 34 feet of yonder image, part iron, part clay, and shattered them. With that, down came iron and clay, down came bronze and silver and gold; chaff of the threshing-floor was never so scattered on the summer breeze. They were gone, none knew whither; and stone that had shattered image grew into a high mountain, filling the whole earth.
 36 So much for the dream, and now we that know the secret of it¹ will tell the king's grace what it means. Thou hast kings for thy vassals; royalty, power, dominion and great renown the God of heaven has bestowed on thee; every haunt of man and wild beast and flying bird he has given over to thee, all alike he has made subject to thee; the head of gold, who else but
 39 thou? Another and a lesser empire must follow thine, one of silver, then another of
 40 bronze, still wide as the world; then a

fourth, of iron, breaking down and crushing all before it, as iron has power all-conquering, all-subduing.² But feet and toes of the image were part iron, part clay; this fourth empire will be divided within itself. Foundation of iron there shall yet be, from which it springs; sure enough, in the feet thou sawest, earthenware was mixed with true steel. Yet was true steel mixed with base earthenware, token that this empire shall be in part firmly established, in part brittle. Iron and clay mingled; race of the conquerors shall be adulterated with common human stock; as well mix clay with iron!³

And while those empires yet flourish, another empire the God of heaven will bring into being, never to be destroyed, never to be superseded; conqueror of all these others, itself unconquerable. This is that stone thou sawest none ever quarried, that fell from the mountain-side, bringing clay and iron and bronze and silver and gold to nothing; this was a revelation the king's grace had from the most high God himself of what must come about; true was thy dream, and this, past doubt, the meaning of it.

With that, king Nabuchodonosor bowed down face to earth, and made Daniel reverence; ay, he would have sacrifice offered to him, and incense, and with these words greeted him: Doubt is none but this God of yours of all gods is God, of all kings the master; he it is brings hidden things to light, or how couldst thou have read the secret? Thereupon, he raised Daniel to high rank, and showered riches on him; ruler he should be of all Babylon's provinces, and over all its wise men have the pre-eminence. But Daniel made suit to him, and it was Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago that had Babylon under their charge; Daniel himself was the king's courtier still.

¹ 'We that know the secret of it'; in the original simply 'we'. It is to be supposed that Daniel was associating himself with his three fellow-pupils, who had perhaps accompanied him to the court.

² Many authors identify the second empire with a 'Median' empire (cf. note on 5. 31 below), the third with Persia, and the fourth with Macedon. Others identify the second with Persia, the third with Macedon, and the fourth with Rome; the break-up of the (now divided) Macedonian empire began with the victory of Paulus at Pydna, B.C. 168.

³ Literally, 'As thou sawest iron mixed with earthenware, so they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cohere, this with that, just as iron will not mix with clay'. This is usually understood as meaning 'the rival dynasties will enter into alliance with each other by means of royal marriages (the seed of men), but they will not contrive to keep the peace'. All this is very much out of tune with the allegory, which plainly implies that the fourth empire in its later stages will be composed of a weaker and a stronger element within itself, the two elements not really mixing. We must understand, then, that the conquering power (whatever it may be) will fail to absorb and unify the conquered elements it is dealing with.

3 It was this king Nabuchodonosor made a golden image, sixty cubits high and six cubits broad, which he set up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon; and word went round in king Nabuchodonosor's name, summoning all the governors, magistrates, judges, chieftains, rulers, prefects and leading men from every part of his dominions, to be present at the dedication of the image king Nabuchodonosor had set up. So they gathered there, governors, magistrates, judges, chieftains, rulers, noblemen in high office, and leading men from every part, for the dedication of king Nabuchodonosor's image. And, as they stood before the image he had set up, a herald cried lustily to men of all peoples, nations and languages: As soon as you hear the sound of horn, flute, harp, zither, dulcimer, pipe and other instruments of music, you are to fall down and worship the image of gold which king Nabuchodonosor has set up. Whoever does not fall down in worship will be thrown, there and then, into the heart of a raging furnace. No sooner, then, did the sound of horn, flute, harp, zither, dulcimer, pipe and the rest reach the assembly than all of them, whatever their tribe, people or language, fell down in worship of king Nabuchodonosor's image.

8 It was then that certain Chaldeans came forward with malicious accusations against the Jews. They wished long life to king Nabuchodonosor, and said, Lord King, thy command was that all men, at the sound of horn, flute, harp, zither, dulcimer, pipe and the rest, should fall down and worship the golden image, on pain of being thrown into a raging furnace. And here are certain Jews, entrusted by thee with the affairs of Babylon province, to wit, Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, who have set the royal command at defiance, and will not reverence thy gods, or worship the golden image thou hast set up. Upon this, in a transport of rage, Nabuchodonosor sent for Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago; and when they were brought, without delay, into his presence, this was the threat king Nabuchodonosor uttered: So Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago will not reverence my gods, or worship this golden image of mine? Here is your choice, then; either you will fall down and worship this

image of mine when the sound of horn, flute, harp, zither, dulcimer, pipe and the other music reaches you, or then and there you shall be thrown into a raging furnace. You are in my power; what God can deliver you?

Then Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago said to king Nabuchodonosor, There is no need for any answer of ours to that question; thou wilt see for thyself whether God we worship is able to rescue us from the raging fire, and from thy royal power. But, whether he rescues us or no, be assured, sir king, here are men who do not reverence thy gods, or worship any image of thine. At this, Nabuchodonosor fell into a rage; his features, as he glared at Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, were distorted with fury. He would have the furnace heated seven times hotter than its wont; and into this raging furnace he bade the most stalwart of his fighting men throw Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago with their feet tied together. So they were bound just as they were, in breeches and turban, shoes and coat, and thrown into the heart of the raging furnace; the king's order admitted no delay. So fiercely was the furnace heated that those who threw them in were burned to death. Meanwhile these three, Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, fell fast bound into the heart of the fires that raged in it.

And there, in the hottest of the flames, they walked to and fro, singing to God their praises, blessing the Lord. There, as he stood in the heart of the fire, Azarias found utterance, and thus made his prayer: Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers, renowned and glorious is thy name for ever! In all thy dealings with us, thou hast right on thy side; so true to thy promises, so unswerving in thy course, so just in thy awards! No punishment thou hast inflicted upon us, or upon Jerusalem, holy city of our fathers, but was deserved; for sins of ours, faithfulness and justice that stroke laid on. Sinners we were, that had wronged and forsaken thee, all was amiss with us; unheard thy commandments, or else unheeded, thy will neglected, and with it, our own well-being! Nothing we had not deserved, pillage of thy contriving, plague of thy sending, and at last the foul domination of godless foes.

of a tyrant that has no equal on earth!

33 Tongue-tied we stand, that have brought disgrace on the livery of thy true worship.

34 For thy own honour, we entreat thee not to abandon us eternally. Do not annul thy covenant, and deprive us of thy mercy.

35 Think of Abraham that was thy friend, of thy servant Isaac, of Jacob whom thou

36 didst set apart for thyself; the men to whom thou didst promise that thou wouldst increase their posterity, till it was countless as the stars in heaven, or the sand

37 by the sea-shore. Whereas now, Lord, we are of all nations the most insignificant; all the world over, men see us humbled for

38 our sins. In these days we are without prince or leader or prophet, we have no burnt-sacrifice, no victim, no offering; for

us no incense burns, no first-fruits can be brought into thy presence and win thy

39 favour. But oh, accept us still, hearts that are crushed, spirits bowed down by ad-

40 versity; look kindly on the sacrifice we offer thee this day, as it had been burnt-

sacrifice of rams and bullocks, thousands of fattened lambs; who ever trusted in thee

41 and was disappointed? With all our hearts, now, we choose thy will, we reverence

42 thee, we long after thy presence; for that clemency, that abundant mercy of thine

43 must we hope in vain? By some wondrous delivrance vindicate thy own renown;

44 theirs be the vain hope, that would do thy servants an injury. Fools, that would

45 match themselves with omnipotence! Crush down their might; teach them that

46 in all the world Lord there is none, God there is none, glorified as thou.

47 Meanwhile, their tormentors were not idle; naphtha and tow, pitch and tinder

48 must be heaped on the furnace, till the flame rose forty-nine cubits above the

49 furnace itself, breaking out and burning such Chaldaeans as stood near it. But an

50 angel of the Lord had gone down into the furnace with Azarias and his companions;

and he drove the flames away from it, making a wind blow in the heart of the

51 furnace, like the wind that brings the dew. So that these three were untouched, and

the fire brought them neither pain nor discomfort. Whereupon all of them, as

with one mouth, began to give praise and

glory and blessing to God, there in the furnace, in these words that follow:

Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers, 52

praised above all, renowned above all for ever; blessed is thy holy and glorious

53 name, praised above all, renowned above all for ever. Blessed art thou, whose glory

54 fills thy holy temple, praised above all, renowned above all for ever; blessed art

55 thou, who reignest on thy kingly throne, praised above all, renowned above all for

56 ever. Blessed art thou, who art throned above the cherubim, and gazest down into

the depths, praised above all, renowned above all for ever. Blessed art thou, high

57 in the vault of heaven, praised above all, renowned above all for ever.

Then they cried out upon all things the Lord had made, to bless him, and praise

58 him, and extol his name for ever.¹ Bless the Lord they should, the Lord's angels;

59 bless him they should, the heavens, and the waters above the heavens; bless him

60 they should, all the Lord's powers. Bless him they should, sun and moon, stars of

61 heaven, each drop of rain and moisture, and all the winds of God. Bless him they

62 should, fire and heat, winter cold and summer drought, dew and rime at morn-

63 ing, frost and the cold air. Bless him they should, ice and snow, day-time and night-

64 time, light and darkness, lightnings and storm-clouds. And earth in its turn should

65 bless the Lord, praise him, and extol his name for ever. Bless the Lord they should,

66 mountains and hills, every growing thing that earth yields, flowing fountains, seas

67 and rivers. Bless him they should, sea-monsters and all life that is bred in the

68 waters, all the birds that fly in heaven, wild beasts and tame, and the sons of men.

69 Bless him Israel should, priests of the Lord bless him, servants of the Lord bless him;

70 bless him they should, spirits and souls of all faithful men; bless him they should,

71 dedicated and humble hearts. And for Ananias, Azarias and Misael, well might

72 they bless the Lord, praise him and extol his name for ever; here was the grave

73 spoiled, death robbed of its prey, and ever they were kept safe from the furnace,

74 let its flames rage as they would. Give thanks to the Lord, they cried, the Lord is

¹ In the original, the words 'praise him, and extol his name for ever' are repeated some thirty times in verses 58-88. Here, as in the liturgy, the passage has been abridged.

90 gracious; his mercy is eternal! Bless the Lord, you that are his worshippers; he is God above all gods; praise him and give him thanks, whose mercy is eternal.¹

91 Sore amazed was king Nabuchodonosor, and started to his feet; Tell me, he said to his courtiers, did we not cast three men into yonder furnace, all closely bound? And when they answered, Sire, past doubt, 92 he told them what he had seen; here were four men, that bonds wore none, walking to and fro in the heart of the fire, and never the worse. And such an aspect he wore, the fourth of them, as it had been a son of 93 God. With that, close went Nabuchodonosor to the furnace door, and cried, Come forth, Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago! Servants of the most high God, come out to me! So out came Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, from the fire's heart all of 94 them; and with one accord governor and judge and courtier clustered round them to look. Plain it was, the heat had no power over them; never a hair singed, nor a coat shrivelled, nor any smell of burning marked its passage. And at that, Nabuchodonosor could contain himself no longer; Blessed be this God whom Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago worship! Here were servants of his that trusted in him, and defied a king's edict, ready to put their lives in peril, so they might be free men, worshipping no God but their own; and he has sent an angel to deliver them. 96 Hereby, then, I enact that if anyone blasphemes against the God of Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, come he of what people, what tribe, what race he may, he shall pay for it with his life, and his house be put to public use. God there is no other that can grant such deliverance as this! 97 And be sure he promoted them to high rank in Babylon province.

98 King Nabuchodonosor to men of every race, tribe and tongue, dwell they where they will, all health! Here be wondrous portents the most high God has been manifesting, and in my person. And my will is to make them known, portents most weighty, wonders most compelling; such a reign as his lasts for ever, such power as his the ages cannot diminish.²

4 All went well in my household; never was Nabuchodonosor's court more flourishing. And then I had a dream that put me in fear; nor waking thoughts gave my troubled wits repose. Thereupon I gave orders that all the wise men of Babylon should appear before me, to interpret my dream; diviner and sage, astrologer and soothsayer, all must assemble, and there in their presence I rehearsed what dream it was, but never one of them could tell me the meaning of it. At last came Daniel, one of their number, styled after my own god's name Baltassar, and endowed by all the holy gods³ with their spirit. To him I unfolded my dream thus: Diviner is none, Baltassar, such as thou art; the spirit of all the holy gods is in thee, and there is no mystery beyond thy ken. Tell me, thou, what vision came to me in sleep, what events it boded.

Wouldst thou know, what fantasies disturbed my rest, this was what I saw. Grew a tree from the heart of earth, beyond measure tall; a great tree and a thriving; top of it reached the heavens, and the ends of the earth had view of it. What fair leaves it had, what foison of fruit, enough to cater for a whole world! Beast was none but might take shelter under it, bird was none but might nest in its branches, and to all living creatures it gave food. But as I lay watching in my dream, came down from heaven one of the holy ones that mount guard there, and loud rang his message: 11 Down with yonder tree, lop branch, strip leaves, spill fruit! Let beast its shade, bird its covert forsake! Yet leave the stock of it fast in earth.

Band of iron, chain of bronze! There on the soft meadow-grass heaven's dew wet him, pasture with the beasts find he; heart of man be changed in him, beast's heart given him, till seven seasons there have found him, and passed him by. Doom it is of the unsleeping ones, will and word of the holy ones; live men and learn that he, the most High, of human kingship is overlord, gives it to whom he will, and holds none too base for the having of it.

Thus dreamt I, the great king Nabuchodonosor. Make haste, Baltassar, and

¹ Verses 24-90 are found in the Septuagint Greek, but were unknown to the Aramaic text, it seems, even in the time of St Jerome. ² Verses 98-100 should (and in some Greek manuscripts do) form part of the next chapter. ³ Or perhaps 'by the holy God'; so also in verses 6 and 15.

read me the riddle; wise man was none in my kingdom that could tell me the meaning of it, but thou hast the spirit of the holy gods in thee; thou canst unravel it.

16 But Daniel, Baltassar if you will, made no answer. For a whole hour, in silence, he gave himself up to his thoughts, and right comfortless they were. Nay, Baltassar, the king said at last, never lose heart over a dream, and the interpretation of a dream! Lord king, said he, such dreams be for thy enemies! To ill-wishers of thine bode they what they bode! A tree tall and sturdy, top reaching the heavens, in all the world's view, fair branches, fruit abounding, food for all, beasts sheltering, birds nesting there, what is it, lord king, but thou? So great thy power has grown, it reaches heaven; earth's bounds are the bounds of thy dominion. He watches ever, that holy one thou sawest coming down from heaven; and his word was, Down with the tree, away with it, yet leave the stock of it rooted fast! Of iron band he spoke, and chain of bronze; of soft meadow-grass under the dews of heaven; of one that should have his pasture among the beasts, till seven seasons had found him there, and passed him by. Sentence from the most High this dream forbodes, and the king's grace the subject of it. Far from the haunts of men thou shalt be driven out, and among brute beasts thou shalt have thy dwelling; eat grass, ox-fashion, and with heaven's dew be drenched, till seven seasons have passed thee by; so learn thou must, that of all human kingship the most High is overlord, and grants it where he will. If stock of tree is to be left rooted, be sure thy throne shall be thine once again; but first thou must learn thy lesson, that all power is from above. Deign, my lord king, to be advised by me; with almsgiving, with mercy to the poor, for fault and wrong-doing of thine make amends; it may be he will condone thy guilt.

25 All this king Nabuchodonosor underwent. A twelvemonth later, as he walked to and fro on the roof of his palace at

Babylon, he said aloud: Babylon lies before me, the great city, the royal city I have built; sure proof of my power, fair monument of my renown! And before the words had died on his lips, came a voice from heaven: King Nabuchodonosor, here is thy doom! Pass away from thee it must, that royal power of thine; driven from the haunts of men, with beasts dwell thou, grass like the cattle eat thou, till seven seasons have passed thee by, and learned thou hast that the most High is overlord of all human kingship, to grant it where he will. There and then fell the doom on Nabuchodonosor; thrust him out they did, to feed on grass, and ever the dew of heaven drenched him; thick as eagle's feathers his hair grew, and like birds' talons his nails.

When the appointed time was over, I lifted up my eyes to heaven, I, Nabuchodonosor, and right reason came back to me. Blessed I then the most high God, to the eternal gave glory and praise; such a reign as his lasts for ever, such power as his the ages cannot diminish. Matched with him, the whole world of men counts for nothing; in the heavenly powers, as in our mortal lives, he accomplishes his will, and none may resist him, none may ask his meaning. And when reason came back to me, back came royal pomp and state, back came the beauty I once had; prince and senator waited on me, restored to my throne now in more magnificence than ever. What wonder if I, Nabuchodonosor, praise this King of heaven, extol and glorify him, so faithful to his promise, so just in his dealings? Proud minds none can abase as he.¹

5 Now turn we to king Baltassar, that made great cheer for courtiers of his a thousand, each man drinking wine as his rank entitled him.² And he, in his cups, would have the spoils of the old temple at Jerusalem brought in, cups of gold, cups of silver that his father Nabuchodonosor had carried away; king and court, wife and concubine should drink from them. Brought in they were, all the spoils of

¹ It would seem that the story of Nabuchodonosor's dream must have been current, from quite early times, in more than one version. The alternation, in this chapter as it stands, between history and autobiography would by itself suggest a compilation from sources. But it is also observable that the Septuagint Greek, while agreeing as to the facts, tells the story throughout in quite different words. ² In the Aramaic text, 'and (the king) drank wine in the presence of all the thousand'.

Jerusalem; king and courtier, wife and concubine, drank from those vessels; 4 drank, and to their own gods gave the praise, gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

5 Then, in that hour, an apparition came to them. They saw the fingers of a man's hand writing on the plaster of the palace wall, full in the lamp's light; joints of a hand that wrote there the king could not choose but see. All at once he changed colour, a prey to anxious thoughts; melted his heart within him, and his knees 6 knocked together. With a loud cry, he bade them summon the wise men of Babylon, sage and astrologer and diviner; and to these he made proclamation: Who reads me yonder writing, and tells me the meaning of it, shall go clad in purple, a gold chain about his neck, and hold the third 8 place in my kingdom. But when they came into the banqueting-hall, never a wise head among them could read the characters, nor tell the king what they meant; whereupon king Baltassar was in a great taking of fear, his cheeks paler yet, and his princes were no easier in mind than himself.

10 But now all this ado brought the queen-mother down into the banqueting-hall; Long life to the king's grace! cried she; here is no need for daunted hearts and pale looks! One man thou hast in thy realm the holy gods inspire; in thy father's time, good proof he gave of the wisdom and learning that were his. Did not thy father, king Nabuchodonosor, put him at the head of his wise men one and all, sage nor wizard nor astrologer nor soothsayer to match him? In such renown thy royal father held 12 him, my lord king; no common spirit is his, no common prudence and discernment, dreams to interpret, hidden things to reveal, spells to unbind. For his name, it is Daniel; thy father called him Baltassar. Let Daniel be summoned, and thy riddle shall not long go unread.

13 So Daniel was brought into the king's presence, and the king asked him if Daniel he were, one of the Jewish exiles his father had brought to Babylon? Great things were told of him; that he had the spirit of the gods, gave proof of skill, discernment 15 and wisdom above the common. And here was certain writing, that had baffled sage and diviner called in to read them; mean-

ing of it they could not tell. If Daniel 16 had skill indeed to reveal mysteries and unbind spells, let him read those characters and interpret them; robe of purple he should have, and a gold chain about his neck, and hold the third place in the kingdom.

But Daniel spoke out, there in the king's 17 presence: Purple and gold keep for thyself; and for thy honours, let him have them who will. But for the writing, I will read it willingly, and tell thee the meaning of it. Sir king, thy father was Nabucho- 18 donosor; to him the most High gave royal state, and splendid renown; for that renown of his, every people and race and tribe must tremble in awe of him; slew he, smote he, exalted he, abased he, all he would. With that, his heart beat high; 20 proud grew his will and obstinate; and the issue of it? From that throne he must come down, be shorn of that glory; cast 21 out henceforth from the haunts of men. Heart of beast the heart of him; dwelling-place of wild ass should be his, food of the ox; and the dews of heaven should drench him, till he had learned that the most High is overlord of all human kingship, grants it to whom he will. All this, Baltassar, thou 22 knewest, yet son no more than father would abate his pride; heaven's Ruler 23 defying, thou wouldst bring out yonder cups, the spoil of his temple, to serve wine for thee and thy court, for wife and concubine. Gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, stone and wood, that cannot see or hear or feel, thou wouldst magnify; for the God that holds thy life, thy fortunes, in his keeping, never a word of praise. That is 24 why the hand appeared to thee, fingers that wrote what there stands written. This is 25 the character of it: Mané, Thecel, Phares. Mané betokens numbering; so many years 26 allotted to thy empire, and now God has brought them to an end. And thecel, 27 weighing; the equal of his benefits God demands, and has not found in thee. And phares, rending; Persian and Mede shall be thy successors in the kingdom that is torn from thy grasp.

With that, at the royal bidding, they clothed Daniel in purple, and hung a chain of gold about his neck; proclamation, too, was made that he held the third place in the kingdom. But that same night Baltassar, 28

the Chaldaean king, was slain, and his crown passed to Darius, a Mede, then in the sixty-third year of his age.¹

6 This Darius saw fit to appoint a hundred and twenty lords lieutenant, who should govern the provinces of his empire; and over these, three viceroys, of whom Daniel was one; governor should be answerable to viceroy, and the king's grace should not be troubled with such matters. 3 Yet governor was none or viceroy that could compare with Daniel, so richly God inspired him; and soon the king's thought was, to put the whole empire under his care. Right gladly would his rivals have found opportunity to discredit him in the king's eyes; but no, handle or pretext they could find none, so faithful was he, so far removed from all breath of suspicion. And at last they were fain to admit, if charge was to be found against Daniel at all, keeping of his God's law must be the ground of it. 6 So they took the king by surprise; Long life, they said, to the king's grace! Here is a design upon which we are all agreed, viceroy and magistrate and governor and senator and judge; that an edict should go out under the royal seal forbidding thy subjects to make any request of god or man these next thirty days, save only of thyself. And if any man disobey, it shall be at his peril; he is for the lion-pit. May it please the king's grace to give this design of ours effect, and make the decree unalterable, under law of the Medes and Persians, the law there is no amending. 9 Draw up the edict he did, and signed it. 10 As for Daniel, when he heard it was law, he took himself home; and now as ever, three times a day, he would open his chamber window towards Jerusalem eastwards, doing reverence on bended knee and praising his God. Be sure they surprised him at it, these enemies of his; found him a-praying to his God, and went off to remind the king of his edict. Had not a law been enacted, prayer there should be none to god or man those thirty days fol-

lowing, save to the king; and that on pain of the lions? Law it is, said he, and law of the Medes and Persians there is no amending. Why then, they asked the king, what of Daniel, Daniel the Jewish exile, that for law and edict cares nothing? Three times a day he offers his God prayer.

Pitiful hearing was this for the king's ear; to save Daniel was all his thought, and to that end he laboured till set of sun; but the trap they had devised was too crafty for him, and ever they put him in mind there was no help for it. By the law Medes and Persians use, let the king once make a decree, there is no amending it. At last the king gave orders Daniel should be sent for and shut up in the lion-pit; So faithful a servant, he told him, thy God must needs deliver. And with that, a stone was brought and set down at the pit's entrance, which the king sealed and his nobles both; there should be no interfering with Daniel. Home went the king, and supperless to bed; he would have no food brought him, and sleep he could not.

With the first light of day, the king was up and stirring; to the lion-pit he hastened, and as he came up to it, he cried out most lamentably: Daniel, worshipper of the God that lives, thou wert ever his true servant; has power of his availed to rescue thee from the lions? Long life to the king's grace, Daniel answered; angel of his did his errand, and stopped the lions' mouths. What harm should they do me, one that my God sees guiltless? And for thyself, lord king, nought did I to earn thy displeasure. Right glad the king was to learn of Daniel's safety; be sure he gave orders they should bring Daniel up out of the pit, and out of the pit they brought him, unscathed from head to foot; such reward they have that trust in God. Thereupon, at the king's bidding, they fetched his accusers, and thrust them into the lion-pit, their wives and children with them. But these never reached the floor of it, so quickly the lions fell upon them, and broke all the bones of them to nothing.²

¹ If the event here referred to is the well-known capture of Babylon by Cyrus, Darius the Mede should perhaps be identified with Gobryas, a general of his who took command of the city after its capture. It is not impossible that a short-lived 'Median' empire may have intervened between that of Babylon and that of Persia, but the monuments reveal no trace of it; and the sacred writers appear to regard the Medes and Persians as already, for political purposes, a single nation. ² Cf. note on Mt. 1. 25. The Septuagint Greek has, 'they fetched those two accusers of his', i.e. the two other viceroys alluded to in verse 2 above.

25 Then Darius sent out a proclamation to all the world, without distinction of nation, race or language, wishing them well, and enjoining this decree upon them, that all the subjects of his empire should hold the God of Daniel in awe and reverence. Here is a God that lives, he told them, a God that abides for ever; such a reign as his there is no overthrowing, such power as his the ages cannot diminish. His to deliver, his to save, his to shew wondrous portents in high heaven and on earth beneath, the God who saved Daniel from the lions.

28 Let Darius reign, or Cyrus the Persian, this same Daniel throve yet.

7 In the first year of the Babylonian king Baltassar, Daniel had a dream; sleep he might, but still his thoughts were busy. The substance of this dream he put on record, giving no more than the sum of it, in these words following.

2 Night came, and brought with it a vision for my seeing. All the winds of heaven, I thought, did battle over the wide sea, and out of it came four great beasts, each of them different from the last. A lioness the first seemed, that yet had eagle's wings; but as I watched, these wings were plucked, and with that it rose up from the ground, standing on its feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. Then rose up another by its side, this one like a bear; three rows of teeth it had in its mouth, and a summons came to it, great part of mankind it should devour. What saw I next? A leopard it seemed, yet had a bird's wings, four of them, on its back, and four heads; this beast it was that now attained dominion. But still I dreamed on, and a fourth beast saw at last, fiercer, and stranger, and more powerful yet. It had great teeth of iron, ready to crush and to devour, and ever what these spared it would trample down with its feet; match it those others might not; and out of its head grew ten horns. Even as I watched them, a new horn grew up in the midst of the others, and three of them must be plucked away to make room for it; eyes it had, this new horn, like a man's eyes, and a mouth that talked very boastfully.

9 While I still watched, there were judgement-thrones a-setting; and one took his

seat there crowned with age. White as snow his garments were, his hair could match unsullied wool for whiteness; his throne all of flame, the wheels under it glancing fire; and ever from his presence a stream of fire came rushing onward. A thousand thousand they were that waited on his bidding, and for every one of these, a thousand others were standing there before him. Assize should be held now, and the records lay open. And still I watched, to see what would become of the boasts yonder horn had made; and all at once I was aware the beast itself had been slain, and even the carcase of it had vanished, handed over to the flames; nor might those other beasts enjoy power any longer, though life they should enjoy for a while, until their turn came. Then I saw in my dream, how one came riding on the clouds of heaven, that was yet a son of man; came to where the Judge sat, crowned with age, and was ushered into his presence. With that, power was given him, and glory, and sovereignty; obey him all must, men of every race and tribe and tongue; such a reign as his lasts for ever, such power as his the ages cannot diminish.

By this, Daniel wrote, my heart was ill at ease; a dread sight it was, and as I dreamed, my thoughts bewildered me. So I drew closer to one that stood by, and asked to know the truth of all that had gone forward; he it was that read the riddle for me, and thus he unravelled it: It is but earthly kingdoms they betoken, these four great beasts thou hast seen; the servants of the most high God shall have dominion yet: theirs it shall be for ever and for evermore. But I was minded to know the truth more fully; what was the fourth beast, so different from all the rest, so dreadful; why must it have teeth and claws of iron, to crush and to devour, to trample on what was left? What of the ten horns on its head, and that other, before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes, and a mouth to boast with, and grew greater than the rest? This horn it was I saw doing battle against the servants of the most High, and getting the better of them, until the Judge appeared, crowned with age, to give them redress, and their turn came to have dominion.

23 And his answer was, this fourth beast was the fourth of those earthly kingdoms, and the greatest of them all, to crush and devour and trample down a whole world.

24 Ten kings be the ten horns of that kingdom, and after these another shall rise, more powerful yet, and three of them shall bite the dust. Boastfully he shall challenge the most High, and do his servants despite; calendar and ordinance he shall think to set aside; for a space of time, and for twice as long, and for half as long,¹ he must needs have his way. Then assize shall be held on him, and all his power be taken away, crushed down and forgotten for ever. Then what royalty, what empire, what earth-embracing dominion shall be theirs, the people set apart for the most High! Sovereignty everlasting; no monarch but must bow to its yoke.²

25 Bewildered my thoughts were, and my cheek pale, but I kept the memory of it faithfully in my heart.

8 To me, to Daniel, another revelation came, besides that I had first seen. It was now the third year of king Baltassar, and I was at the town of Susa, in Aelam province, but it seemed, in my vision, it was by the gate³ of Ulai I stood. I looked at what lay before me, and what saw I, at the edge of the marsh, but a ram standing there, with one high-branching horn, and another that grew up after it, but grew higher yet. With those horns it tossed every enemy that came to meet it; west and north and south was never a beast could match it, or escape its attack; no wonder this ram carried all before it, and rose to greatness.

5 But now, as I looked, came a buck-goat from the west country, earth overshadowing, and spurning the ground beneath

him; one horn this goat had between the eyes of him, a horn of noble aspect. Close he came to the ram, the great horned ram I had espied in yonder gateway, and bore down upon it with very furious onslaught. So madly he charged that he overcame the ram and broke either horn of it with one blow; what shift could it make now? Brought down it was and trampled under foot; there was no rescuing it. So now it was the goat's turn to enjoy dominion; yet no sooner had he reached his full strength, than the great horn was broken, and four other horns must grow up in place of it, fronting the four winds of heaven.

It was from one of these a single horn now sprang; a little horn that grew till it outrivalled south and east, aye, and the armies. . . For the armies of heaven itself it proved a match, bringing heavenly powers down to earth, stars down to earth, and trampling them under foot; a match even for the captain of those armies, that must lose the daily sacrifice offered to him, and look on at the destruction of his sanctuary. Alas for our guilt! That such an enemy, by armed force, should avail against the sacrifice, truth itself should dethrone, and should thrive yet, should prosper yet! This complaint I heard one of God's servants making to another, I know not who; and when that other asked how long a cessation of sacrifice the vision portended, how long the estranging guilt, and the defeat, and the profanation, Night first, said he, morning after; two thousand three hundred days it will be, ere the sanctuary is cleansed.⁴

But for me, for Daniel, that saw the vision, understanding of it was none, till one appeared to me that had the semblance of a man, and a voice hailed him from between Ulai gates; For thee it is, Gabriel, to make the vision clear. Came he close,

¹ Literally, 'for a time, and times, and half a time'. This is traditionally interpreted as meaning three-and-a-half, that is, half of the mystical number seven.

² It must be confessed that the historical interpretation of verses 15-27 remains wholly doubtful. It is not even clear whether the four beasts represent four successive empires (like the statue in chapter 2), or four kingdoms existing simultaneously, e.g. the four main divisions of the Macedonian empire after Alexander's death. The little horn is usually identified with Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 176-164), the persecutor of the Machabees; but he was the eighth, not the tenth of his line, and the explanations given of the 'three horns' displaced by him seem curiously forced.

³ According to the Hebrew text, 'the river', and so in verse 16.

⁴ Verses 9-14 (particularly verse 13) are very obscure, and may have suffered from manuscript corruption. At the end of verse 9, the Septuagint Greek has 'the north'; the Hebrew text 'the splendour' (or possibly, 'the gazelle'); the Latin version 'the armies'. Perhaps a word has dropped out, and we should read either 'the armies of heaven', as in verse 10, or 'the land of splendour' as in 11. 16. The reference to night and morning in verse 14 is generally interpreted, according to the Hebrew text, of the evening and morning sacrifices. Some think that we should understand an interval of 1,150 days, involving 2,300 sacrifices.

then, to where I was standing; but I, at his coming, fell down in terror, face to earth. Heed thou well, son of man, said he; what here thou seest, in the last days shall be accomplished. But he spoke to one that lay swooning on the ground; so he must put out his hand, and raise me to my feet.

Then he went on: I mean to tell thee how all shall fall out when the days of punishment are over; be sure the end of them is fixed. Horned ram of thy vision rules over the Medes and Persians; buck-goat over the realm of Greece, and the great horn between his eyes is first of the Greek kings.

Those four others that grew after its breaking are four kings that shall arise, fellow-countrymen of his, but not his peers.

These reigning, the world shall go from bad to worse, till a new king comes to the throne, brazen-faced, a master of riddles.

Great power shall he wield, though of that first king not the peer, making havoc beyond belief, thriving and prospering. Strength of arms nor holiness of life shall rescue peoples from his will; all shall go well with crafty scheming of his, till his heart grows proud, and he deals death all about him, when peril is none. And at last with the Prince of princes he shall try conclusions; no human hand it shall be that crushes him down at last. Night comes first, then morning; but the revelation made to thee is a true one; seal it up, till those last days when it must have effect.

So much he told me; and for many days after I lay sick; when I was on my feet again, I had the king's business to do, but still I was all dazed by the vision, and there was no interpreting it.

9 Then Darius the Mede, son of As-suerus, was raised to the throne of Chaldaeae; and in the year when his reign began who but I, Daniel, should discover, by the reading of old records, how to compute the seventy years of Jerusalem's widowhood? Such doom the Lord had foretold to the prophet Jeremias. And with that, I turned to the Lord my God; pray to him I would, and sue for mercy,

fasting ever, sackcloth and ashes my only wear.

Prayed I then to the Lord my God, and made confession of my sins, in these words following: Mercy, mercy, Lord God, the great, the terrible; to those who love thee, so gracious, with those who keep thy commandments, troth keeping still! Sinned we have, and wronged thee, rebelled we have, and forsaken thee, turned our backs on decree and award of thine, nor heeded thy servants, the prophets, that spoke to us in thy name, to king and prince and the common folk that gendered us. Fault with thee is none; ours, Lord, to blush for the wrong-doing that has offended thee, men of Juda, citizens of Jerusalem, Israel near at hand, Israel banished far away, in what plight thou seest! Blush we, king and prince of ours, fathers of ours that did the wrong; be it thine, O Lord our God, to have mercy and to forgive. So far we have strayed from thee, so deaf to the divine voice, when the prophets that served thee bade us follow thy law! A whole people that would transgress thy command, turn a deaf ear to thy calls! What wonder if it fell on us, drop by drop, the avenging curse God's servant Moses wrote of? Our sins had deserved it, and if yonder unexampled punishment befell Jerusalem, it was but a threat fulfilled; warning we had of it, we and the princes that governed us. No misfortune overtook us, but the law of Moses had foretold it; and yet, O Lord our God, appease thy anger we would not, nor leave our sinning, nor bethink ourselves, how well thy word thou keepest; what wonder if bane, not blessing, the divine regard brought us? Be our punishment what it will, not ours to find fault with the God we have disobeyed.

Thou art the Lord our God, whose constraining power rescued thy people from the land of Egypt, who hast won thyself glory, too, in this our day; we, Lord, have been sinners, we have shewn ourselves unworthy of all thy faithful dealings with us. But wilt thou let thy indignant anger fall on Jerusalem, on that holy mountain of

¹ In verses 19-26, the great horn is evidently Alexander of Macedon, who died in a.c. 323, and the little horn presumably Antiochus Epiphanes. The Latin version gives two different translations of the same phrase in verses 22 and 24; but it seems likely that we ought to prefer a uniform interpretation; either 'not a match for Alexander's strength', which suits the context best, or 'not by means of their (his) own strength', which is a more natural rendering of the Hebrew. The description of Antiochus Epiphanes is not particularly recognizable.

thine? Too long, for our sins and the sins of our fathers before us, all our neighbours have held Jerusalem, and us thy people, in contempt. God of our race, give audience at last to the prayer, the plea thy servant brings before thee; for thy own honour, restore the sanctuary, that now lies forlorn, to the smile of thy favour. My God, give ear and listen to us; open thy eyes, and see how desolate is this city of ours, that claims to be thy own. No merits of ours, nothing but thy great love emboldens us to lay our prayers at thy feet. Thy hearing, Lord, and thy pardon; thy heed, Lord, and thy aid! For thy own honour, my God, deny thyself no longer to the city, the people that is called thy own!¹

Thus prayed I, thus did I confess my own sins, and the sins of my fellow Israelites, pouring out supplication, there in the presence of my God, for that holy mountain which is his dwelling-place. And I was still at my prayer, when the human figure of Gabriel, as I had seen it at the beginning of my vision, flew swiftly to my side; it was the hour of the evening sacrifice when he reached me. And with these words he enlightened me: Daniel, my errand is to instruct thee and give thee discernment. Even as thy prayer began, a secret was disclosed, and I am here to make it known to thee, so well heaven loves thee. Mark well, then, the message, and read the revelation aright. It is ordained that this people of thine, that holy city of thine, should wait seventy weeks before guilt is done away, sin ended, wrong righted; before God's everlasting favour is restored, and the visions and the prophecies come true, and he who is all holiness receives his anointing. Be assured of this, and mark it well; a period of seven weeks must go by, and another period of sixty-two weeks, between the order to rebuild Jerusalem and

the coming of the Christ to be your leader. Street and wall will be built again, though in a time of distress; and then sixty-two weeks must pass before the Christ is done to death; the people will disown him and have none of him. Then the army of an invading leader will destroy both city and sanctuary, so that his taking away will mean utter destruction; only a ruin is to be left when that war is ended. High covenant he shall make, before another week is done, and with folks a many; but when that week has run half its course, offering and burnt-sacrifice shall be none; in the temple all shall be defilement and desolation, and until all is over, all is fulfilled, that desolation shall continue.²

10 Then, in the third year of Cyrus' reign, that was king of Persia, a fresh revelation was made to Daniel, who is also called Baltassar. Here is truth indubitable, and a great host. . . And right well he understood its meaning; little avails vision where understanding is none.³

For three weeks together I, Daniel, that saw it, had been making sad cheer; for three weeks together dry bread was my diet, nor ever did meat or wine cross my lips, nor oil anoint me. Came now the twenty-fourth day of the new year, and I stood by the banks of the great river, where it is called Tigris. I looked up, and saw a man standing there clad all in linen, and his girdle of fine gold. Clear as topaz his body was, like the play of lightning shone his face, and like burning cressets his eyes; arms and legs of him had the sheen of bronze, and when he spoke, it was like the murmur of a throng. The vision was for me, for Daniel, alone; my companions never saw it; such fear overcame them, they were fain to hide themselves, and I was left alone with this high vision for my

¹ The prayer of Daniel has several points in common with that of the Jewish people in Bar. 1. 15, 2. 13.
² The traditional account given of verses 24-27 is, that Daniel interprets the seventy years of Israel's captivity as seventy weeks of years, and that the periods called 'weeks' are periods of forty-nine years, four hundred and thirty-four years, and seven years respectively, four hundred and ninety in all. The order to rebuild Jerusalem is, quite naturally, identified with that given in II Esd. 2, and dated B.C. 445. This would explain the preoccupation with prophecies about 'the End' which characterizes the outlook of our Lord's contemporaries; Daniel's prophecy was to fall due within the course of that century. It must be admitted, however, that widely different views have been held about the application of the prophecy in detail. Modern commentators, who understand the whole passage as a reference to Antiochus Epiphanes, and the profanation of the Temple in B.C. 167, are driven to very unconvincing explanations of the time-periods involved. Verse 27 is very obscure, and the text seems to have suffered in transmission. 'All shall be defilement and desolation'; literally, 'there shall be abomination of desolation'; cf. Mt. 24. 15.
³ The attempts made to explain this verse as it stands are not such as to produce conviction, and it seems likely that there is some corruption or omission in the text.

company. No wonder if my spirits were cowed; pale grew my cheek, and all the strength in me ebbed away. He spoke, and as I listened to that voice, I swooned where I stood, and lay there, face to earth, till a hand touched me, giving fresh impulse to knee and wrist.

Daniel, he said to me, Daniel, so well beloved, up with thee, and heed thou well; I have an errand to thee. Yet for all he spoke thus to me, I stood there trembling, and still he must allay my fears. Take heart, Daniel, said he; thy prayers did not go unheard. Prayer of thine it was beckoned me to thy side, from the very moment when thou didst set about thy search for knowledge, by fasting in the presence of thy God; but these twenty-one days he who guards the realm of Persia has delayed my coming. At last Michael, one of the high lords, brought me aid, and there, at Persia's court, I was left master of the field.¹ Now I am here to tell thee what shall befall thy people in the last days; long days must pass ere the revelation is accomplished.

Ever, as he spoke, I stood there dumb, and with eyes downcast, till all at once a touch fell on my lips, like the touch of human hand.² Now found I speech, to give yonder visitant his answer. Bethink thee, my lord, I said, that sight of thee unknits my frame; strength in me is none. How should slave bandy words with master? Not strength alone fails me; the very breath will not come. Once again a hand seemed to touch me, and words came to hearten me; Nay, fears are not for thee, so well beloved; never harm befall thee! Take courage, and play a man's part! With that, I found my strength again; Speak on, my

Lord, said I; thou hast put new heart into me. And he answered, Hast thou read, by this, the secret of my coming to thee? I am even now on my way back to fight against the lord of Persia; when I left him, what saw I but the lord of the Greeks already on the march? Only I must shew thee first what is written in the book of doom.³

Much is to do, and save for Michael, that is guardian of your race, I have none to aid me.

11 Him to strengthen and uphold has been my task,⁴ ever since Darius the Mede began reigning. And now, doom to foreshew thee, a king shall rise in Persia,⁵ the fourth from this, rich in great revenue beyond all the others; in the power such wealth gives him, he will set the whole world in motion against the realm of Greece. . . .

And a warrior king shall arise, winning such empire that there is no resisting his will.⁶ Divided that empire shall be, as soon as it is established, between the four quarters of heaven; not sons of his they shall be that rule it, nor peers of his; besides these, foreign lords shall part his dominions between them. The southern kingdom a strong ruler shall have, but of his vassals one shall be mightier than he, and in dominion excel him; wide, wide his domain; until at last these two make terms between them, and, to seal their amity, daughter of Egyptian king to Syrian king must pass.⁷ Yet thrive she may not, nor dynasty of hers endure; herself in due time, with retinue of hers, faction of hers, must be a victim. Not unavenged; scion of her own father's stock shall march on

¹ 'He who guards the realm of Persia'; the reference here, and all through the rest of the chapter, is to the guardian angels of the countries concerned, according to the common opinion. The last clause in this verse is of very doubtful interpretation.

² Literally, 'As it were the semblance of a son of man touched my lips'. This would suggest, at first sight, the presence of a second angelic being, not yet mentioned. But verse 19 probably implies that only one angel is referred to, from verse 5 onwards.

³ Verses 20, 21 do not read naturally, and some think the order of the original text has become dislocated through an accident. 'The book of doom'; literally, 'the writing of faithfulness' (i.e. certainty).

⁴ 'Him' probably refers to Michael; but it might be understood of 'the lord of Greece', or even of Darius.

⁵ This king is ordinarily identified with Xerxes (B.C. 485-465). But it is doubtful whether the Hebrew text should not be rendered 'shall set all in motion, the (whole) realm of Greece'; and this might describe the provocation offered to Philip of Macedon by Artaxerxes III; he might be called the fourth successor of Artaxerxes I, in whose reign Jerusalem was rebuilt. If the interval (of more than a century) between Xerxes and Alexander had been passed over in silence, it may be a prophetic foreshortening of history, or conceivably there has been an omission in the text.

⁶ In verses 3-19, the period from Alexander the Great to Antiochus the Great is sketched in with considerable detail; verse 6 gives the history of Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II, and verse 17 that of Antiochus' daughter Cleopatra. ⁷ 'Egyptian' and 'Syrian' are 'southern' and 'northern' in the original, all through this chapter (though Egypt is mentioned by name in verses 8, 42 and 43).

8 Syria, and do battle, and prevail; shall carry off to Egypt the images of Syria's gods, its treasures of silver and gold. Then, 9 his rival mastered, with that inroad he shall be content, and to his own kingdom return.

10 To Syria's heirs the quarrel is left; and now there are great hosts a-mustering, under a new king that must ever be hurrying on, like river in flood, returning with spirit to the charge, throwing all his forces into the assault. See with what fury the Egyptian king takes the field against him, rallies a great host of his own, and over Syria's host gains the mastery! Captives a many, dead warriors a many, to gladden 13 his heart, but all to no purpose; back Syria comes, in greater force than ever, ranks filled, and treasures swollen, with the years. All the world will be for picking a quarrel with Egypt then; hot-heads there will be among thy own people who think to fulfil the old prophecies thus, but to their cost. On marches he, yonder Syrian king, raises mound, and makes fortified cities his own; Egypt's vigour is all spent, never a halt, though its best warriors engage him; irresistible he comes, to impose terms on his enemy, sets foot in a noble 17 land¹ and crushes it under his heel. How to gain secure possession of the whole kingdom? A bargain must be struck; gift of a royal bride shall be the land's undoing! But no, that will not serve, never shall it be his. To the sea-coast he turns his thoughts instead, and conquers lands a many; puts to silence the author of his own disgrace, and covers him with disgrace in 14 his turn.² But at last, to his own province turning back, he totters to his fall, and the fame of him is heard no more.

20 To a vile creature his throne must pass, of a throne unworthy; soon shall his end come, and yet no blow struck in anger, or in battle.³ And after him a man little thought of; royal investiture he has none,

yet see how stealthy his approach, what shifts he uses to win a throne!⁴ Down go 22 strong armies, crushed before him, down goes covenanted chief;⁵ treaty first, and then treachery; of armed following he needs but little. So he makes his way into 24 rich cities that suspect no harm, outdoes father and grandsire both in havoc, so much wealth to plunder and to squander; into strong cities, too, by crafty devices, while fortune serves. Power of his and 25 policy of his he shall match at last against Egypt, with a great army at his back; alas, Egypt, what avails that great muster of warriors? Craft wins the day; men that 26 feed on thy royal bounty are thy own undoing, and with great slaughter that army of thine is overborne. See where the two kings plot mischief at one table, liars both! But nothing they shall achieve; not yet the 27 appointed hour has come. Back goes the king of Syria, enriched with spoil, wreaking his spite on God's covenant as he journeys home; then, when the time is 29 ripe, marches once again southwards. Yet speed he shall not as once he sped; here 30 are Roman galleys⁶ overtaking him, and he must return discomfited.

And now, as he returns, he shall vent his spleen against the holy covenant in good earnest. The forsakers of that covenant have not escaped his eye, and there are 31 willing hands a many to help him profane the inviolable sanctuary, daily sacrifice annulling, spreading defilement and desolation there. Fawning knaves, and traitors 32 to the covenant! But those others, that their God acknowledge, shall go all the more boldly to work, counsellors a few 33 that give right counsel to many. Crippled they shall be for a while, by sword and flame, by prison and plunder; then, even 34 as they are falling, it will need but a little support, and the fickle multitude will rally to their side. What if some of 35 them should fall, those wise counsellors?

¹ The 'noble land', here and in verse 41, is usually understood as meaning Palestine, though Egypt is a possible alternative in either case.

² This verse is very obscure, and in the Hebrew text untranslatable. We should have expected some reference to the defeat of Antiochus by the Romans at Magnesia (B.C. 190).

³ The Hebrew text describes this king as 'causing an exactor to pass through', presumably in allusion to II Mac. 3. 7. But the Septuagint Greek, like the Latin version, contains no such allusion.

⁴ Throughout verses 21-45, the allusions are much less readily traceable than in verses 3-19. Some parts of it at least are generally understood as referring to Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 176-164), but for the most part it would be equally applicable to any persecuting tyrant.

⁵ 'Covenanted chief' perhaps means the high priest Onias III, deposed by Antiochus in B.C. 175. ⁶ So the Septuagint Greek, but the Hebrew text has simply 'ships of Chittim', i.e. from the West. It looks as if the versions had interpreted their original; it is well known that Antiochus was warned off Egyptian soil by the Roman ambassador Popilius Laenas.

Assayed let them be for a little, sifted, purged for a little; there shall be happier times yet.

36 As for the king, he shall have all his own way; in his pride, he will think himself a match for any god, even of that God boast himself the rival, who is above all gods, And still he shall thrive; vengeance is not yet ready to overtake him; doom shall come when doom must. What are his fathers' gods to him? Women's dalliance is all his concern; of gods he reck's little, that will set himself up over all. When his turn comes, it is the god of Maozim¹ he will worship; for such a god, that never his fathers knew, the gold, and the silver, and the precious jewels; with this new-found god to aid him, he will make Maozim his stronghold, shower honours and dignities upon its folk, make a present of lands to them.

40 Then comes the hour of destiny. Egypt shall declare war, and he, the Syrian king, shall sweep down upon it with horse and chariot and a great fleet. Which lands will he invade and conquer, which pass by, ere he reach the noblest of them all? Ruined a many shall be, but Edom shall escape his onslaught, and Moab, and the principedom of Ammon. A country here he will attempt, a country there, and be sure Egypt shall not go unscathed; gold and silver of Egypt, and all its precious treasures shall come into his power. Then, as through Libya and Ethiopia he makes his way, tidings shall come from east and north, to bring him back with all his host, ready for havoc, ready for carnage. See where he sets up his royal pavilion² betwixt sea and sea on yonder noble hill, yonder sacred hill; reaches its very summit, and none brings aid!³

12 Time, then, that Michael should be up and doing; Michael, that high lord who is guardian of thy race. Distress shall then be, such as never was since the world began; and in that hour of distress

thy fellow-countrymen shall win deliverance, all whose names are found written when the record lies open. Many shall wake, that now lie sleeping in the dust of earth, some to enjoy life everlasting, some to be confronted for ever with their disgrace. Bright shall be the glory of wise counsellors, as the radiance of the sky above; starry-bright for ever their glory, who have taught many the right way.

For thyself, Daniel, keep this revelation locked away; sealed up the record of it must be until the hour appointed. Leave others to hasten to and fro, in search of knowledge.⁴

Thus he spoke; and now, looking up, I saw two others that stood there, one on either bank of the stream. But he, the man clad in linen, stood there yet over the river itself; and when I asked how long these wondrous doings should last, it was from him I had my answer. Both hands raised to heaven, he swore by the God who lives for ever that there should be an end to it; it should last for a space of time, and for twice as long, and for half as long, no more. Strength of God's holy people must be broken utterly; when that is over, all is over and done.⁵ So I had my answer, but still could not tell the meaning of it; Ay, my Lord, I said, but what shall be the end of it all? Nay, Daniel, said he, no more of this; needs must that this revelation be shut away and sealed up, till the appointed hour comes; and still there shall be chosen souls a many, that are purged by the fire's assaying, and still there are sinners that will not leave their sinning. The riddle, for these others, a riddle must remain, but wise counsellors there be that will find the clue to it. Of this be sure; after the time when the daily sacrifice is abrogated, and all becomes defilement and desolation. Twelve hundred and ninety days must pass. Blessed shall his lot be that waits patiently till twelve hundred and thirty five days are over.⁶ And for thyself, Daniel, go thy way

¹ 'Maozim'; or perhaps, 'fortresses'. But it is difficult to understand who are meant by 'them' in verse 39 if Maozim is not a proper name. We do not meet the name elsewhere; on the other hand, attempts to identify the 'god of fortresses' are not altogether convincing.

² The Latin version here translates, 'his pavilion Apadno'. ³ The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'he reaches his end, and there is none to bring him aid'. ⁴ The last part of this verse cannot be rendered with any certainty.

⁵ Here too the end of the verse is variously interpreted. ⁶ The figures given in verses 11 and 12, like those given in 8. 14, are mysteriously uncoordinated with the 'time, times and half a time' which is elsewhere given as the time-unit. Cf. Apoc. 12. 6, 14 and 13. 5, where the time-unit is consistent.

... till the end; till the end of the days rest thou shalt, and rise to fulfil thy appointed destiny.¹

13 There was a man called Joakim living in Babylon, married to one Susanna, daughter of Helcias.² This was a woman of great beauty, and one that feared God, so well had her parents, religious folk, schooled their daughter in the law of Moses. A rich man was Joakim, and had a fruit-garden close to his house; and he was much visited by the Jews, among whom there was none more honoured than he. There came a year in which those two elders of the people were appointed judges, of whom the Lord said, Wickedness has sprung up in Babylon, and the roots of it are those elders and judges who claim to rule the people.³ These two were often at Joakim's house, and all those who had disputes to settle appeared before them there.

At noon, when the common folk had returned home, Susanna would walk about in her husband's garden, and these two elders, who saw her go in and walk there day after day, fell to lusting after her. Reason they dethroned, and turned away their eyes from the sight of heaven; its just awards they would fain have forgotten. The love that tortured both, neither to other would disclose; confess it for very shame they might not, this hankering after a woman's favours; yet day after day they seized the opportunity to have sight of her. A day came at last when one said to the other, Home go we, it is dinner-time; and go they did, taking their several ways; yet both returned hot-foot to their watching-place, and there met one another. So there was questioning on both sides, and out came the story of their lust; and now they made common cause; at a suitable time they would waylay her together, when she was alone.

They watched, then, for their opportunity; and she, as her custom was, went out one day with two of her maids, and had a mind to bathe, there in the garden, for it was summer weather, and none was by except the two elders; and they were in

hiding, watching her. So she bade her servants go and bring her oil and soap, and shut the garden door while she was a-bathing. Her whim was obeyed; shut the door of the garden they did, and went out by a back entrance to bring her what she had asked for; they knew nothing of the elders that were hiding there within. And these two, as soon as the servants were gone, rose from their hiding-place and ran to her side. See, they told her, the garden door is shut, and there is no witness by. We are both smitten with a desire for thy favours; come, then, let us enjoy thee. Refuse, and we will bear witness that thou hadst a gallant bear, and this was the reason thou wouldst rid thyself of thy hand-maidens' company.

Whereupon Susanna groaned deeply; There is no escape for me, she said, either way. It is death if I consent, and if I refuse, I shall be at your mercy. Let me rather fall into your power through no act of mine, than commit sin in the Lord's sight. With that, Susanna cried aloud, and the elders, too, began crying shame on her; meanwhile, one of them ran to the garden door and opened it. And now the servants of the house, hearing such outcry in the garden, came running in through the back entrance to know what was afoot; and they were greatly abashed when the elders told their story; never before had Susanna been defamed thus.

When the morrow came, there was a throng of people in Joakim's house, and the two elders were there, intent upon their malicious design against Susanna's life. They asked publicly that Susanna, daughter of Helcias and wife to Joakim, should be sent for; sent for she was, and came out with her parents and her children and all her kindred. So dainty she was, and so fair, these two knaves would have her let down her veil, the better to enjoy the sight of her charms. All her friends, all her acquaintances, were in tears. Then the two elders rose amidst the throng, and laid their hands upon Susanna's head, while she, weeping, looked up to heaven, in token that her heart had not lost confidence in the

¹ This verse is very obscure, and perhaps corrupt. The latter part of it is usually interpreted as meaning that Daniel will die and rise again to happiness in a future life; but if so all the words in it are used in an unaccustomed sense.

² This chapter, with chapter 14, is preserved in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

³ Some think this is an allusion to Jer. 29. 21-23.

36 Lord. We were walking in the garden apart, said the elders, when this woman came out with two hand-maidens. She had the garden door shut close, and sent the maidens away; whereupon a young man, who had been in hiding till then, 37 came out and had his will with her. We, from a nook in the garden, saw what foul deed was being done, and ran up close, so 38 that we had full view of their dalliance; but lay hold of the man we could not; he was too strong for us, opening the garden door and springing out. The woman we caught, and asked her who her gallant was, but she would not tell us. To all this, we bear witness.

39 They were elders, they were judges of the people, and they persuaded the assembly, without more ado, to pass the death sentence. Whereupon Susanna cried aloud, Eternal God, no secret is hidden from thee, nothing comes to pass without thy foreknowledge. Thou knowest that these men have borne false witness against me; wilt thou let me die, a woman innocent of all the charges their malice has invented? And the Lord listened to her plea; 40 even as she was being led off to her death, all at once he roused to utterance the holy spirit that dwelt in a young boy there, called Daniel. This Daniel raised his voice and cried out, I will be no party to the death of this woman; and when all the people turned upon him, asking what he meant, he stood there in their midst, and said, Are you such fools, men of Israel, as to condemn an Israelite woman without trial, without investigation of the truth? 41 Go back to the place of judgement; the witness they have borne against her is false witness.

42 Eagerly enough the people went back, and the elders would have Daniel sit with them, such credit God had given him beyond his years. He bade them part the two men, at a distance from each other, while he questioned them. So parted they were, and when the first was summoned, thus Daniel greeted him: Grown so old in years, and years ill spent! Now, that past sinning of thine has found thee out, a man that perverts justice, persecutes innocence, and lets the guilty go free. Has not the Lord

said, Never shalt thou put the innocent man, the upright man, to death? Thou 43 foundest her; good; they met under a tree; tell us what kind of tree. And he answered, Under a mastic-tree I surprised them. The right word! cried Daniel; 44 prized asunder thyself shall be, when God bids his angel requite thee for this calumny. Then he had this one removed, and bade 45 the other come near. Brood of Chanaan, said he, and no true son of Juda, so beauty ensnared thee? So lust drove thy heart astray? Such approaches you have made, 46 long since, to women of the other tribes, and they, from very fear, admitted your suit; but you could not bring a woman of Juda to fall in with your wicked design. And now tell me, under what tree it was 47 thou didst find them talking together? Under a holm-oak, said he, I saw them. The right word again! cried Daniel. Saw 48 thee asunder the angel of the Lord will, with the sharp blade he carries yonder; you are both dead men.

49 And with that, the whole multitude cried aloud, blessing God that is the deliverer of those who trust in him. And they turned on the two elders, by Daniel's questioning self-convicted of false witness; served they must be as they would have served others, and the law of Moses 50 obeyed; so they put them to death. That day, an innocent life was saved. Good cause had Helcias and his wife to praise God for their daughter Susanna, good cause had Joakim and all his friends; no breath of suspicion assailed her now. And as for Daniel, he was in high favour with all the people from that day forward.

51 When king Astyages became part of his line, it was Cyrus, the Persian, succeeded him.¹

14 Of this king, Daniel was the courtier, and valued above all his other friends. A great idol there was, that the men of Babylon worshipped; Bel was the name of it, and day by day it must be fed with thirty-two bushels of fine flour, and forty sheep, and of wine thirty-six gallons. The king himself honoured it with the rest, and no day passed but he went to pay it reverence. A time came when he asked

¹ This verse evidently belongs to the next chapter. But it only gives us a loose historical reference; it was only after he had been king of Media for twelve years that Cyrus conquered Babylon.

Daniel, that worshipped no God but his own, why Bel he would not worship; and this answer Daniel made him, that for idols made by men's hands worship he had none, only for that living God that made heaven and earth, and of all mankind held the sovereignty. What, cried the king, wilt thou have it Bel is not a living god? Hast thou no eyes for the great trencherman he is, day in, day out, of food and drink both? Nay, my lord king, Daniel answered with a smile, give no heed to false tales. Clay he is within, and bronze without; I warrant thee, eat he cannot. Whereupon the king, in high displeasure, summoned Bel's priests. You shall give account, said he, of yonder revenues, and that on pain of your lives. Who is it has the eating of them? Prove to me it is Bel himself, and Daniel shall die instead, that blasphemed him. As it pleases the king's grace, said Daniel.

Seventy of these priests there were, that had wives and children to fend for besides. And when the king reached their temple, with Daniel in attendance, this challenge they offered: Withdraw we, as thou seest; for thee it is, lord king, to set food, pour out wine, lock and seal door with thy own hand. To-morrow, come thou and find aught left over from Bel's banquetting, we die for it; or else Daniel dies, that so traduced us. Lightly enough the challenge was made; had they not provided a hidden entrance-way, close under the god's table, by which they came in and ate what eat they would? So out they went, and the king set on Bel's viands with his own hand; and what did Daniel? He would have his servants bring ashes, and scatter them all over the temple floor, there in the king's presence. Which done, all withdrew, leaving the door locked, and the royal seal upon it. And that night in they came as came they ever, priest and priest's wife and priest's children, and left neither bite nor sup between them.

Next day, the king was early abroad, and Daniel with him. What of the seals, Daniel? the king asked. Are they unbroken? Ay, my lord king, unbroken yet. What a cry was that the king gave, when he opened the door and caught sight of the table within! A great god thou art, Bel, said he, and no deceiver! But Daniel

smiled, and would not have the king go in yet; Look about thee, he said, and ask thyself who it was left their prints on yonder floor. Why, cried the king, these be footprints of living men, and women and children besides! With that, he fell into a rage; priest and priest's wife and priest's children must be taken into custody. And when these had shewed him the door by which they came in and swept the table bare of its offerings, he put the whole company of them to death. And as for Bel, he left him to Daniel's mercy, who threw down image and temple both.

There was a great serpent, too, in those parts that was worshipped by the folk of Babylon; and of this the king said to Daniel, here at least was a god that lived; gainsay that he could not, and therefore he needs must worship. Nay, said Daniel, my own God I worship still; living God is none but he. Here is no living God; let me but have the royal warrant, and I will make an end of it, and neither sword nor club to help me. So the king gave his warrant, and what did Daniel? Pitch and fat and hairs he boiled all together, and with lumps of this fed the serpent, which thereupon burst all to pieces; and, Here, said Daniel, is your god.

Angry men were the folk of Babylon when they heard of these doings, and they made their way into the royal presence, crying out, Here is the king himself turned Jew! Here is Bel overthrown, and the dragon slain, and our priests massacred! And when they found audience, Give up Daniel to us, they said, or we will make an end of thee, and thy household with thee. The king, finding their onslaught so determined, gave up Daniel to them against his will; and they threw him into a pit in which lions were kept, where he spent six whole days. Seven lions there were in the pit, and each day two human bodies were given them as food, and two sheep; but now they were kept unfed, so that Daniel might be their prey.

Far away, in Judaea, the prophet Habacuc had been making broth, and crumbling bread in a great bowl, and was even now carrying it to the reapers on the farm; when suddenly the angel of the Lord said to him, Take the dinner thou hast with thee to Babylon, and give it to Daniel; he

- 34 is in the lion-pit. Lord, said Habacuc, I was never yet in Babylon, and know
35 nothing of any lion-pit there. Upon which the angel of the Lord caught at his head and lifted him by the hair of it; then by the
36 force of his impulse, set him down in Babylon, close to the pit. So Habacuc
cried out, Daniel! Servant of God! The
37 Lord has sent thee thy dinner; come and take it. And Daniel said, Thou wouldst
not forget me, O God, wouldst not forsake
38 such as love thee. So he rose and ate, while the angel of the Lord brought Habacuc,
all at once, back to his home.
39 When the seventh day came, the king

went out to mourn for Daniel; and now, reaching the pit and looking in, he saw Daniel seated there among the lions. And
40 at that, the king cried aloud, How great thou art, O Lord, thou who art Daniel's God! And he took him out of the lion-pit,
and shut up there instead the men who had
41 conspired to ruin him; and in a moment, as he watched, the lions devoured them.
Whereupon the king said, Well may the
42 whole world stand in awe of Daniel's God. What deliverance he effects, what signal
proofs of his power, here on earth, the God who has rescued Daniel out of a den of
lions!

THE PROPHECY OF OSEE

THIS is the message which came from the Lord to Osee, son of Beer, during the reigns of Ozias, Joathan, Achaz and Ezechias in Juda, and during the reign of Jeroboam, son of Joas, in Israel.

When first the divine voice made itself heard through Osee, this was the command given him: Wanton wed thou, wantons breed thou; in a wanton land thou dwellest, that keeps troth with its Lord never. So it was he came to marry Gomer, a daughter of Debelaim.¹ When he got her with child, and she bore him a son, This one, the Lord told him, thou art to call Jezrahel; at Jezrahel the blood was spilt² for which, ere long, Jehu's line must be punished, and Israel have kings no more; in Jezrahel valley, my doom is, bow of Israel shall be broken. And next, she was brought to bed of a daughter; of whom the Lord said, Unbefriended call her, in token that I will befriend Israel no longer, heed them no longer. To Juda I will be a friend yet, not with bow or sword of theirs delivering them, not in battle, with horse or horseman to give aid, but by the power of the Lord their God only.

Unbefriended, then, was the name of her; and after she was weaned, once more Gomer conceived, and had a son. This time the command was, Call him Strangefolk; no longer shall you be my people, or I be your. . . .³

. . . Measureless the race of Israel shall be and countless as the sand by the seashore. In the very place where once the doom was uttered, You are but strangers to me, they shall be welcomed as sons of the living God. As one people, Juda and Israel shall be rallied, under a leader of their common choice; and they shall

come flocking from every corner of the land; such great doings there shall be at Jezrahel.

2 God's-folk and Befriended, these are the names they should have by rights, brother and sister of yours. Blame her, blame your mother, that she is no true wife of mine, nor I any longer her Lord. Must she still flaunt the harlot's face of her, the wantonness of her breasts? Must I strip her, leave her naked as babe new-born, leave her desolate as the barren waste, the trackless desert, to die of thirst? Those children of hers, must I needs leave them unpitied, the children of her shame?

Harlot mother of theirs brought reproach on the womb that bore them; Haste I away, she said, to those gallants of mine, the gods of whose gift bread comes to me, and water, wool and flax, oil and wine! See if I do not hedge her way about with thorns, fence in her prospect, till way she can find none! Then, it may be, when her gallants she courts in vain, searches for them in vain, she will have other thoughts: Back go I to the husband that was mine once; things were better with me in days gone by.

Yet I it was, did she but know it, that bread and wine and oil gave her, gave her all the silver and gold she squandered on Baal. And now I mean to revoke the gift; no harvest for her, no vintage; I will give wool and flax a holiday, that once laboured to cover her shame; no gallant of hers but shall see and mock at it; such is my will, and none shall thwart me. Gone the days of rejoicing, the days of solemnity; gone is new moon, and sabbath, and festival; vine and fig-tree blighted, whose fruit, she told herself, was but the hire those lovers paid;

¹ It is not clear whether the transactions here described took place in real life, or in a vision.
² This perhaps refers to the massacres described in IV Kg. 10. 1-11. It seems almost certain that there is an omission at the end of verse 9, the word 'God' being needed to complete the sense. It may be questioned whether the gap is not more considerable. We should expect more information about the history of Osee's family, to prepare us for the allusions of chapters 2 and 3; meanwhile, the abrupt change of situation in verses 10 and 11 appears to demand some kind of introduction. Some think verses 10 and 11 have been accidentally misplaced, and belong to the end of chapter 2.

all shall be woodland, for the wild beasts
 13 to ravage as they will. Penance she must
 do for that hey-day of idolatry, when the
 incense smoked, and out she went, all rings
 and necklaces, to meet her lovers, the gods
 of the country-side, and for me, the Lord
 says, never a thought!

14 It is but love's stratagem, thus to lead
 her out into the wilderness; once there, it
 15 shall be all words of comfort. Clad in vine-
 yards that wilderness shall be, that vale of
 sad memory¹ a passage-way of hope; and
 a song shall be on her lips, the very music
 of her youth, when I rescued her from
 16 Egypt long ago. Husband she calls me
 now, the Lord says, Master no longer; that
 name I stifle on her lips; master-gods of
 the country-side must all be forgotten.²
 18 Beast and bird and creeping thing to peace
 pledge I; bow and sword and war's alarms
 break I; all shall sleep safe abed, the folk
 that dwell in her.

19 Everlastingly I will betroth thee to my-
 self, favour and redress and mercy of mine
 20 thy dowry; by the keeping of his troth thou
 shalt learn to know the Lord. When that
 21 day comes, heaven shall win answer, the
 Lord says, answer from me; and from
 22 heaven, earth; and from earth, the corn
 and wine and oil it nourishes; and from
 23 these, the people of my sowing.³ Deep,
 deep I will sow them in the land I love;
 a friend, now, to her that was Unbe-
 24 friended; to a people that was none of
 mine I will say, Thou art my people, and
 they to me, Thou art my God.

3 The Lord's word came to me: To wife
 that will have gallants a-courting her,
 shew thyself a lover yet. The Lord is yet
 Israel's lover, that has no eyes but for alien
 gods, leaves grape for husk.⁴

2 So buy her back to me I must, fifteen
 pieces of silver paying for her ransom, and
 3 a core and a half of barley. A long time
 thou must wait for me, I told her, thy

wantonness leaving, yet still unwed; and
 I will wait for thee as faithfully.

A long time the sons of Israel must wait,
 4 neither king nor prince to rule them,
 neither sacrifice nor shrine to worship at,
 neither sacred mantle nor their own images
 to consult. Then they will come back, and
 5 to the Lord, their own God, betake them,
 and to David that is their true king; the
 Lord, and the Lord's goodness, holds
 them spell-bound at last.

4 Listen, sons of Israel, to a message
 from the Lord, notice of a suit he
 prefers against all that dwell in this land of
 yours; a land where loyalty, and tenderness
 of heart, and knowledge of God is none.
 Curse they and lie, murder they and steal
 2 and live adulterously, till there is no check-
 ing it; never feud ends but another feud
 begins. What wonder the land lies wi-
 3 dowed, and its folk dwindle; gone, beast
 and bird, and the sea-beach piled high
 with fish? Nay, let us have no recrimina-
 4 tions between man and man; so should
 this people of thine fall to railing at their
 priests! Ruin for thee, sir priest, this day,
 5 and, come night, the prophet shall share
 thy ruin;⁵ name of the mother that bore
 thee shall perish, as, through thy fault, this
 6 people of mine perishes for want of know-
 ledge. Knowledge wouldst thou spurn,
 and shall not I spurn thy priesthood; my
 law wouldst thou forget, and shall race of
 thine be spared oblivion? Priests a many,
 7 and sins to match their number; shall that
 title bring glory any longer, and not reproach?
 Fault if Israel committed, guilt if
 8 Israel incurred, it was but the meat and
 drink such priests craved for.⁶ Priest, now,
 9 shall fare no better than people; he shall
 pay for his ill living, reap what his false
 aims deserve; greed, that remained still
 10 unsated, wantonness, that could never
 have enough. Ah, faithless guardians, that
 11 you should play your Lord false!⁷ That

¹ Literally, 'the vale of Achor', see Jos. 7. 26. It may be, however, that no historical allusion is intended; the valley in question is mentioned by Isaiah (65. 10) in a quite general context.

² A Hebrew wife would address her husband as her *ba'ul*, i.e. 'proprietor'; the same word was used for those proprietary gods who were supposed to control the harvest, the vintage, etc.

³ 'The people of my sowing'; literally, 'Jezrahel' (i.e. God has sown). It seems clear that the word, an echo of the foregoing chapter, is used here as a kind of cipher-word for 'Israel'.

⁴ 'Leaves grape for husk'; or perhaps 'offers raisin-cakes' idolatrously.

⁵ The text of verses 4 and 5 is barely translatable, and is widely suspected of being corrupt. The word 'priest' only occurs once in the original, but there is no telling whether it is meant to be the last word of verse 4 or the first of verse 5; possibly it occurred in both places and, through inadvertence, was written once instead of twice.

⁶ Unless the prophet is using a somewhat violent metaphor, there is probably an allusion to the sacrifices offered in expiation, when the law had been transgressed, and to the priests' share in them.

⁷ The interpretation of this verse is very uncertain.

dalliance, and wine, and revelry, should so steal away your wits!

12 And what of my people? See where they have recourse to tree-stump or senseless wand, for an answer to their perplexities! Lust for strange worship swept them away, made them false to their troth with
13 God; on mountain and hill-side, grateful for leafy shade of oak, poplar or terebinth, they slay the victim, and burn incense. What wonder daughters should turn harlot, wives play the wanton? Harlot daughter and adulterous wife shall go unpunished; what did father and husband, but keep harlots' company, share revel with consecrated minions? Want wit, be sure a people is ruined.

15 Wanton though Israel be, at least let Juda shun the wrong; not for them the way that leads to Galgal, Bethaven's pilgrimage, or the oath taken by the living God. . .¹

16 Stubborn as frisking heifer, Israel turns away the head; would you have the Lord feed him, like a cade lamb, unconfined?
17 Wedded to idols, this Ephraim; go his own way he must; here be revellers that will keep their own company, here be idolaters in grain, and princes that dote still on their
19 own disgrace. Ay, but a storm is coming that shall carry them away on its wings, to rue the unavailing sacrifice.²

5 Priest and people, hear and heed! And you, too, mark it well, men of the court; whose but yours the blame, if there are snares on every commanding height,³
2 if Thabor itself is ringed with toils, and your quarry is driven down to the depths?
3 But to all alike comes the warning. Think you that I have no eyes for Ephraim's wantonness? that Israel escapes my scrutiny, Israel, so defiled? Return to the Lord? Not for such hearts the message; lust for strange worship is there, and of the

Lord they reck nothing. Self-condemned, the pride of Israel; what wonder Israel. . . and Ephraim should be entangled in guilt?⁴ Juda itself shall not escape their downfall. All their flocks and herds shall not win them access to the Lord; he stands aloof from them, sinners that have defied him; a bastard brood, that ere yonder moon rises new shall be disinherited and brought to nothing.⁵

The trumpet, there, in Gabaa; at Rama sound for battle; let Bethaven echo with the rallying-cry! Benjamin, to arms! Alas for Ephraim, in the hour of punishment left forlorn! Mine to teach Israel's tribes a lesson of faithfulness. And what of Juda's chieftains? A neighbour's landmark scrupled they never to remove; on these, too, the full flood of my vengeance shall come down. Poor Ephraim, ever since he set his face towards the mire, all is oppression with him, all is judgement gone amiss. And all the while I, none other, wear away strength of Ephraim and Juda alike; moth nor canker so surely! What did Ephraim, in his great sickness, what did Juda, bound hand and foot? To Assyria Ephraim would despatch envoys, to yonder ruthless king; but heal you he could not, nor unbind. Mine the encounter Ephraim has to fear, and Juda both; lion's dam nor whelp mauls prey and carries it off so inexorably. All in a moment come and gone whence I came! Who knows if weariness will drive you back to my presence?⁶

6 Ay, in their distress they will be waiting full early at my door; Back to the Lord! will be their cry; salve he only can bring, that wounded us; hand that smote us shall heal. Dead men to-day and to-morrow, on the third day he will raise us up again, to live in his presence anew.

¹ It seems clear that the verse, as it stands, is incomplete, and some think a reference to Bersabee has fallen out (cf. Am. 5. 5). The reference to an oath, even so, is puzzling; but cf. Am. 8. 14. ² In verses 18 and 19, once more the accuracy of the Hebrew text may be doubted; in verse 18, no sense can be made of it at all.

³ The 'commanding height' may also be read as a proper name, Maspha. It is not clear whether the hills are mentioned merely as a setting for the metaphor, or as places where idolatrous worship was in fact conducted. ⁴ 'Israel' and 'Ephraim' are strict synonyms; it looks as if a verb might have fallen out in the manuscripts. ⁵ Literally, 'They have begotten alien children; now a month shall devour them with their territory', an obscure phrase which is perhaps corrupt.

⁶ The situation in verses 8-15 is not easy to envisage. It would appear that a common danger threatened the two kingdoms; Juda is invited to bring aid to Israel (verse 8), but fails to do so (verse 9), and perhaps even takes advantage of Israel's embarrassments to make territorial acquisitions (verse 10). It is hard to see whence the threat can have come, if not from Assyria; verse 13 therefore probably indicates, not an appeal to Assyria for help, but an attempt to buy off the invader, such as that made by king Manahem (IV Kg. 15. 19).

Acknowledge we, cease we never to acknowledge the Lord, he will reveal himself, sure as the dawn, come back to us, sure as the rains of winter and spring come back to the earth. What way will serve with you, men of Ephraim? Juda, what way will serve? Ruth of yours is but momentary, fades like the early mist, like morning dew. What wonder I should send prophets first, to shape men to my will if they could, and then utter my sentence of ruin? Believe me, this doom of thine shall be clear as daylight. A tender heart wins favour with me, not sacrifice; God's acknowledging, not victim's destroying; and these be very children of Adam, keep troth they cannot, here is a land where my will is set at defiance.¹ What is Galaad but a stronghold of idolatry, bedabbled with footprints of blood? Nor much imports it, company of priests thou meet on Sichern road, or troop of robbers thirsting for men's lives; be sure there is mischief afoot;² foul deeds I see done in Israel.³ Ephraim so wanton, Israel so defiled; and Juda, what of thyself? For thee, no harvest!⁴

When I restore my people from exile . . .

7 When I would grant⁵ healing to Israel . . .

Foul shews the guilt of Ephraim, Samaria's malice is plain to view. What a workshop of wrong-doing is here, all thieving within doors, all robbery without!² Let them never complain I am too nice over the chronicling of their misdeeds; why, they blazon these ill designs of theirs, under my very eyes! King himself there

is no pleasing but by villainy, nor his nobles but by flattering speeches; false is every one of them to his troth. What else is this whole realm but baker that lights his fire, and then takes a rest from his kneading, leaves yeast to spread as it will? Huzza for our king?⁶ Ay, but see how the princes fall to their carousing, and he himself reaches out for the wine, reckless as they! Their scheming adds fuel to the fire; are there not plots afoot? Sleeps baker the long night through, and morning finds him flaming hot like the rest. A very furnace the city is; ruler may not abide nor king stand before the heat of it, and never a man among them invokes my name! What wonder Ephraim should throw in his lot with the Gentiles? No better than a girdle-cake is Ephraim, baked only on one side.⁷

Foreign neighbours, all unawares, have drained the strength of him; the dark locks, all unawares, dappled with grey; and even now self-condemned stands the pride of Israel;⁸ return to the Lord, recourse to the Lord is none, even now. Never silly dove so lost her wits as this Ephraim, now calling on Egypt, now turning to Assyria for aid! Fatal the journey; my net I mean to spread over them, catch them as in the fowler's snare; public the chastisement shall be, as public the warning. Dearly they shall pay for their wandering from me, ruin follow on the heels of rebellion; I their ransom, and they so false!¹ Never do their hearts cry out to me; growl they like beast in den, or beast-like eat and drink and chew the cud; me they have forsaken.⁹ Now I chasten them, now I

¹ There is considerable reason to think that the text of verses 7-11 has suffered from corruption in the manuscript. Verse 7 reads literally, 'These, like Adam, have sinned; they have behaved treacherously towards me there'—the last word suggests that a place name should appear in the first half of the verse, possibly Adom (Jos. 3. 16).

² This verse is untranslatable in the Hebrew text as it stands, and the Latin version of it offers no grammatical construction.

³ Literally, 'in the house of Israel', perhaps a false reading for 'in Bethel'.
⁴ Verse 11 remains wholly obscure; some think the latter part of it really belongs to chapter 7.

⁵ So the Latin version, but the Hebrew text and the Septuagint Greek are more naturally translated, 'When I grant'. It seems doubtful, therefore, whether the first seven words of the verse really fit on to what follows.

⁶ 'Huzza for our king'; literally, 'The day of our king'; cf. IV Kg. 9. 13.
⁷ The allegory from cooking seems to be a double one; the baker (apparently the people of Israel) goes to sleep and lets the fire blaze up, instead of keeping a moderate heat, and at the same time he does not finish kneading the dough, so that the result is a half-baked state of things. The application is not easily made; but perhaps the passage reflects the disappointment of God-fearing people at the relapse of Jehu's dynasty into idolatry, after the overthrow of Ahab's Baal-worship. The ruling class, it seems to be intimated, are too strong for the new sovereigns, and the old ways come back again.

⁸ 'Self-condemned stands the pride of Israel'; the same words are used as in 5. 5 above, but the Latin version here has 'The pride of Israel shall be humbled before his very eyes'. It seems unlikely that we are meant to vary the interpretation in this way.

⁹ Literally, 'And they did not cry out to me with their heart, but howled in their beds, chewed the cud over wheat and wine, departed from me'. If 'chewed the cud' is the right interpretation of the rare verb used, we must suppose that the Israelites are being compared to dumb beasts. But it seems likely that the text is corrupt.

strengthen their hands, and still they have
 16 no thought for me but of hatred; ever they
 step back from the yoke,¹ like a twisted
 bow recoil.

Put to the sword their nobles must be,
 railing tongues the ruin of them. This the
 taunt that shall be uttered against them in
 the land of Egypt. . .

8 The trumpet to thy mouth! Eagle's
 wings threatening the Lord's do-
 main! Conscious of faith forsworn, of my
 2 law defied, to me Israel cries out, My
 God! cries out, We acknowledge thee!²
 3 Estranged, poor Israel, from the good that
 was his, and the enemy pressing hard upon
 him.

4 Kings a many, and with no warrant
 from me; princes a many, that were none
 of my choosing; idols a many, of their own
 gold and silver minted; here is cause
 5 enough for their undoing. Cast calf, Sa-
 maria, is yonder calf of thine; for this
 burning affront, it shall be long ere thou
 6 canst find acquittal. Israel gave birth to it,
 this calf of Samaria, that came of man's
 fashioning, and god is none; it shall be
 beaten fine as filigree.

7 Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind;
 empty stook is empty bin, and here if grain
 is any, alien folk shall have the eating of it!

8 Poor Israel, already engulfed, the heathen
 all around making a despised tool of him!

9 Lone as wild ass in the desert, to Assyria he
 betakes himself; if mate he would, he must
 10 pay for his dalliance. Well, hire they mer-
 cenaries where they will, they shall be
 cooped up in their own land none the less,
 and have respite from the exactions of king
 and nobles both.³

11 So many the altars Ephraim has, and
 they shall increase his guilt, none of them
 12 but shall increase his guilt; so many the
 laws I gave him, and all alike went un-

recognized. Appointed sacrifice⁴ they still
 13 offer, flesh of the sacrifice still eat, but the
 Lord will have none of it; no more their
 guilt shall go unrecorded, their sins un-
 punished; Egypt once again for them! The
 14 God that made them forgotten, Israel
 builds shrine and Juda stronghold still;
 but the fire I am kindling shall fall upon
 Juda's cities, shall devour them, citadel
 and all.

9 No rejoicing, Israel, no cries of glad-
 ness now! Wouldst thou be like the
 heathen, and rejoice that thou hast played
 thy God false, ever selling thy favours to
 the first comer, in return for a full thresh-
 ing-floor?⁵ Not for such reapers harvest
 2 and vintage; the wanton must go without
 her wine; dispeopled, now, the Lord's
 3 territory, Ephraim back in Egypt again, or
 tasting, among the Assyrians, unhallowed
 food. Libation shall be none to win the
 4 Lord's favour, nor any sacrifice; bread of
 theirs shall be as the bread mourners eat,
 defiling to the lips; fill their bellies it may,
 but into the Lord's house it cannot enter.
 5 Alas, what shift will you make when the
 great days come round, the Lord's festi-
 vals? Ruin fell on the citizens, and they
 6 are gone; Egypt the home of them now,
 Memphis the tomb of them; bowers that
 shone with silver the nettles have claimed,
 burdocks grow in the doorways.

Close at hand the audit-day, the doom
 7 close at hand! And wouldst thou know,
 Israel, why prophet is turned fool, and he
 can but rave now that once was inspired?
 God's heavy plague is this for thy much
 sinning; prophet of thine, watchman of
 8 thine, Ephraim, is a snare at every turn,
 luring thee to thy ruin, and at God's de-
 cree; he stands there in God's house, a
 plague to thee. So deep the canker of their
 9 sin; Gabaa itself never knew worse wrong.

¹ The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning, 'they return, (but) not upwards', a phrase which leaves a good deal to the imagination. The latter part of the verse, if the text is genuine, can hardly be understood except on the supposition that some words have fallen out at the end of it.

² As before, it is difficult to feel certain that the text has been preserved in its original state. Literally, the passage reads: 'To thy palate the horn, like an eagle upon the house of the Lord, because they have overstepped my covenant and transgressed about my law, to me they shall cry out, My God, we recognize thee, Israel.'

³ Literally, 'Even if they hire among the nations, now I will collect them, and they shall cease for a little from the burden of king and nobles'. Verses 7-10 are best explained if we suppose that Jeroboam II only won his victories against Syria at the price of calling in Assyrian aid; this meant burdening the people with taxation and, ultimately, forfeiting the national independence.

⁴ 'Appointed sacrifice'; this seems the most probable translation of a rare word in the Hebrew text, for which the Latin version only gives us a rough equivalent.

⁵ Literally, 'loving hire upon all the threshing-floors of wheat'. There can be little doubt that the reference is to the worship of the countryside gods, or Baalim, who were supposed to have a special influence over the harvest.

For the remembered guilt of it they shall be called to account.¹

- 10 When I kept trust with Israel long ago, rare the encounter, as of grapes out in the desert, of spring figs a-ripening high up on the tree. And all at once to Beelphegor they betook themselves, sold honour for shame, caught foul contagion from the things they loved! Light as bird on bough, Ephraim's glory has come and gone; womb is none that breeds, or, breeding, bears;
- 12 ay, though they should bring sons to manhood, childless their race shall be, nameless among men.
- 13 Woe betide them indeed, when I withdraw my presence from them! Ephraim's land, so fair a garden, as I look out over it towards Tyre! And must Ephraim rear
- 14 her sons for the slaughter-house?² Thy gift to them, Lord, what is the best gift they can have of thee? A womb, assuredly,
- 15 that miscarries, and dried-up breasts! See where, at Galgal, their offence comes to a head; there it is they have made an enemy of me. They shall dwell in my domain no longer, claim love from me no longer; chieftains of theirs are no vassals of mine.
- 16 On Ephraim blight has fallen; withered the root now, wizened the fruit; beget thy doom of death is on their offspring, so dearly loved. Cast away, my God, from thy presence, because heed thee they would not, cast away to wander homeless through the world!

10 A spreading vine is yonder vine of Israel, and fruit of him matches leaf. Rich, fertile soil; alas, how rich in altars, in sacred trees how fertile! A race half loyal, half false, but the penalty must be paid in full; those altars God himself

will devote to extinction, strip those trees bare.³

King we have none, you say; God we fear not; what of the great king? What will he do to us? All is vain promise and making of treaties; never a furrow in your land but shall yield the bitter fruit of punishment.⁴

Calf⁵ of Bethaven, the folk of Samaria once honoured, what ado is here! Mourns people and writhes priest at the passing of its glory; carried off, now, into Assyria, for the pleasure of a ruthless king; fooled is Ephraim, Israel's hopes have played him false. Like foam on the river Samaria sees her king pass by; and with that, vanish the hill-shrines of false worship, Israel's darling sin; grows thorn and thistle on their altars; no prayer have the men of Israel now but that mountains should fall on them, hills should bury them alive.

Old is the tale of Israel's guilt, old as what befell at Gabaa; there stood they unmoved; was it not at Gabaa the tide of battle reached them, battle against the champions of wrong?⁶

A jealous chastiser I will be to them; twofold their guilt, and many the nations I will muster for their chastisement. Heifer that has learned the welcome task of the threshing-floor, such is Ephraim; that sleek neck of hers I have spared till now; now she is to be harnessed; when Juda goes a-ploughing, Jacob it shall be that breaks the clods for him.⁷

If mercy is to be the measure you reap by, seed of yours must be sown in right doing; there are fallow acres to be tilled. Not too late to have recourse to the Lord, waiting for him to come and bring⁸ you redress! But alas, shameful furrows⁹ they

¹ The sense of verses 7-9 can only be guessed at, and most modern editors suspect the text of corruption. In verse 8, 'God's decree' is 'my God's decree', and 'God's house' is 'his God's house' in the original. The mention of Gabaa in verse 9 is explained by some as a reference to Jg. 19 and 20, but there can be no certainty on the point.

² The use of language here is strained, and once more suggests the possibility of corruption in the text. 'The slaughter-house' may refer to the worship of Moloch (Jer. 32. 35), or simply to the massacres that will accompany the capture of Samaria. This verse is more easily understood if we suppose (as is most likely) that the Israelites were not clear in their own minds whether the hill-shrines, etc. were devoted to the worship of the true God or not.

³ Literally, 'For now they will be saying, We have no king, because we do not fear God: what will the king do to (or, for us)? For now they speak perjured words in making a treaty; therefore judgement springs up in their furrows like hemlock'. It is hard to feel certain about the meaning or bearing of the passage.

⁴ 'Call': so the Septuagint Greek. The Hebrew text, like the Latin version, gives 'heifers', followed by a masculine singular pronoun in the rest of the sentence.

⁵ Cf. 9. 9 above. Here, as there, some think the reference is to Jg. 20; but it may easily be to some incident not elsewhere recorded.

⁶ The last part of this verse is usually translated, 'Juda shall plough, and Jacob shall break the clods for himself'. But the expression 'for himself' seems curiously inappropriate.

⁷ The verb used in the Hebrew text may mean either 'rain down' or 'teach'.

⁸ 'Shameful furrows'; it can hardly be a coincidence that the Hebrew verb used can mean either 'ploughing' or 'carving images'.

were you traced, and what came of it? A harvest of wrong, fruit that cheated you in the tasting!

14 So thou wouldst trust in thy own devices, in thy own warrior strength? Believe me, there shall be turmoil among thy folk, and all thy strongholds shall fall, as fell *Salmana* before *Jerobaal*¹ when the day was won; fell child, fell mother, dashed to
15 pieces. So much shall yonder *Bethel* countervail the heinousness of your guilt!

11 Soon fades the dawn; soon passes king of Israel.

Israel in his boyhood, what love I bore him! Away from Egypt I beckoned him, henceforth my son.²

2 ... They called them, the more they refused obedience; gods of the country-side must have their victims, dumb idols their incense!³ Yet it was I, none other, guided those first steps of theirs, and took them in my arms, and healed, all unobserved, their injuries. Sons of Adam, they should be drawn with leading-strings of love; never
4 waggoneer was at more pains to ease bridle on jaw, fed beast so carefully.

5 Never again to Egypt; Assyria shall rule him now, the unrepentant; already the sword is let loose in those towns of his, the brave shall engulf, the wise shall devour.
7 Can my people be reconciled with me? All hangs in doubt, until at last I put a yoke on all alike, never to be taken away from
8 them.⁴ What, Ephraim, must I abandon thee? Must I keep Israel under watch and ward? Can I let thee go the way of Adama, share the doom of Seboim? All at once my heart misgives me, and from its embers
9 pity revives. How should I wreak my vengeance, of Ephraim take full toll?

God am I, not a man in the midst of you, the Holy One, that may not enter those city walls;⁵ the Lord must lead, and man
10 follow.⁶

Loud he will call, like lion roaring, and at the sound of it, sons of his will come trembling from the distant sea; fluttering
11 like sparrow or dove from Egypt, from the Assyrian country, and in their own home, the Lord says, I will give them rest.

Ephraim so false, Israel so treacherous,¹² all about me! But *Juda* governs his folk with God to aid him; *Juda* takes part with the holy ones, loyal yet.⁷

12 Ephraim, that would still play shepherd to the wind, still hunt in the track of the storm, and nothing hoard up but treachery, nothing but his own ruin! See him making treaties with the Assyrian, sending tribute of oil to Egypt! On *Juda*'s part the Lord takes up the quarrel, will call *Jacob* to account,⁸ for ill
2 deeds and ill designs rewarding him.

Here was one that took precedence⁹ of his brother even in the womb; strength was his, of celestial strength the rival. Did he not hold his own in contest with an angel, and prefer, with tears, his suit? Ay, and what of that encounter at *Bethel*, when the promises came to us from him, the Lord of hosts, from the God whose name we remember yet?

Wouldst thou to thy God return? A tender heart keep thou must, and a right mind, and wait for thy God's help continually.

Is it the Chanaanite that carries false weights, and loves ill gotten gain? Here is Ephraim boasting that he has grown rich, has found a false god to worship; will not

¹ According to the Hebrew text 'as *Salman* (quite differently spelt) destroyed *Beth-abel*', an event not elsewhere alluded to.

² The Hebrew text, at the end of the verse, is naturally understood as meaning, 'I called him to be my son'. If this is authentic, we must suppose that a different colour was given to it in early times; cf. *Mt.* 2. 15. The Septuagint Greek has, 'I called his children'.

³ Although the subject of verse 1 is continued, it looks as if one or two words had been accidentally omitted.

⁴ Literally, 'The sword has begun in his towns, and shall consume his chosen ones, and devour their heads; and my people shall hang to my return; and a yoke shall be put on them at the same time, which shall not be taken away'. The Hebrew text differs considerably, but is equally obscure.

⁵ The first sentence of this verse may be read as a statement, 'I will not wreak my vengeance', or as a question, 'Shall I not wreak my vengeance?' The remaining part reads literally, 'for I am God and not man in the midst of thee holy and I will not go into the city'; an obscure phrase, and perhaps corrupt.

⁶ Literally, 'They shall go behind the Lord'. The rest of this verse, with verse 11, cannot easily be fitted into the context, and was perhaps misplaced.

⁷ The language of this verse is curiously forced; if it has been correctly preserved, 'the holy ones' is perhaps best understood of the (non-rebellious) angels.

⁸ Literally, 'And there is a quarrel to the Lord with *Juda*, and to the calling to account of *Jacob*'. In view of 11. 12, it does not seem likely that the Lord's quarrel here is against *Juda*.

⁹ 'Took precedence of'; literally, 'dogged the heels of'. The incident related in *Gen.* 25. 25 is cited here as an example, not of Israel's treachery, but of God's favour for his own people.

these earnings of mine, thinks he, buy me out from the punishment I have deserved?¹

9 I, the Lord, thy God in Egypt, and thy God still! Once again thou shalt dwell in tents, as in the days when I kept trust with thee;² once again I will bestow³ utterance upon the prophets. Mine it is, by the prophets' means, to grant clear vision, to speak in parables.

11 If Galaad is all idolatry, vain the sacrifice of oxen that is made at Galgal; stone heaps their altars shall be, out in the ploughlands.⁴

12 Time was when Jacob fled to the Aram country; Israel worked for a wife, and for that wife's sake loyally kept his troth.

13 Time was, when the Lord rescued Israel from Egypt by a prophet's means, and, for that prophet's sake loyally preserved them.⁵

14 For bitter jealousy of mine Ephraim must pay the penalty; spurned Master spurns him now.

13 Spoke Ephraim,⁶ all Israel trembled at his word; how else came they, for Baal's worship, to barter away life itself? And they are busy yet over their sinning; melt down silver of theirs to fashion models of yonder images, craftsman copying craftsman's design! And of such models they say, The man who would do sacrifice has but to kiss these calves.⁷

3 Fades the memory of them, light as early mist or morning dew, light as chaff on the threshing-floor, smoke from the chimney, when high blows the wind!

4 And all the while I am the Lord thy God⁸. . . from the land of Egypt; God thou shalt own no other, other deliverance

is none; out in the desert, out in the parched wastes, owned I thee. Fatal pasturing! With food came satiety, and with satiety pride, and with pride forgetfulness of me! Now their way lies to Assyria, and on that road I will meet them again, their enemy now, watchful as lion or leopard; bear robbed of its young should not tear open breast more cruelly, lion devour more greedily; they shall be a prey, now, to the wild beasts.

Alas, Israel, undone! Who but I can aid thee? Thy king, where is he? Now, if ever, from end to end of thee thou hast sore need of king and princes both; king and court thou didst demand of me, and gift of mine was never so grudgingly made, so angrily withdrawn.

Trust me, it is stored away, it is jealously preserved, the record of Ephraim's sinning. Pangs like the pangs of travail shall come upon him; or say he is babe ill-guided, that shall thrive never when it comes to the birth.⁹

From the grave's power to rescue them, from death to ransom them; I, death's mortal enemy, I, corruption's undoing!¹⁰

Pity? My eyes are closed to it; these, that now have a share among their brethren, shall feel the Lord's vengeance, a burning desert wind that shall dry up their brooks, foul their springs, lay waste the store-houses where they hoard their treasure.

14 Death to Samaria, that has provoked her God's anger! Death at the sword's point; children dashed headlong, ripped open the womb!

¹ The meaning of verses 7 and 8 is obscure, and much disputed.

² That is, when the Tabernacle of Appointment went with Israel through the desert. Or, possibly, the sense may be 'as in the days of solemn observance', i.e. the Feast of Tent-dwelling (Lev. 23. 34).

³ The Latin version here has 'And I used to bestow'; but a reference to the past seems out of place here. ⁴ The language of this verse is strained, and the sense doubtful; some think there is an error in the manuscripts. The Hebrew for 'stone-heaps' is *gallim*, and there is possibly a play upon words. ⁵ Little can be said for certain about these verses, except that those editors are wrong who would print verse 12 after verse 5, and verse 13 after verse 10. Evidently they must be taken together, but it is hard to see the force of their minute parallelism; possibly there is an allusion to Assyria and Egypt as places of exile; cf. 11. 11.

⁶ 'Ephraim' is here the tribe of that name (to which Jeroboam I belonged), not, as elsewhere, a synonym for the twelve tribes in general. ⁷ The Latin version gives no satisfactory sense in the last clause; it translates, 'Sacrifice, O men that worship calves', or possibly, 'Sacrifice men, you that worship calves'.

⁸ After 'the Lord thy God' the Septuagint Greek has 'that holds heaven in place and is earth's Creator, whose hands made all the host of heaven. Warrant thou hast none from me to follow such worship; I it was that rescued thee'. . . .

⁹ The metaphor here is confused, and the details of it cannot be determined with certainty. ¹⁰ Literally, 'I will free them from the hand of the grave, I will ransom them from death; O death, I will be thy plague, O grave, I will be thy devouring'. But many editors read the first part of this as a question, implying a threat; and translate the second part, 'Come, death, where are those plagues of thine? Where is that destroying power of thine, corruption?' as if Almighty God were calling on his creatures to assail unrepentant Israel. The Septuagint Greek has 'where', instead of 'I will be', and a reminiscence of its language is to be found in I Cor. 15. 55.

- 2 Come back, Israel, to the Lord thy God; it is sin that has caused thy overthrow.
3 Come back, men of Israel, with a plea ready on your lips: Pardon all our guilt, and take the best we have in return;¹ the praises we utter shall be our victims now.
4 No longer we will find refuge in Assyrian help, mount our men on horses from Egypt;² no longer will we give the name of gods to the things our own hands have made; thou art the friend of the friendless who trust in thee.
5 I will bring healing to their crushed spirits;³ in free mercy I will give them back my love; my vengeance has passed them by. I will be morning dew, to make Israel
grow as the lilies grow, strike roots deep as the forest of Lebanon. Those branches shall spread, it shall become fair as the olive, fragrant as Lebanon cedar. None that dwells under the protection of that name but shall come back to me; corn shall be theirs in plenty, and they will grow like one of their own vineyards, famed as the vintage of Lebanon itself. The false gods of Ephraim are forgotten; mine to answer his prayer and tend him, ever-green as a fir-tree; from me all thy increase comes. All this the wise discern, the thoughtful understand; straight paths the Lord has shewn us for his friends to walk in; who leaves them shall stumble to his ruin.

¹ 'Take the best we have in return'; literally, 'take good', that is, perhaps, the praises mentioned in the following clause; the phrase is unusual. ² 'From Egypt' is not expressed in the original, but is almost certainly intended; cf. Is. 31. 1. ³ The Hebrew text has here, as in Jer. 3. 22, 'their apostasies'.

THE PROPHECY OF JOEL

THIS message came from the Lord to Joel, the son of Phathuel.

2 Citizens, hear and heed, ruler and commoner alike! Tell me, what happenings are these, in your days and in your fathers' days unmatched, a tale you must needs hand on to your children, and they to theirs, and theirs to a fresh generation yet? That locusts, breed upon breed of them, so ravage yonder countryside, Swarmer devouring what Spoiler, 5 Ruin-all what Gnaw-all has left? ¹ Weep they and wail, the tipplers that must be ever at their cups, for the sweet wine they drank, and shall drink no more!

6 Alas, my country, how valiant an enemy is this, in number past all counting, that comes to invade thee; lion nor lion's whelp 7 has teeth can grind so pitilessly. Spoiled thy vineyards lie, stripped of the very bark thy fig-trees; bare and blanched and 8 ruinous every bough. Weep bitterly, then, as maid that goes clad in sackcloth, untimely widowed; in the Lord's house, bread nor wine is offered now; for the priests, the Lord's own ministers, no office 10 now but tears. Desolate the land lies, every field forlorn; crops ravaged, the vine 11 thirsty, strengthless the oil. Alas, for husbandman's labour lost, for vintage-song turned to lament! Alas for harvest 12 perished, for vineyard withered, and drooping fig-tree! Pomegranate, and palm, and apple, no tree in the wood but fades there; what wonder? Has not joy faded in human hearts?

13 Mourn, priests, and lament; in mourners' garb go about your work at the altar; ministers of God, to his presence betake you, and there, in sackcloth, keep vigil; your God's house, that offering of bread and wine has none! Then proclaim 14 a fast, assemble the folk together, ruler and

commoner alike summon to the temple, and there for the Lord's help cry lustily. Woe betide us this day! The day of the 15 Lord is coming; his the dominion, his the doom. Here in our sight, here in the 16 temple of our God, the festal cheer abolished, all the contentment, all the rejoicing! Beast on dung-heap rots; barn- 17 wall gapes, and store-house lies in ruin, the hope of harvest gone; echoes byre with 18 lowing of bewildered cattle, that pasture have none; even the flocks dwindle. What 19 help, Lord, but thine? Parched are the upland meadows, every tree scorched in the forest; to thee even the wild beasts 20 make their dumb appeal, from dry riverbeds, from upland pastures laid bare.

2 The trumpet, there, in Sion! On yonder mountain-height, my sanctuary, sound the alarm! Tremble, fellow-countrymen, one and all; the day of the Lord is coming, coming so soon. Day of 2 gloom and darkness, day of cloud and storm; spread out, like dawn over the hills, this great, this valiant army; never was the 3 like since time began, never shall be, while the ages run their course. Fire running greedily before them, and a track of flame 3 behind; in front, a land that could match Eden for loveliness, and where they have passed, nothing but a desert waste; escape 4 from them is none. Horse nor horseman so terrible of aspect, so speedy in advance; hark to the noise of them, as they spurn 5 the hill-slopes! Din of chariots is not so loud, nor crackling of flames that feed on stubble; a valiant army, all arrayed for battle! What wonder if whole nations 6 groan at their coming, everywhere pale cheeks? ² Bravely they hasten to the attack, 7 warrior-like scale the wall; unswerving they press on, never one jostling with an- 8

¹ The Latin here mentions four destructive agencies—the caterpillar, two kinds of locust, and the blight. The Hebrew text is ordinarily understood as giving four different kinds of locust, or four different names for the locust. It is impossible to say with certainty whether the prophet, from 1. 4 to 2. 11, is describing a hostile invasion under the metaphor of a locust-swarm, or a locust-swarm under the metaphor of a hostile invasion.

² See note on Nahum 2. 10.

other, so well keeps each one his course;
 9 storm the loop-hole¹ unhurt; and now,
 the city breached, mount wall, climb
 house-top, enter by windows, the thief's
 way.

10 Before that army, quakes earth, and
 heaven rocks; dark grow sun and moon,
 11 and the stars withhold their radiance; with
 his own voice the Lord heralds its coming.
 Wide it stretches, that host of the Lord,
 valiant it is, and ever ready to do his will.
 O great, O terrible day of the Lord; who
 shall find strength to bear it?

12 Time now, the Lord says, to turn the
 whole bent of your hearts back to me, with
 13 fasting and with mourners' tears. It is your
 hearts, not the garments you wear, that
 must be torn asunder. Come back to the
 Lord your God; he is ever gracious and
 merciful, ever patient and rich in pardon;
 threatens he calamity, even now he is ready
 14 to forgive. Who knows but he will relent,
 and be appeased; cast one glance behind
 him, and, enough for his own due of bread
 and wine-offering, spare us largesse yet?

15 The trumpet, there, in Sion! Here is
 fasting proclaimed,² the citizens assem-
 16 bled; the folk summoned, the cleansing
 rites performed, the elders met; weanling
 must be there and babe unweaned, groom
 leave his chamber and bride her bower.
 17 Hark how the priests, that wait upon the
 Lord, make lament between porch and
 altar, crying aloud: Spare thy people,
 Lord, spare them; thy chosen people, do
 not put them to the shame of obeying
 heathen masters! Wilt thou let the Gen-
 tiles ask, What has become of their God?

18 People of a land well loved, he spares us
 19 yet. His answer comes, Here is corn and
 wine and oil to your hearts' content; no
 20 more will I let the nations mock you. Far
 he shall be driven from your lands, the
 northern invader; out in the trackless
 desert he shall lie, vanguard to eastern,
 rearguard to western sea, and nothing
 more shall assail you but stench and stink
 of him, this enemy that did so wondrously.
 21 Fear no more, land of Israel; in the Lord's

wondrous doings triumph and rejoice!
 Fear no more, beasts that roam the coun- 22
 try-side; grass grows on the upland mea-
 dows! There is fruit on the trees again;
 vine nor fig-tree ever bore so lustily. Re- 23
 joice, men of Sion, and triumph in the
 Lord your God; proof he gives you of your
 restoration to favour,³ making the winter
 and the spring rains fall, as in time past.
 Now the threshing-floor shall be piled with 24
 wheat, and the presses overflow with wine
 and oil. Profitless years, when the locust 25
 ravaged you, Gnaw-all and Ruin-all and
 Spoiler, that great army of mine I let loose
 among you, they shall be made good. Eat 26
 you shall to your hearts' content, praising
 the name of the Lord your God for his
 wondrous protection; never again shall Is-
 rael go away disappointed. I will make 27
 myself known among you, I, the Lord your
 God, who alone am God; Israel cheated of
 their hopes never again!

And afterwards? Afterwards I will pour 28
 out my spirit upon all mankind, and your
 sons and daughters will be prophets. Your
 old men shall dream dreams, and your
 young men see visions; everywhere ser- 29
 vants of mine, handmaids of mine, in-
 spired to prophesy! I will shew wonders 30
 in heaven, and on earth blood, and fire, and
 whirling smoke. The sun will be turned 31
 into darkness and the moon into blood be-
 fore the day of the Lord comes, the great,
 the terrible day. And never a soul shall call 32
 on the Lord's name but shall find deliv-
 erance; here on mount Sion, here in Jeru-
 salem there shall be refuge; for a remnant,
 a remnant of the Lord's own summoning,
 there shall be deliverance at last.

3 Perilous those times shall be, when
 the hour has come for reversing my
 sentence against Juda and Jerusalem. Into 2
 the valley of Josaphat I will herd the hea-
 then folk, one and all, and there hold assize
 over them for the wrong they did to my
 people, to Israel, my own domain. People
 of mine they scattered through the world,
 land of mine they parcelled out between

¹ 'Storm the loop-hole'; literally, 'fall through windows', but the Hebrew text reads 'fall (or plunge) among weapons'. ² Grammatically (if the text is sound) verses 15-17 imply a command; dramatically (as verses 18 and 19 shew) they imply that the command has been carried out. ³ 'Proof of your restoration to favour', literally, 'a teacher of justice'. Some would understand the Hebrew text as meaning 'winter rain to produce the restoration of your fortunes'. But it almost seems as if the prophet had made a deliberate play upon words: 'He gives you a show-er of (the way to) restoration, makes the winter show-er and the spring rain fall'.

- 3 them. Must they be awarded by lot, such captives, and then sold cheap, boy-slave for a harlot's hire, girl-slave for the draining of a wine-stoup? What, would you chaffer with me, men of Tyre and Sion, men from the pale of Philistia? Must there be barter and exchange between us? Nay, if you will have exchanges with me, look to it that the reward does not fall on your own
- 4 heads, swift and sudden! Would you carry off silver of mine and gold, lay up the choicest of my treasures in yonder temples? Citizens of Jerusalem, men of Juda's breed, would you sell them to Grecian
- 5 masters, far away from their home? See if I do not summon them back from exile that was of your contriving, and, for that service
- 6 done, pay you in your own coin; make over son and daughter of yours to these same men of Juda, slaves they can barter at will to the remote Sabaeans; I, the Lord, have decreed it.
- 7 Cry it to the nations, they should do sacrifice and muster their tried warriors for battle; rally they, march they, all that bear
- 8 arms. Ploughshare beat into sword, spade into spear; weakling is none but must summon up his manhood now! To arms, to the rendezvous, nations all about; doom of
- 9 the Lord awaits you, warriors all! Up, up, to Josaphat's valley betake you; here, upon all neighbouring peoples, I will hold assize.
- 10 The sickle, there! Harvest is ripe already.

Down to the vineyard with you! Are not the vats full, the presses overflowing? Has it not come to a head, the measure of their wickedness?

Thronging, thronging they come, in yonder valley to try their destiny, appointed trysting-place of a divine audit; dark grow sun and moon, light of the stars is none. Loud as roaring of lion speaks the Lord in thunder from his citadel at Jerusalem, till heaven and earth quake at the sound. To his own people, the sons of Israel, refuge he is and stronghold; doubt you shall have none thenceforward that I, the Lord your God, have my dwelling-place at Jerusalem; a holy city Jerusalem shall be, never again shall alien foe breach the walls of her.

Drip now with sweet wine the mountain-slopes, bathed in milk the upland pastures; never a stream in all Juda but flows full and strong. What fountain is this that comes out from the Lord's temple, and waters the dry valley of Setim? A lonely ruin Egypt shall be, and Edom a desert waste; here was great wrong done to Jewry's people, here unoffending lives were taken. For Juda, for Jerusalem, there shall be peace undisturbed, long as time shall last; for these, guilt of blood that went still unpardoned shall be pardoned now; here, in Sion, the Lord will have his dwelling-place.

¹ The interpretation of this verse in detail is not altogether clear; the general sense is evidently that Almighty God demands to be indemnified for the loss he is represented as having suffered when his people were sold as slaves.

THE PROPHECY OF AMOS

HERE tells Amos, one of the shepherd folk at Thecue, what visions he had concerning Israel. In Juda, Ozias was then reigning, in Israel, Jeroboam son of Joas, and it was two years before the earthquake. Loud as roaring of lion, said he, the Lord will speak in thunder from his citadel at Jerusalem; forlorn they lie, yonder pastures the shepherds loved once, the heights of Carmel all shrivelled away.

3 A message from the Lord: Thrice forfeit Damascus, and forfeit once again,¹ that rode rough-shod over the men of Galaad;² 4 fall fire on Azael's court, to burn down all the strongholds of Benadad! Broken Damascus gate shall be, nor any be left to dwell in Aven's plain, or rule over Eden valley; far off, at Cir,³ the Syrian folk shall go into banishment, the Lord says.

6 This, too: Thrice forfeit Gaza, and forfeit once again, that secured for the men of 7 Edom their full toll of captives;⁴ fall fire on Gaza's walls, to burn down all its 8 strongholds! None shall dwell in Azotus, none rule over Ascalon; upon Accaron, too, my stroke shall fall; every trace of Philistia vanished and gone, the Lord God says.

9 This too: Thrice forfeit Tyre, and forfeit once again, that gave Edom its full toll of captives, as though bond there were none between brethren; fall fire on its walls, to burn down its strongholds!

11 This too: Thrice forfeit Edom, and forfeit once again, that would hunt down his

own brother at the sword's point; unnatural cruelty, so to hug his enmity, nor ever let rancour die down; fire fall on 12 Theman, to burn down the strongholds of Bosra!

This, too: Thrice forfeit Ammon, and 13 forfeit once again, that so coveted Galaad's lands, every mother's womb he would rip open; fire fall on Rabba's walls, to burn 14 down its strongholds! Hark to the bray of battle, blustering of the storm-wind! Into 15 exile Melchom⁵ shall go, with all his retinue.

2 This, too: Thrice forfeit Moab, and forfeit once again, that burned the king of Edom's bones to dust;⁶ fall fire on 2 Moab, to burn down all the strongholds of Carioth! With tumult and the bray of trumpets, Moab shall go to his death; ruler 3 of theirs I will strike down in their midst, and all his vassals shall perish with him, the Lord says.

This, too: Thrice forfeit Juda, and forfeit 4 once again, that spurned the Lord's law and left his bidding undone, so mazed were they by the false gods their fathers had gone a-courting; fire fall on Juda, to 5 burn down all the strongholds of Jerusalem!

And this, too: What of Israel? Thrice 6 forfeit Israel like the rest, and forfeit once again, that for a debt, though it were but the price of a pair of shoes, will make slaves of poor, honest folk. Ground in the dust, 7 the poor man's rights, shouldered aside,

¹ Literally, 'For three offences of Damascus, and for four, I will not bring it back'. The verb is variously explained: 'I will not restore Damascus to prosperity,' 'I will not recall the sentence I have pronounced', etc.

² 'Rode rough-shod over the men of Galaad'; literally, 'threshed Galaad with iron threshers'.

³ The situation of Cir is unknown; but the Latin version can hardly be right in identifying it as Cyrene.

⁴ Here and in verse 9, it is usually explained that first the Philistines, then the Phoenicians, invaded Israel, and sold the prisoners they took to the Edomites. But such a notion is both historically and geographically improbable. It seems much simpler to understand that the Edomites invaded Israel (see verse 11) from the south-east, and neither the Philistines on the south-west nor the Phoenicians on the north-west would allow Israelite refugees to cross their frontiers. This would be described in Hebrew idiom as 'shutting up Israel into the hands of the Edomites'. Cf. Abd. 14.

⁵ For 'Melchom' the Hebrew text, probably by an error, reads 'their king'.

⁶ It seems unlikely that the words 'burned the king of Edom's bones to dust' represent what the prophet wrote. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is one heathen nation reprimanded for its conduct to another; nowhere else is cremation treated as an atrocity. And the denunciation of the Edomites in 1. 11 does not prepare us for a sympathetic reference to them.

the claim of the unbefriended! See where father and son, to my name's dishonour, bed with one maid! See where they lie feasting beside the altar, at the very shrine of their God, no cloak there but is some borrower's pledge, no stoup of wine but is some debtor's forfeit!

Was it for such men as these I exterminated the Amorrites, a race tall as the cedar, hardy as the oak, root and fruit of them doomed to destruction? These are the men I rescued from Egypt, guided them, all those forty years, through the wilderness, to make the domain of the Amorrites theirs! Tell me, men of Israel, the Lord says, what avails it that I should call sons of yours, from their boyhood's days, to serve me as prophets and Nazirites? Ever you tempt the Nazirites with wine, ever you forbid the prophet to raise his voice in prophecy. Henceforth, you shall seek my help in vain; waggon-axle overladen with sheaves groans not so reluctant as I! Speed shall be no profit to the speedy, strength to the strong; warrior shall not escape, nor bowman stand firm; the fleet of foot, nay, the very horseman shall have no deliverance; a day is coming, the Lord says, when tried valour shall be fain to throw arms away, and take flight.

3 This, then, is the Lord's message to you, men of Israel, to the whole race I rescued from Egypt: Nation is none I have claimed for my own, save you; and guilt of yours is none that shall go unpunished.

Tryst there must be, if friends will meet and journey together; prey there must be, ere lion will roar in the forest, lion's whelp growl in its lair; bird is not pinned to the ground, without fowler to snare it, nor trap released without a catch made.

Sounds trumpet in the streets, men do well to be afraid; if peril is afoot in the city, doubt not it is of the Lord's sending.

Never does he act, but his servants, the

prophets, are in the secret. Roars lion, who but will tremble? Comes the divine warning, who but will prophesy?¹

Raise a cry from the house-tops, there in Azotus, there in Egypt's land: To the hills about Samaria betake you, and look deep into the heart of her, what turbulent doings are there, what wrongs men suffer! In yonder palaces, the Lord says, that are store-houses of oppression and rapine, honest doing is all forgot. This doom, then, the Lord God utters: Distress and siege for such a land as this! All thy fastnesses shall be dismantled, all thy palaces spoiled. Wilt thou have lion disgorge his prey? Pleased enough the shepherd, if a pair of legs he recover, a mangled ear! They shall fare no better, the Israelites that lie on a corner of the mattress at Samaria, and have their bed at Damascus.² A message for you, says the Lord, the God of hosts, a warning for the sons of Jacob! I will have a reckoning with the rebellions of Israel, a reckoning with those altars of theirs at Bethel, that shall have the horns of them cut off and hurled to the ground; on summer dwelling of yours and winter dwelling my hand shall fall, houses of ivory and houses of the common folk; all shall lie in ruin, the Lord says.

4 Here is word for you, pampered cattle that dwell at Samaria, the poor wronging, the friendless folk spurning, and ever crying out upon your husbands. Wine, there! We would drink! Never let me be called holy, the Lord God says, if doom does not overtake you for this; see if you be not trussed on spears, and your children given up to feed the cooking-pan!³ Leave the city walls you must, the Lord says, one by this breach, one by that, and be cast away in Arnon.

On with you to Bethel, and defy me. thence to Galgal, and repeat defiance there; morning victims, tithes on the third

¹ The meaning of this difficult passage seems to be that there is no smoke without fire; the lesser judgements already experienced by Samaria (4. 6-11) are sure proof that it has incurred God's anger, and worse calamity is to follow.

² The insinuation is not clear, perhaps a general warning against luxury is intended (cf. verse 15). But this seems to be the natural rendering of a sentence that has produced a wide variety of interpretations. It runs, literally: 'So shall the sons of Israel be dragged out, that dwell in Samaria on the corner of a bed, and in Damascus... a couch'. There is no evidence that the stuff called 'damask' was known, or was so called, in Amos' time.

³ Literally, 'they shall lift you up on poles (or, spears) and that which you leave behind (or, that which is left of you) in boiling pots'. We might compare Jer. 19. 9, or possibly Ez. 11. 7. But the meaning of the Hebrew text is probably different: 'he will lead you away with hooks, with barbed prongs such as fisher-folk use, all that is left of you.'

5 day, bread, leavened bread, for thank-offering, gifts of devotion publicly proclaimed!¹ Have your will, men of Israel, says the Lord God, have your will.

6 What would you? Never a city left but men's teeth were idle, never a village but bread lacked there, and you would not
7 come back to me, the Lord says. It was three months to harvest, and rain I denied you; or rain fell on one city, and not on the next, one village had a drenching and the
8 next was dry, till one city must supply water for three neighbours, and none had its fill, and you would not come back to
9 me. You would not come back to me, the Lord says, when sirocco I sent, and mildew, and the locust preyed on garden and vineyard, fig-tree and olive-tree of yours;
10 you would not come back to me, when with Egypt's pestilence² I slew you, when your warriors fell at the sword's point, and your horses were carried off, and never a camp of yours but the stench of it plagued your
11 nostrils; you would not come back to me, when ruin threatened, swift as the divine stroke that ruined Sodom and Gomorrhah, and you yourselves were like a brand saved from the burning.

12 Now I have worse, Israel, in store for thee;³ when that worse comes, prepare
13 thou must, Israel, to meet thy God. He is here, that fashioned the hills and made the winds; he is here, that gives man warning of his designs, that turns dawn into darkness, and sets his feet on the highest heights of earth; the Lord God of hosts is the name of him.

5 Please you then listen to the dirge I raise for you, men of Israel: Fallen she
2 is, never to rise again, Israel, the unsubdued; stretched at full length she lies there
3 forsaken! Ay, the Lord God says, but a hundred citizens, but ten villagers left to you, city that marched out a thousand, village a hundred strong!

4 Yet warning the Lord gave to the race of Israel: On peril of your lives, to my aid
5 betake you! Not to Bethel, not to Galgal's

ring-shrine, or Bersabee pilgrimage; a long road yonder circle shall lead you, a road that never returns; house of God shall not avail you, that is home of idols now! On
6 your lives, to the Lord betake you, as you would not see all Joseph ablaze, quenchless fire raging over Bethel! And still you
7 poison the springs of justice, still in the dust fling honour away.

...⁴ Creator he of Arcturus and Orion; dawn brings he out of darkness, and turns
8 night to day, beckons to the waters of the sea, and over the surface of earth spreads them, such the power of his name! At his
9 glance falls ruin on the strong, devastation on the fortified.

Ill looks he will earn at yonder city gate,
10 that finds fault; the wise word, there, is a thing abominable. Yet, trust me, it shall
11 nothing avail you, this harrying of the poor, and taking toll of the best they have. Houses of stone you build you shall never dwell in, sunny vineyards you plant you shall drink of never. Your often misdoing,
12 your heinous guilt, never think I am blind to it; innocence hated, the bribe taken, the poor refused their rights at the judgement-seat! And should wisdom keep silence
13 times like these, ill times like these?⁵ Set
14 your minds on right, that now are set on wrong-doing; so you shall find life, so your boast shall come true that the Lord, the God of hosts, is with you. Shun wrong,
15 cherish the right, justice enthroned at your judgement-seat; then there is hope that the Lord, the God of hosts, will have mercy on some remnant of Joseph's line.

This doom he utters, he, the Lord of
16 hosts, he, our Master: Market-place or street is none but shall echo with wailing and cries of woe; country-folk, and such as are skilled in mourning, they shall call in to make dirge and dole;⁶ dirge, too, the
17 vineyards shall sing; all this, when I make my way through your midst, the Lord says. Fools, that wait eagerly for the day of the
18 Lord's coming! Think you it shall serve your turn? Nay, it is the Lord's day of triumph, not yours; dawn it must, but in

¹ See Ex. 23. 18.

² See Deut. 7. 15, 28. 27.

³ Literally, 'I will do this to thee', the nature of the punishment being left vague, as is the common formula, 'May the Lord do to me (that is, punish me) thus and more than thus'.

⁴ Both grammar and logic seem to demand that some thought should be supplied here, which our existing manuscripts do not express.

⁵ This sentence may be read either as a statement or as a question; if it is a statement, no satisfactory account of it has yet been devised.

⁶ At the end of this verse, the Latin seems to be a correction of a text unintelligible in the Hebrew. But it may be questioned whether the corruption does not go deeper.

19 darkness, not in light. Speeds he well, that
shuns lion and meets bear? Has he joy of
his home-coming, that leans hand on wall,
20 and all at once is bitten by a viper? And for
you, that day brings darkness, not the light
you craved for; no radiance haunts about
it, only gloom.

21 Oh, but I am sick and tired of them, your
solemn feasts; incense that goes up from
your assemblies I can breathe no longer!
22 Burnt-sacrifice still? Bloodless offerings
still? Nay, I will have none of them; fat be
the victims you slay in welcome, I care not.
23 O to be rid of the singing, the harp's music,
that dins my ear!

24 . . . And like waters rolling in full tide,
like a perennial stream, right and justice
shall abound . . .

25 What, men of Israel, did you spend
forty years in the desert, ever for me your
burnt-sacrifice, ever for me your offerings;
26 and now would you have Moloch for your
king, a star for your god, carry shrine of
theirs, idolatrous image you made of them,
27 hither and thither?¹ What wonder if I
banish you beyond Damascus far away?
Dooms you with his own sign-manual the
Lord, the God of hosts.

6 Poor fools, that in Sion or high
Samaria take your ease, and fear no-
thing! That lord it over the Gentiles, and
2 pass proudly through Israel's domain, bid-
ding us make our way to Chalane, and
thence to noble Emath, or go down to
Gath, where the Philistines are, and see if

land of theirs be fairer, borders of theirs be
wider, than these of ours. Poor fools, with
3 the evil day ever at arm's length, wrong
enthroned ever close at hand!² Sleep they
4 on beds of ivory, sprawl they at table,
eating the best lambs flock can provide,
5 calves fattened at the stall; and ever must
harp and voice nicely accord, ay, very
6 Davids they think themselves for musical
invention! All their drinking is from the
7 bowl, all their ointment of the best, and
what care they for Joseph's ruin?

Lead their folk they shall, but into exile;
7 the revel must break up at last. By my
8 divine power I swear it, says the Lord God
of hosts, pride of yours shall weary me,
9 great houses of yours shall offend my sight,
no longer; city and citizens, I will leave you
10 at the enemy's mercy. Be there ten men
left alive in a house, death shall take toll of
them . . .³

. . . Kinsman that comes to take him
11 away must burn him first, and so carry his
bones without. Ho, there! cries he to one
that lurks in the inner rooms, hast thou any
left? And when he hears the task is over,
12 bids him say no more, unless it be to call
the Lord's name to memory⁴ . . .

A word from the Lord, and all shall be
1 a gaping ruin, palace and cottage both.
Strange, if yonder mountain-crag men
2 should climb on horseback, or plough with
oxen!⁵ Stranger still, that people of mine
3 should poison the springs of right and
justice, all wormwood now! And still you
4 boast over some conquest of little worth;⁶

¹ Literally, 'And took up (or, will take up) Siccut (or, the booths) your king (or, of Moloch), and Ciun (or, the image or, the pedestal), of your images, the star of your god (or, gods), which you made for them'. The meaning of the sentence has been much disputed, and the general reference to Israel's idolatrous habits in Ac. 7. 42 does not help to clear up the difficulty. Many suspect a reference to the Assyrian worship of the planet Saturn; but it should be observed that Amos does not, as a rule, tax the Israelites with worshipping false gods; rather with an idolatrous and unspiritual approach to their own religion. It is not improbable that the text has suffered from an early corruption, like the beginning of chapter 6.

² The language of the Hebrew text is curiously forced all through verses 1-3, and it is difficult to feel certain that manuscript errors have not interfered with it. The invitation in verse 2 must be taken as the utterance, not of the prophet, but of the boastful Samaritan leaders; otherwise the logic of the passage is wholly obscure. For the mention of Sion (if the text is rightly preserved) cf. 2. 4, the only other threat against Juda in the whole book; cf. 7. 12 below.

³ There seems to be a gap, both in grammar and in logic, at the end of this sentence, which suggests a manuscript omission; e.g. the mention of the number ten would be more readily intelligible if the text ran, 'Be there ten men left alive in a house, nine of these shall die'. We should expect also to hear what kind of danger (perhaps battle) they had escaped, to fall into some other danger, perhaps that of pestilence. If a reference to plague has dropped out, it would explain the allusion to burning in verse 10; the Israelites did not ordinarily burn their dead.

⁴ The exact bearing of this vivid passage escapes us, perhaps because the true context of it has not been preserved. 'Say no more, unless it be to call the Lord's name to memory'; the Latin means, and the Hebrew text may mean, 'Hush! No mention must be made of the Lord's name'. But no plausible reason has been produced for such a taboo; nor does it appear that there was any immediate danger of the divine name being introduced into the conversation.

⁵ By a very slight change in the Hebrew text it is possible to get the reading, 'or plough the sea with oxen'. ⁶ 'Of little worth'; or possibly, 'Of Lodabar', a place-name (II Kg. 9. 4). The prophet may intend a play upon words, as we might upon the name 'Littleworth'.

To what greatness, you say, valour of ours
 15 has brought us! Trust me, men of Israel,
 the Lord God of hosts says, I mean to embroil
 you with such an enemy as shall crush
 the life out of you, from Emath pass to the
 brook that bounds the desert.

7 This was a vision the Lord God
 shewed me; here were locusts a-
 making, just at the time when the after-
 growth was coming up, after the king's
 2 crop had been carried. Short work had
 these made of all the land yielded; Ah,
 Lord God, said I, be merciful! How
 should Jacob survive, the puny creature he
 3 is? And with that, the Lord relented;
 4 Happen it shall not, said he. And a second
 vision the Lord God shewed me, how he
 would summon them to ordeal by fire; fire
 should devour the waters below the earth,
 5 and devoured some part of them were. Ah,
 Lord God, said I, for pity! How should
 Jacob survive, the puny creature he is?
 6 And with that, the Lord relented again;
 Happen it shall not, said he.

7 But now the Lord shewed me a third
 vision; a plastered wall, and the Lord him-
 self standing by it with a trowel¹ in his
 hand, asking me if I could see what he had
 8 there. Why, Lord, I said, a plasterer's
 trowel! Ay, he answered, and here, in full
 view of Israel's folk, that trowel I lay
 aside; cementing they shall have from me
 9 no more. Hill-shrines of Aven³ shall
 tumble down, sanctuaries of Israel be laid
 waste; at the sword's point I will try con-
 clusions with the race of Jeroboam.
 10 Hereupon, a message came to Jeroboam,
 king of Israel, from Amasias that was priest
 at Bethel. Here is Amos, said he, raising
 revolt against thee in the realm of Israel;
 there is no room in all the land for such talk
 11 as his; Jeroboam to die at the sword's
 point, Israel to be banished from its native

country! And this was his counsel to
 12 Amos, Sir prophet, get thee gone; in Juda
 take refuge if thou wilt, and there earn thy
 living by prophecy. Prophecy here in
 13 Bethel thou mayst not, where the king's
 chapel is, and the king's court.

What, said Amos, I a prophet? Nay, not
 14 that, nor a prophet's son neither; I am one
 that minds cattle, one that nips the sycam-
 ore-trees; I was but tending sheep when
 the Lord took me into his service. It was
 15 the Lord bade me go and prophecy to his
 people of Israel. He has a message for
 thee: Thou wilt have no prophesying
 against Israel, no word dropped against
 Bethaven? Here, then, is the divine doom
 17 pronounced on thee: Wife of thine, here
 in the city streets, shall be dishonoured;
 sons and daughters of thine shall die at the
 sword's point; lands of thine shall feel the
 measuring-rope. And for thyself, on un-
 hallowed soil death awaits thee, when Is-
 rael is banished, as banished it needs must
 be, from the land of its birth.

8 Then the Lord God shewed me an-
 other vision, of a hook⁴ such as they
 use for fruit-gathering. And when he
 2 asked, could I see what he had there, Why,
 Lord, I said, a grappling-hook for fruit-
 trees! Ay, said he, and right autumn it is
 for my people of Israel; no further chance
 shall they have of repentance.

Day of doom! How shriek the hinges of
 3 yonder temple gates; then, what massacre!
 Everywhere deep silence falls.⁵

Here is word for you, oppressors of the
 4 poor, that bring ruin on your fellow-citi-
 zens in their need; you that long for new
 5 moon and sabbath to be at an end, for
 trading to begin and granary to be opened,
 so you may be at your shifts again, the
 scant measure, the high price, the false
 weights! You that for a debt, though it
 6

¹ Literally, 'Have we not by our own strength taken to ourselves horns?' The Hebrew word for horns, *Carmain*, was also a place-name (I Mac. 5. 26).

² The Hebrew word rendered in the Latin by 'trowel' more probably means a plumb-line, which Almighty God threatens to apply against Israel; that is, he will proceed strictly against them, he will not pass over (their sins) any more (cf. 8. 2, where the same words are used).

³ The Latin version gives 'hill-shrines of Aven (or, the Idol)', exactly as in Os. 10. 8 (cf. Am. 1. 5). In verse 16 below it gives 'Bethaven (or, House of the Idol)', exactly as in Os. 4. 15, 5. 8, 10. 5. Our present Hebrew text gives 'hill-shrines of Isaac' and 'house of Isaac'; it is supported by the Septuagint Greek (which, however, translates the word as 'laughter'); this, too, was St Jerome's reading. It almost looks as if there had been some early uncertainty in the manuscripts, due perhaps to scrupulous reluctance on a scribe's part, to write down some name connected with heathen worship (like 'Baal'). It may be pointed out that 'house of Isaac' is a phrase nowhere else used—it would necessarily include Edom—and that Isaac is never mentioned by the prophets, except in Jer. 33. 26.

⁴ 'A hook'; according to the Hebrew text, 'a basket'. ⁵ The sense of this verse is uncertain, and a manuscript error seems probable.

were but the price of a pair of shoes, will make slaves of poor, honest folk; you that sell refuse for wheat! By Jacob's ancient renown the Lord swears it, crimes of yours shall remain for ever unforgotten. Well may the earth quake over such doings, to the hurt of all that dwell in it; everywhere mount up, and shift, and sink, like Egypt's river in flood. Day of doom, says the Lord God, when there shall be sunset at noon, and earth shall be overshadowed under the full light! All your feasting turned to lament, all your songs to dirge and dole; not a loin but goes clad in sackcloth, not a head but is shaved bald; never was such mourning made, though it were for an only son; bitter the day, bitter its ending.

A time is coming, says the Lord God, when there shall be great lack in the land, yet neither dearth nor drought. Hunger? Ay, they shall hunger for some message from the Lord, yet go they from eastern to western sea, go they from north to south, making search for it everywhere, message from the Lord they shall have none. Thirst, ay, they shall thirst, fair maid and brave warrior both. Fools, that by the shame of Samaria take their oaths, pin their faith to Dan's worship or Bersabee pilgrimage! Here is fall there is no amending.

9 And now I saw the Lord standing above the altar; smite column there, he cried, lintel there dislodge, nest of ill-gotten gains!¹ To the last man, the sword must take its toll; refuge shall be none. Flee they, never a fugitive shall escape; from the pit beneath I will dig them up; from heaven above I will drag them down; hide they on Carmel's heights, I will search and seize them, lurk they in the sea's depths, my writ runs there; maw of monster shall devour them. Let enemy drive them into exile, even there the sword shall be my pursuivant; watch and ward I keep

over them, never doubt it, but to their undoing.

... The Lord God of hosts, whose touch melts earth, to the hurt of all that dwell in it, makes it everywhere mount up and sink, like Egypt's river in flood; his the arched stairway of heaven, his the knitted frame of earth; beckons he to the waters of the sea, and over the earth spreads them, such the power of his name!

Ethiop or Israelite, what care I? the Lord says. God that brought you here from Egypt was God that brought the Philistines from Caphtor, brought the Syrians from Cir!² Divine regard that watches ever this kingdom, marks ever its guilt; I will blot it out, believe me, from the face of the earth.

And blot out the name of Jacob altogether? Nay, not that, the Lord says. At my command, the whole world shall be a sieve, to sift the race of Israel as corn is sifted in the riddle, and never a grain³ cast out loose on the bare ground; all the sword's point they shall die, all the guilty that are found among my people; the guilty, who now flatter themselves that evil shall never come next or nigh them. Then, I mean to rebuild the fallen dwelling-place of David, all its breaches made good, all its ruins restored; it shall stand once more as it stood long ago; empire it shall have over the Edomites, and all the Gentile folk I claim for my own. A time is coming, the Lord says, when ploughman shall tread on the heels of reaper, sower's task begin ere vintager's is ended; never a mountain-side but shall run with sweet wine, never a hill but its rugged nature shall be tamed.⁴ I will bring back my people of Israel from its exile, to rebuild ruined cities and dwell there, plant vineyards and drink of them, till gardens and eat the fruits of them. Firm root they shall take in their native soil, never again to be torn away from the home I have given them, says the Lord, thy own God.

¹ 'Nest of ill-gotten gains'; the meaning of this phrase is very doubtful. ² The Latin version here gives Cappadocia for Caphtor, and Cyrene for Cir, as elsewhere. The identification is by no means probable. ³ 'Never a grain'; the word used is of doubtful significance. But the meaning seems to be that all the Israelites will go into captivity, and this will be a sieve to separate the good from the worthless among them; none will escape, as a grain of corn might escape by being thrown carelessly over the sieve's edge. ⁴ 'Its rugged nature shall be tamed'; literally, in the Latin version, 'it shall be cultivated'; in the Hebrew text, 'it shall melt'.

THE PROPHECY OF ABDIAS

HERE follows the vision of Abdias. What doom does the Lord God pronounce on Edom? What bruit is this has reached our ears, what embassy has been sent abroad among the nations? Up, march we out to engage him in battle! ¹ Sorry the lot I have given thee among the peoples of the world, no better than a thing of contempt; yet, dwelling where thou dost in the clefts of the rocks, thou art puffed up with pride; high thou hast built thy throne, and thinkest there is none can drag thee down to earth. Build thy cyrie high as the eagle, nest, if thou wilt, among the stars, I will yet drag thee down thence, the Lord says. Strange, the silence that has fallen upon Edom! Thieves were they, midnight robbers, that had assailed thee, at least they had been content to carry off what they had need of; some gleanings at least those vintagers would have left thee! But now, see how Esau is ransacked, how all his treasury is rifled! See how the very folk that are in league with thee drive thee back to thy own frontier, thy own confederates playing thee false, pressing thee hard! Stabbed from beneath by boon companions of thy own? Thou art a fool for thy pains.

Day of doom, the Lord says, when wise man shall be none in Edom, nor any prudent counsellor on all Esau's hill-side; dismayed the warriors of Teman ² shall be, till slaughter leaves all the mountains of Esau desolate. What wonder if hopes of thine come to nothing, name of thine perish eternally, that didst assail thy own brother, with murderous wrong? Hast thou forgotten the day when thou stoodest aloof, while the enemy disarmed his ranks, while aliens thronged through yonder gates, and parcelled out Jerusalem by lot, thyself making common cause with them?

What, look on idly, when fortune turns against that brother of thine; nay, triumph over Juda's fall, boast of his calamity? He overthrown, and thou wouldst find thy way in at the gates of my own city; he overthrown, and thou wouldst rejoice at his discomfiture; he overthrown, and thou wouldst offer him battle? Thou wouldst take up thy post in the breach, and cut off the fugitive, bar the way to the straggler, when all is lost?

Be sure of this, a time is soon coming when the Lord will summon all the nations to their account; then, as thou didst, it shall be done to thee, in thy own coin thou shalt be paid. The cup of vengeance you, my people, have drunk, there on that mountain which is my sanctuary, all the heathen shall drink henceforward; drink, ay, drink deep, and fall into forgetfulness, as if they had never been. But here, on mount Sion, all shall be deliverance, all shall be holiness, and their spoilers the men of Jacob shall despoil. A fire Jacob shall be, a living flame the sons of Joseph, and Esau's race stubble before their onset; the spark once kindled, all shall be consumed, and of Esau's race no memory be left; the Lord decrees it.

Hill-country of Esau shall fall to the southern folk, and Philistia to the men of the plain; all that is Ephraim and Samaria now shall be theirs, and Galaad shall be made over to Benjamin. Warriors of Israel, banished far away, shall hold all the Chanaanite lands, Sarepta their northern frontier; men of Jerusalem, come back from the shores of Bosphorus to claim the cities of the south. No lack of champions Sion shall have, to do justice on the mountains of Edom; and of that empire the Lord himself shall be sovereign ruler.

¹ It seems possible that some of these early verses are a quotation from an earlier prophecy, which is also cited by Jeremiah (49. 9 and 14-16). ² The Latin version, here and in Hab. 3, translates Teman as if it were a common noun, meaning 'the South'. It was a district in northern Edom.

THE PROPHECY OF JONAS

THE Lord's voice came to Jonas, the son of Amathi: Up, and to the great city of Nineve make thy way; I would have thee preach to them; great guilt of theirs claims thy cognizance.

Rise up he did, but his thought was, he would escape to Tharsis, and there avoid the Lord's scrutiny. So he made his way to Joppa, and there, sure enough, was a ship bound for Tharsis; passage-money was paid, and aboard went Jonas with the rest of them, sailing for Tharsis to be out of the Lord's way.

But now the Lord sent out a boisterous wind over the sea, that raised a great tempest there, and the ship was like to have been broken all to pieces. Sore afraid the mariners were, and loud they called upon their god; ay, and fell to throwing the tackle overboard, to lighten ship. And what of Jonas? He had gone down into the ship's hold, and fallen fast asleep. But that would not serve; up came the captain and asked what he meant, to lie there sleeping? Up, said he, and cry out upon thy God! Who knows but God will take pity on us, and grant us our lives yet?

By this, the ship's company were of another counsel; Nay, said one to other, cast we the lot, and so find out how it is that such peril has befallen us! Cast lots they did, and Jonas was singled out. Tell us, they cried, for whose sake¹ it is that we are come into such peril! Tell us what thy errand is, whence thou art journeying and whither, what nation it was gave thee birth.

I am a Hebrew, he told them, and worship the Lord, the God of heaven, that made the sea and the dry land both. And when they heard (for he told them all) that this was a man who would escape from the Lord's

sight, they were in a great taking of fear. What ailed thee? they asked. And how must we use thee, if we would have yonder seas calmed for us? (Even as they spoke, the waves grew more angry yet.) Why, said he, take me up and throw me over the ship's side, and the sea will grant you respite; doubt there is none, I am the cause of all this peril that has befallen you.

What would you? They fell to the oars, hoping to make land thus, but could nothing avail; ever angrier grew the seas about them. And at last they cried out upon the Lord; Take we this man's life, they said, let it not be to our own undoing! Do not charge us with the death of an innocent man, thou who hast so manifested thy divine will! And with that, they took Jonas up, and threw him over the ship's side. All at once, the raging of the sea was stilled: what awe fell on those mariners! What sacrifices they made, what vows they offered to the Lord!

2 And what of Jonas? At the Lord's bidding, a great sea-beast had swallowed him up; and there, in the belly of it, three days spent he and three nights. This was the prayer which Jonas made to the Lord his God, there in the belly of the sea-beast: Call I on the Lord in my peril, redress he grants me;² from the very womb of the grave call I, thou art listening to me! Here in the depths of the sea's heart thou wouldst cast me away, with the flood all about me, eddy of thine, wave of thine, sweeping over me, till it seemed as if I were shut out from thy regard: yet life thou grantest me; I shall gaze on thy holy temple³ once again. Around me the deadly

¹ 'For whose sake'; that is, probably, 'in vengeance for whom', the assumption being that Jonas was a murderer (Ac. 28. 4). But this clause is omitted by the best manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek, and it may possibly be a footnote on the similar clause in verse 7, accidentally included in the text. ² *vv.* 3-10: Cf. Ps. 119. 1; 17. 7; 41. 8; 30. 23; 68. 2; 141. 4; 142. 4; 17. 6; 30. 7; 116. 17, 18; 3. 9. The occurrence of such a cento proves how complete a body of psalms was in existence at the time when this book was written. ³ The temple here alluded to is presumably the temple at Jerusalem, although Jonas is usually regarded as belonging, not to Juda, but to the northern kingdom (IV Kg. 14. 25). In verse 6, the Latin has 'sea' instead of 'weeds'.

waters close, the depths engulf me, the
 7 weeds are wrapped about my head; mountain
 caverns I must plumb, the very bars of
 earth my unrelenting prison; and still,
 8 O Lord my God, thou wilt raise me, living,
 from the tomb. Daunted this heart, yet
 still of the Lord I would bethink me;
 prayer of mine should reach him, far away
 9 in his holy temple! Let fools that court
 false worship all hope of pardon forgo;
 10 mine to do sacrifice in thy honour, vows
 made and paid to the Lord, my deliverer!
 11 And now, at the Lord's bidding, the sea-
 beast cast Jonas up again, high and dry on
 the beach.

3 A second time the Lord's voice came
 2 to Jonas: Up, and to the great city of
 Nineve make thy way; there preach, what
 3 preach I bid thee. That voice he obeyed;
 rose up and took the road for Nineve, a
 great city indeed, three days' journey from
 4 end to end. And when he had advanced
 into it as far as one day's journey would
 carry him, he began crying out, In forty
 5 days, Nineve will be overthrown. With
 that, the Ninevites shewed faith in God,
 rich and poor alike, proclaiming a fast and
 6 putting on sackcloth; nay, the king of
 Nineve himself, when word of it reached
 him, came down from his throne, cast his
 robe aside, put on sackcloth, and sat down
 7 humbly in the dust. And a cry was raised
 in Nineve, at the bidding of the king and
 his nobles, A fast for man and beast, for
 herd and flock; no food is to be eaten, no
 8 water drunk; let man and beast go covered
 with sackcloth; cry out lustily to the Lord,
 and forsake, each of you, his sinful life, his
 9 wrongful deeds! God may yet relent and
 pardon, forgo his avenging anger and spare
 10 our lives. Thus, when God saw them
 amending their lives in good earnest, he

spared them, in his mercy, their threatened
 punishment.

4 As for Jonas, he took it sore amiss, and
 was an angry man that day. And thus
 he made his prayer to the Lord: See if this
 2 be not the very thought I had, far away in
 my own country! Good cause had I to seek
 refuge at Tharsis from such an errand as
 this. I knew from the first what manner of
 God thou art, how kind and merciful, how
 slow to punish, how rich in pardon, ven-
 3 geance ever ready to forgo. A boon of thee,
 Lord! Take away this life of mine; I had
 rather die than live. Why, the Lord said,
 4 what anger is this?!

Jonas had left the city, and sat now under
 5 a little arbour he had made for himself on
 the east of it, waiting there in the shade to
 see what doom would fall on Nineve. And
 6 now, at the Lord God's bidding, an ivy-
 plant grew up over Jonas' head, to give him
 shade and shelter after his toiling; and
 great joy he had of his ivy-plant. But when
 7 the morrow dawned, came at God's bid-
 ding a worm, that struck at the plant's root
 and killed it. Up rose the sun, and at the
 8 Lord's bidding the sirocco came; here was
 Jonas with the sun's rays beating on his
 head, and all of a sweat. Now indeed his
 heart's prayer was, he might die; Better
 death than life, said he. Why, said the
 9 Lord, what anger is this over an ivy-plant?
 Deadly angry am I, Jonas answered, and
 no marvel either. Great pity thou hast, the
 10 Lord said, for yonder ivy-plant, that was
 not of thy growing, and no toil cost thee;
 a plant that springs in a night, and in a
 night must wither! And what of Nineve?
 11 Here is a great city, with a hundred and
 twenty thousand folk in it, and none of
 them can tell right from left, all these cattle,
 too; and may I not spare Nineve?

¹ The exact force of the Hebrew idiom used here is uncertain. Some think it means, 'Hast thou good reason to be angry?'; others would translate, 'Art thou very angry?'

THE PROPHECY OF MICHAEL

THIS message came from the Lord to Michael the Morasthite, during the reigns of Joathan, Achaz and Ezechias in Juda; this revelation was made to him concerning Samaria and Jerusalem both together.

² A word for you, nations far and near; let the whole world give audience, and all the world contains! Listen to this indictment the Lord God brings, from his high throne all beholding. See, where the Lord comes out from his dwelling-place; and, as he makes his way down, the topmost peaks of earth for his stairway, melt hills at his touch, melt valleys like wax before the fire, like water over the steep rocks flowing away!

⁵ Alas, what betokens it? What but Jacob's going astray, what but guilt of Israel's line? Head and front of Jacob's sinning Samaria needs must be, sure as Jerusalem is Juda's place of pilgrimage.¹ In ruin Samaria shall lie, a heap of stones in the open country-side, a terrace for vineyards; all down yonder valley I will drag the stones of her, till her very foundations are laid bare. Shattered all those idols must be, burnt to ashes the gauds she wears;² never an image but shall be left forlorn; all shall go the way of a harlot's wages, that were a harlot's wages from the first.

⁸ For this, should I not raise the dirge aloud? Barefoot go I and stripped; jackal nor ostrich cries out more lamentably.

Hurt is here past all cure, that to Juda itself must spread; Jerusalem itself, mart of my own country-side, shall feel the blow. Gate of Gath³ must never hear the news, hushed be the sound of weeping; afar at Beth-aphra cast the dust on your heads. Away with you, Shaphir's folk, shivering and shamed; of coming and going in Saanan sign is none; mourning of Beth-ezel... has taken the ground from under your feet. Marred, now, are the anxious hopes of Maroth; so ruthless the Lord's decree against yonder gates of Jerusalem. Recklessly, at Lachis⁴, harness they steed to chariot; Lachis, that first betrayed poor Sion into guilt, that was Israel's mistress in wrong-doing! Marriage-dower this daughter of thine, Moreseth-gath, shall cost thee; here is Achsib, too, for the royal policy how rude a set-back! Thy marches, Maresa, shall be ridden once again; to Odollam...

...Israel's glory shall come.⁵ Such pride in thy children! Shaven bare thy brow; vulture itself is not so bald; alas, for sons of thine exiled far away!

2 Out upon you, that lie awake over dreams of mischief, schemes of ill, and are up at dawn of day to execute them, soon as your godless hands find opportunity! Covet thy house or lands, house or lands by robbery become theirs; ever their oppression comes between a man and his home, a man and his inheritance. And I,

¹ In the original, the latter part of this verse reads simply, 'What is the crime of Israel; is it not Samaria? And what are the hill-shrines of Juda, are they not Jerusalem?' The sense of the phrase cannot be determined with certainty.

² The gauds she wears; literally, 'the wages of a harlot', as in the concluding part of the sentence. The prophet seems to regard the meretricious accessories of Samaritan worship not as a gift from man to God, but as a gift from God to man (possibly in allusion to the idea that false gods were responsible for Israel's prosperity, cf. Os. 2. 5). The end of the verse is perhaps merely a proverb, 'lightly come, lightly go', used of wealth won on easy terms.

³ Gath seems to have been wrested from the Philistines by Ozias (II Par. 26. 6); Michael points out that this and the neighbouring towns will once more be lost to Juda as the result of the Assyrian invasion. He plays upon the names of these towns by a series of rough assonances, of which the rendering given above may afford some idea. Unfortunately, the text of verses 10-15 seems to have been much disturbed; the meaning of the Hebrew is doubtful in several cases, and the Latin version, like the Septuagint Greek, yields no satisfactory sense, even where it can be construed as grammar. The Latin version also represents most of the place-names by common nouns. It is, therefore, the sense of the Hebrew text that is given here.

⁴ The allusion to Lachis as specially responsible for Juda's misdoings has not been convincingly explained.

⁵ It seems impossible to find any meaning in the phrase, 'the glory of Israel shall come to Odollam', and the text of the verse may well have suffered in transmission.

too, the Lord says, am devising mischief, mischief against the whole clan of you; never think to shake it off from your necks and walk proudly as of old; ill days are coming. A by-word then they shall make of you, dirge and dole of music raise over you: Stripped, stripped bare! My country's bounds removed! Come he but once again, that so parcels out our lands, all is lost to me! Trust me, when lands are allotted among the Lord's people, never shall one of yonder clan have rope to throw.¹

Prophets, leave your prophesying; word of prophecy is never for such as these, never may shame overtake them.² What, cry they of Jacob, is the Lord so easily offended? Are his designs indeed so unfavourable? Nay, certain it is, if a man will follow the straight path, award of mine shall prosper him; but what of you? Has not this people of mine long counted you enemies, rising up to arraign you? Robbers, that will have cloak and coat both; what marvel if simple folk are up in arms against you? My people! And you would dispossess its women of the homes they loved, take away from its children... my glory for ever.³ Do you, in your turn, rise up and go your ways; no resting-place shall you have here; corruption most foul the guilt of this land shall breed in it.

Alas, that I should be one beckoned by the spirit, and not rather some forger of lies! Wine and revel to inspire him, he might prophesy, and a people such as this take him for an oracle: Trust me, Jacob, I mean to assemble thee in full strength, rally all that is left of Israel in one place, thronging like sheep in fold, like herd in byre, hum of voices echoing all around; where the breach has been made ready for them, break they out and pass on their way, sally forth with a king to lead them, with the Lord at their head!⁴

¹ Literally, 'thou shalt not have a man to throw a rope'. It is difficult to see what is the singular subject addressed as 'thou', unless it be the clan mentioned in verse 3, though indeed we might have expected a feminine proposition to follow it.

² Verses 6-11 are very obscure, and some critics think the text has suffered from considerable faults of copying. Verse 6 begins, in the Hebrew text, 'Do not prophesy, they will prophesy, they will not prophesy to these', and in the Latin version, 'Do not speak speaking, it will not drip upon these'.

³ It seems difficult to believe that the text has not suffered here, either by corruption or by omission.

⁴ Verses 11-13 are usually printed as if a fresh paragraph began with verse 12. But verses 12 and 13, in that case, wholly interrupt the run of the passage, and the note of encouragement is particularly out of place here. The rendering given above assumes that verses 12 and 13 are the utterance of the imaginary false prophet, verse 1 of the next chapter being the message which Michaëas, as a true prophet, is forced to deliver. It is doubtful whether there is any reference here to a return from exile; the situation envisaged seems rather to be a sortie from a besieged stronghold (cf. IV Kg. 25: 4).

3 But no, this is my word to you, chieftains of Jacob's line, rulers of Israel: Who should acclaim justice, if not you? Alas, that you should be the foes of right, the friends of wrong! Beasts of prey, that will have skin and flesh both, leave nothing save the bare bone. My people! And you will gnaw flesh of them, tear skin of them, break bones of them; cut them to pieces, meat for your pot, roast for your oven! What marvel, if the Lord will not listen to such cry as yours, turns his back on you in your distress, for your ill deserving?

And this message the Lord has for prophets that guide my people amiss, prophets that must have their mouths filled ere they will cry, All's well; sop thou must give them, else thou shalt be their sworn enemy. Visions would you see, all shall be night around you, search you the skies, you shall search in the dark; never a prophet but his sun is set, his day turned into twilight! Seers that see nothing, baffled diviners, acknowledge they, finger on lip, word from God is none. But here stands one that is full of the Lord's spirit; vigour it lends me, and discernment, and boldness, fault of Jacob to denounce, guilt of Israel to proclaim.

A word with you, chieftains of Jacob's line, rulers of Israel, that hold right abominable, and all justice pervert; that build up strength of Sion, fortunes of Jerusalem, with deeds of bloodshed and of wrong! Never a judge but has his price; never a priest tradition teaches, but for hire; never a prophet but must have his hand lined with silver! And all the while, how lean they on the Lord! Is not he in their midst (they ask)? How should harm befall them? Trust me, for such guilt as yours I will turn mount Sion into ploughlands; standing heaps of stones that were once Jerusalem, and brushwood of the high forest growing over the Temple hill.

4 The Temple hill!¹ One day it shall stand there, highest of all the mountain-heights, overtopping the peaks of them, and the nations will flock there together. A multitude of peoples will make their way to it, crying, Come, let us climb up to the Lord's mountain-peak, to the house where the God of Jacob dwells; he shall teach us the right way, we will walk in the paths he has chosen. The Lord's command shall go out from Sion, his word from Jerusalem; over thronging peoples he shall sit in judgement, give award to great nations from far away. Sword they will fashion into ploughshare and spear into pruning-hook; no room there shall be for nation to levy war against nation, and train itself in arms. At ease you shall sit, each of you with his own vine, his own fig-tree to give him shade, and none to raise the alarm; such blessing the Lord of hosts pronounces on you. Let other nations go their own way, each with the name of its own god to rally it; ours to march under his divine name, who is our God for ever and for evermore!

6 When that time comes, the Lord says, I will gather them in again and take them to myself, flock of mine that go limping and straggling, ever since I brought calamity on them; lame shall yet be a stock to breed from, and wayworn shall grow into a sturdy race; here in Sion they shall dwell, and the Lord be king over them, for ever henceforward. And thou, the watch-tower of that flock, cloud-capped fastness where the lady Sion reigns, power shall come back to thee as of old, once more Jerusalem shall be a queen.

9 When that time comes! At this present time, what anguish is this constrains thee?

Have king and counsellor played thee false, that the pangs of travail take hold on thee? Sorrow thou well mayst, lady of Sion, and labour as any woman brought to bed; city thou must needs leave, and lodge in the open country-side, nay, to distant Babylon thou must journey;² there it is thou wilt find deliverance, there it is the Lord will ransom thee from the power of thy enemies. At this present time, how many the nations that gather about thee, crying, Death to the adulteress! Feast we our eyes on Sion's downfall! Little they know God's thoughts; little they guess his purpose is to store them up, like wheat on the threshing-floor! Up, lady of Sion, and set about the threshing of them! Horn of iron, hoof of bronze he will give thee, to grind all that conspiracy of nations to dust. Forfeit to the Lord their ill-gotten gains shall be; nothing of theirs but must be his, who is master of the whole earth.

5 At this present time, what is left thee but to muster thy roving bands, daughter of an outlaw king? Hard siege presses us now; smitten on the cheek, now, is the ruler of Israel.³

Bethlehem-Ephrata! Least do they reckon thee among all the clans of Juda? Nay, it is from thee I look to find a prince that shall rule over Israel. Whence comes he? From the first beginning, from ages untold!⁴

Marvel not, then, if the Lord abandons his people⁵ for a time, until she who is in travail has brought forth her child; others there are, brethren of his,⁶ that must be restored to the citizenship of Israel. Enabled by the Lord his God, confident in that mighty protection, stands he, our

¹ vv. 1-3. The same words occur at the beginning of Is. 2. Since Michaelas was Isaiah's contemporary, it seems probable that both prophets are quoting from some older fragment of literature.

² The mention of Babylon suggests, to the modern reader, the Captivity, which took place a century later. Michaelas' own contemporaries will have imagined that they were going to take refuge in Babylon as in a friendly country (IV Kg. 20. 12).

³ The beginning of this verse reads literally, 'Now thou shalt be laid waste, daughter of freebooters'; in the Hebrew text, 'thou shalt be laid waste' is 'form thyself into bands' (or possibly 'cut thyself', i.e. in sign of mourning). Thus both the meaning of the verse and its historical background are obscure; but conceivably the prophet is preaching guerrilla warfare, and reminding his fellow-countrymen that this was, in early days, king David's experience.

⁴ Our present Hebrew text reads, 'Thou (art) too small to be among the clans of Juda'; but there may have been an alternative reading, 'thou art not small among the clans of Juda'. This would account for the rendering given in Mt. 2. 6, without making it necessary to suppose that the translator of St Matthew's Aramaic was guilty of an error. 'From ages untold'; literally, 'from the days of eternity', but this is a phrase used somewhat loosely by Hebrew authors (cf. 7. 20 below), and no certain theological inferences can be based on it.

⁵ Literally, 'he abandons them', but the sense is presumably that given. ⁶ Apparently the brethren of the Messianic prince; the Septuagint Greek gives 'their brethren', but this is probably guesswork.

shepherd, and safely folds his flock; fame of him now reaches to the world's end; who else should be its hope of recovery? What though the Assyrian invade our country, trample down our strongholds? Seven leaders of men we shall find to marshal us, and an eighth yet in reserve; sword in hand, they shall herd the men of Assyria, naked steel for the land of Nemrod! Inva-
 6 ded they, trample they as they will, he shall be our deliverance.

7 Poor remnant of Jacob, lost among that multitude of peoples! Yet thrive it shall; does not the grass thrive, with dew and shower from the Lord to water it, nor looks for man's tending, unheholden to our
 8 human toil? Poor remnant of Jacob, among those heathen multitudes lost! Yet lion amid the forest herds, lion's whelp amid flock of sheep, finds not easier pas-
 9 sage, brings not down more inexorably his prey. High triumph thou shalt have over thy enemies; perish all that bear thee ill-
 will!

10 All other help, the Lord says, shall then be denied thee; gone, horse and chariot of
 11 thine, the cities lost, ruined the strongholds. Sorcery thou shalt have none to
 12 trust in, nor divinings; gone idol and sacred pillar of thine, nor any of thy own
 13 imaginings left thee; uprooted the woods of thy false worship, fallen the cities.
 14 Only then shall my fierce anger find its scope, only then fall my vengeance upon the nations that defied me.

6 Listen to this message I have from the Lord: Up, and to the mountains make thy complaint, let the hill-sides echo with thy voice! Listen they must, yonder sturdy bastions of earth, while the Lord implores his people; Israel stands upon its trial now.
 2 Tell me, my people, what have I done, that thou shouldst be a-weary of me? Answer
 3 me. Was it ill done, to rescue thee from Egypt, set thee free from a slave's prison,

send Moses and Aaron and Mary to guide thee on thy way? Bethink thee, what designs had Balach, king of Moab, and how Balaam the son of Beor answered him... from Setim to Galgala; and canst thou doubt, then, the faithfulness of the Lord's
 5 friendship?¹

How best may I humble myself before the Lord, that is God most high? What offering shall I bring? Calf, think you, of a year old, for my burnt-sacrifice? Fall
 7 rams by the thousand, fattened buck-goats by the ten thousand, will the Lord be better pleased? Shall gift of first-born for wrong-doing atone, body's fruit for soul's
 8 assailing? Nay, son of Adam, what need to ask?² Best of all it is, and this above all the Lord demands of thee, right thou
 shouldst do, and ruth love, and carry thyself humbly in the presence of thy
 God.

So comes the divine voice to yonder city; best he shall thrive, that stands in awe of thy name.³ Listen, tribesmen, to that voice; which of you dares acclaim it? What
 10 of homes unhallowed, that hide yet the ill-gotten gain⁴, the false measure to call down my vengeance? Here the uneven
 11 scales, there the bag of short weights, and shall I hold you acquitted? City where the rich are ever busy with oppression, where
 12 all is treachery, and a man has a tongue in his mouth only to deceive! Thy turn, now,
 13 to feel my lash; thy guilt is thy undoing. Thine to eat, and eating, never have thy
 14 fill; for all alike, now, the same affliction.⁵ Thine to enslave, but thy slaves never to
 keep; those thou hast, I mean to make over to the sword. Sow shalt thou, and never
 15 reap, press olive, and never anoint thee, tread grape, and no wine drink. Com-
 16 mands of Amri thou wouldst obey; not mine, Ahab's purposes, not mine, fulfil; their bidding if thou wouldst follow, what
 marvel that I should mark thee down for ruin, Jerusalem for the hiss of scorn?

¹ It seems probable that some words have been lost here; Setim and Galgala are not connected in any way with Balaam's prophecy, but are, respectively, the last camping-ground of Israel before, and the first camping-ground after, the passage of Jordan.

² 'What need to ask?'; literally, 'I will tell thee', but in the Hebrew text 'he has told thee' (or possibly, 'it has been told thee').

³ This verse is very obscure in the Hebrew text, and its interpretation remains uncertain.

⁴ 'The ill-gotten gain'; literally, 'the embers of ill-gotten gain', but it would appear that the Latin version and the Septuagint Greek have here misunderstood a word in the original.

⁵ The Hebrew word here rendered 'affliction' occurs nowhere else, and the rendering given in the Latin is perhaps only a conjecture. In the second part of the verse, the Hebrew text is generally understood as referring, not to enslavement, but to the removal of wives, children, etc. into a place of safety.

Shame of its own origins the people that is mine must bear.¹

- 7** Your tears for Sion! Not more pitiful work is gleaned when the vintage is done; never a cluster to eat; for the ripe figs belly craves in vain. Fled is piety, vanished honesty, from human kind; murderous plots afoot; the hunt is up everywhere, man spreading his nets for man.
- 3** Ever the wrong done, and fair names devised for it; ruler must have his benevolence, and judge his gratuity, and tyrant makes known what is his earnest wish; they know well how to wrap it up.² Cruel as thorns they be, that are kindest of them, close as thorn-hedge, that are honest above the rest. Surely this is the day thy watchmen foretold, surely thou wilt call them to account; not long delayed their last extremity!
- 5** Trust no man, give thy heart to no man, though he be friend and counsellor of thine; against the wife that lies on thy bosom, guard the entry of thy lips; here, where son fools father, and daughter her mother, and son's wife her mother-in-law, where a man's own household are his enemies! On the Lord my eyes are set; it is to God I look for my protection; my own God, and will he deny me audience?
- 8** City that Sion hatest, never triumph over her fall; fall I, it is but to rise again, sit I in darkness, the Lord will be my light.
- 9** The Lord's displeasure I must bear, I that have sinned against him, till at last he admits my plea, and grants redress. Out into the light he will bring me, to find him

faithful still. Sore abashed that enemy of mine shall behold it; only yesterday she was crying, What is become of thy God now? Welcome the sight, when she is trampled down like mire in the streets!³

Day of pell-mell disorder it shall be, the day of thy walls' rebuilding; a day when folk shall resort to thee from all the lands that lie between Assyria and the towns of Egypt, between Egypt and . . . Euphrates, between sea and sea, mountain-range and mountain-range.⁴ By then, the whole country-side will be lying desolate, such reward the inhabitants of it have earned by their ill-doing. With that staff of thine gather thy people in, the flock that is thy very own, scattered now in the forest glades, with rich plenty all around them; Basan and Galaad for their pasture-grounds, as in the days of old. Now for such wondrous evidences of power as marked thy rescuing of them from Egypt! Here is a sight to make the Gentiles hold their valour cheap, stand there dumb; ay, and why not deaf too? Let them lick the dust, serpent-fashion, crawl out from their homes, like scared reptiles, in terror of the Lord our God; much cause they shall have to fear him.

Was there ever such a God, so ready to forgive sins, to overlook faults, among the scattered remnant of his chosen race?⁵ He will exact vengeance no more; he loves to pardon. He will relent, and have mercy on us, quashing our guilt, burying our sins away sea-deep. Thou wilt keep thy promise to Jacob, show mercy to Abraham, thy promised mercies of long ago.

¹ The concluding words of the chapter read literally, 'You shall bear the reproach of my people! Some think this means, 'You (the rich) shall bear the reproach of my people in general'; others suppose that there is a slight error in the manuscripts, and that we should render, 'You shall bear the taunts of the (heathen) nations'.

² The interpretation of this verse is difficult; the meaning given above seems to fit the Latin best.

³ We have no means of determining whether the last thirteen words are part of what the rival city used to say about Sion, or part of what Sion will say about the rival city.

⁴ The passage is obscure, and there is some reason to doubt whether the text has been preserved accurately. It runs literally, 'Day for the building of thy walls, that (is a) day the limit is removed far off, that (is a) day and he (or, people) shall come all the way to thee, all the way from Assur and the cities of Mazor, all the way from Mazor and to the River, and the sea from the sea and the mountain the mountain'. 'Limit' can hardly mean 'frontier', a notion which is always expressed elsewhere by a different word (over two hundred times in the Old Testament). The phrase 'limit is removed' is a jingle of words, probably meant to suggest confusion, like our 'higgledy-piggledy'. Mazor is translated as a proper noun ('fortress') in the Latin version. It is hard to see why the space between Assyria and Egypt should be regarded as different from the space between Egypt and the Euphrates; possibly something has dropped out.

THE PROPHECY OF NAHUM

WHAT burden for Nineveh? Here is matter revealed to Nahum the Elcesite. A jealous lover the Lord is, and takes full vengeance; full vengeance the Lord takes, no stranger, he, to indignation; nor spares rebel, nor forgets the wrong. Bide his time he may, but power lacks not; guilty is guilty still. Storm and whirlwind are the path he treads, cloud-wrack the dust he spurns; the sea at his rebuke dries up, streams turn into a desert, Basan withers away, and Carmel; all the leaf of Lebanon fades. Shrink and shrivel they, mountain-top and hill-side, before him; quakes earth at his coming, and all the world of men with it. Alas, when the blow of his resentment falls, who may confront that fierce anger unmoved? Here is vengeance poured out like fire, to melt the hard rock!

None so gracious as the Lord, no strength like his in the hour of distress; do but trust him, and he will keep thee in his care. . . .

. . . Flood-tide shall overwhelm the site of it; ever his enemies find darkness at their heels. Think not, by shifts of yours, to thwart the Lord's will; believe me, he will take full toll, there shall be no second visitation. Close be it as thicket of thorns, yonder conspiracy over the cups, all at once, like scorched stubble, they shall be consumed.²

Here is one of thy number devising rebellion against the Lord, folly's counsellor. But thus the Lord says: Are they in full muster? At least there are over-many of them; they must be shorn of their strength. It will pass; once chastened is chastened enough,³ and now I mean to shatter that yoke of his that lies on thy back, tear thy chains asunder. . . .

For thee, this doom the Lord has; race shall never spring from thee to bear thy name, nor in the temple of thy god any images be left, cast or carven; and I will write it on thy tomb-stone, thou wast nothing worth.⁴

See where they bring good news on the mountain heights, proclaiming that all is well! Now, Juda, keep holiday; paid be thy vows; mocking enemy shall pass through thee no more; never a one left.⁵

2 Here is an enemy at thy gates that scatters all before him; here is close siege, no entry but must be guarded; gird thee well, summon up all thy strength! Honour of Juda the Lord retrieves now, and honour of Israel both, that have seen the spoiler ransack them, strip vineyard bare.⁶ Bright flash that enemy's shields, warriors of his go clad in scarlet; dart like flame his chariots as he goes to the attack, dizzily sways charioteer. How jostle they in the streets, those chariots, hurtle they in

¹ Since there is no noun in verse 7 to which the words 'of it' can conceivably refer, the suspicion naturally arises that there may have been an accidental omission in the text. . . .

² Some modern scholars, by means of altering and transposing the text, make verses 1-10 into part of an abecedarian poem; i.e. one in which the first verse in the Hebrew begins with Aleph, the second with Beth, and so on (cf. e.g. Ps. 24). There is some reason to think that Ps. 9 was originally abecedarian, and the traces of it were confused by subsequent editing (as happened with the Hymn of Friday Lauds). But a careful examination of the present chapter suggests that the apparent traces of arrangement may be due to mere coincidence.

³ The meaning of the Hebrew text here is uncertain, and many scholars think it corrupt. It runs, literally, 'Thus the Lord says: Are they complete? (or, if they are complete) even so they are many; and even so they will be shaven. And it (or, he) will pass, and I have afflicted thee but I will not afflict thee any more'.

⁴ This verse is evidently addressed not to Juda but to Assyria, and some think it has been accidentally misplaced.

⁵ *vv.* 11-15. Some part, or all, of verses 11-15 may refer to the invasion of Sennacherib (IV Kg. 18 sqq.).

⁶ 'Mocking enemy' is literally 'Belial', a word meaning 'worthlessness' or perhaps 'destruction'.

⁷ Meaning and bearing of this verse are obscure; it tells us that the Lord will restore, or perhaps remove, or perhaps requite, the excellency, or perhaps the pride, of Jacob, and also that of Israel. 'Jacob' is a strict equivalent of 'Israel' as a rule; here, if the text is sound, it can only be conjectured that Jacob stands for Juda, and Israel for the ten tribes. Some think the whole verse has been accidentally misplaced.

the open market-place; dazzle they like flame of torches, like the lightning that comes and goes!

5 Alas, for the muster-roll of the king's vassals,¹ fallen as they went about their task! Swiftly they manned the walls, but
6 the engines were in place already. Open, now, stands the water-gate, crumbles yonder temple into dust. Alas, for warriors of
7 Nineve gone into exile, for maids of hers led away,² that sigh and moan like ring-doves in the bitterness of their heart!
8 Nineve, welcome sight as pools of water to the fugitive;³ stay, stay! But never a one looks back. Out with silver, out with gold of hers; store is here of costly stuff beyond
9 price or reckoning! Roof to cellar rifled and ransacked! Sore hearts are here, and knees that knock together, loins that go
10 labouring, and pale cheeks.⁴ Lair of lion, and nursery of his whelps, what trace is left of thee, once so secure a retreat, his haunt and theirs? Cub nor lioness should want, so preyed he, so mauled he, so filled with plunder of his forays the den
11 where he lay. Have at thee! says the Lord of hosts; yonder chariots shall be burnt to ashes; whelps of thine shall die at the sword's point, plunder of thine be swept off the face of earth; and for thy heralds, their voices shall be heard no more.

3 Out upon thee, city of blood, full fed with treason and rapine, yet still at prey! What sounds are these? Crack of whip, whirring of wheels, beat of horse-hoof, rattle of chariot. Mounts horseman, flash like lightning sword and spear; what carnage! How cumbered the earth with slain! Dead bodies past counting; the
4 living stumble over the dead. Harlot so unwearied in thy harlot's ways, so fair, so

full of witchery, too long hast thou betrayed a nation here, a tribe there, with sorcery of thine, harlotry of thine; and now
5 I will be even with thee, says the Lord God of hosts. I mean to set thy skirts flying about thy ears, and lay bare the naked shame of thee, for all the kingdoms of the world to see; pelted thou shalt be with things abominable, and foully bemocked; such a public show I will make of thee, passer-by will be fain to shun thee; Nineve
6 fallen, says he, and never a tear! Search where I will, never a friend to comfort thee!⁵ Here was another city, No-Ammon,⁶ fair as thyself; she too was built on the river-side, water all about her; the sea her mart, the sea her defences. Hers the
7 Ethiop land, hers was Egypt; wanted there strength yet, African and Libyan were at her side; yet thy fate was hers, exile, and
8 captivity, and children at every street's turning dashed to death; honour and rank condemned to the lot's mercy, and the chain's grip!

Bemused and helpless with fear, looking
9 about for succour against the invader, so she was, so thou shalt be. At a touch thy
10 bastions shall fall, like ripe figs that drop into the eater's mouth, soon as tree is shaken; woman-hearted the defenders, the
11 gates wide open to the enemy's onrush, touchwood the bars of them. Water, there,
12 water for a siege! Raise the battlements higher yet! Down to the clay-pit with thee, tread the mortar, put thy hand to the brick-mould! Fire shall consume thee
13 none the less, the sword cut thee off, hungry as locust to devour.

Thrive thou as locust thrives or grass-hopper, ay, let thy enterprises outnumber
14 the stars in heaven, what avails it? Early hatches locust, early flies away. Forgotten, the high lords, forgotten, the

¹ Literally, 'he will remember (or perhaps mention) his princes'. There is no evidence that the verb can mean 'to summon', and the phrase is so awkward that we may be tempted to suspect the prophet wrote something else; e.g. 'his menfolk, his princes'.

² The word rendered 'warriors' in the Latin more probably refers, perhaps by a proper name, to some queen or goddess; the word used for 'maids' has, everywhere else, the sense of female attendants.

³ 'Nineve, welcome sight as pools of water to the fugitive'; the Hebrew text here differs from that of the Septuagint Greek, and of the Latin, but the literal sense is probably, 'Nineve is a pool of water; water is she, and thy fugitives'. The meaning of the verse can only be conjectured.

⁴ 'Pale cheeks'; literally, 'faces like the blackness of a pot'. We may compare Joel 2. 6, where the Latin renders the same phrase, 'all faces shall be turned into a pot'. The literal meaning of the Hebrew text is that they will gather some kind of complexion perhaps best described as 'lividness'; the noun does not occur anywhere else.

⁵ It is not clear where the comments of the supposed passer-by come to an end.

⁶ No or No-Ammon is commonly identified with (Egyptian) Thebes, the 'sea' being understood as referring to the Nile. The Latin version gives 'Alexandria', which involves a manifest anachronism.

⁷ In the Hebrew text, 'thy merchants'.

A change of one letter would give 'thy foot-soldiers'.

princelings,¹ as they had been locusts,
and brood of locusts, that cling to yonder
hedge-row in the chill of morning, and are
gone, once the sun is up, who knows
18 whither? Gone to their rest thy marshals,
king of Assyria; thy vassals lie silent in
the dust; out on the hills the common

folk take refuge, with none to muster
them. Wound of thine there is no hiding,¹⁹
hurt of thine is grievous; nor any shall hear
the tidings of it but shall clap their hands
over thee, so long thy tyrannous yoke has
rested on so many.

¹ The words rendered 'high lords' and 'princelings' are rare words of uncertain significance. The Latin has 'guardians' and 'little ones', but it seems likely that state officials of some kind are meant.

THE PROPHECY OF HABACUC

THIS burden following was revealed to the prophet Habacuc.

² Lord, must I ever cry out to thee, and gain hearing never? Plead against tyranny, and no deliverance ³ be granted me? Must I nothing see but wrong and affliction; turn where I will, nothing but robbery and oppression; pleading at law everywhere, everywhere ⁴ contention raising its head? What marvel if the old teachings are torn up,¹ and redress is never to be found? Innocence by knavery circumvented still, and false award given!

⁵ Have you no eyes for the world about you? Look upon it with wonder and awe; in your own days here be strange deeds a-doing, so strange, a man would scarce credit them if they were told in story.²

⁶ What a nation is this I am spurring on to battle, the Chaldaean folk, so implacable, so swift! Ready to march the wide world over, so there be lands, not theirs, to covet!

⁷ A grim nation and a terrible; no right they acknowledge, no title, but what themselves

⁸ bestow. Not leopard so lithe as horse of theirs, not wolf at evening so fast; wide the sweep of their horsemen, that close in, close in from afar, flying like vultures

⁹ hungry for their prey. Plunderers all; eager as the sirocco their onset, whirling ¹⁰ away, like sand-storm, their captives.³ Here

be men that hold kings in contempt, make princes their sport; no fortress but is a child's game to such as these; let them but ¹¹ make a heap of dust, it is theirs. Veers wind, and he is gone; see him fall down and ascribe the victory to his god!⁴

But thou, Lord, my God and all my ¹² worship, thou art from eternity! And wilt thou see us perish? Warrant of thine they hold, take their strength from thee, only to make known thy justice, thy chastening power!⁵ So pure those eyes, shall they ¹³ feast on wrong-doing? Wilt thou brook the sight of oppression, look on while treason is done? Innocence the prey of malice, and no word from thee? As well ¹⁴ had men been fishes in the sea, or creeping things, that ruler have none! And indeed ¹⁵ it nothing spares, hook of yonder Chaldaean; seine and drag he spreads for all, and great joy has he of his sport. Nay, ¹⁶ seine must have its victims, incense be offered to drag; whom else thanks he for the rich fare on his plate, viands most dainty? Trust me, wider still yonder net ¹⁷ shall be flung; sword of his will never have done with massacre.

2 What message, then, is entrusted to me? What answer shall I make when I am called to account? Here on the watch-tower my post shall be; stand I on the battlements, and await his signal.

Write down thy vision, the Lord said, on ² a tablet, so plain that it may be read with a glance; a vision of things far distant, yet ³ one day befall they must, no room for doubting it. Wait thou long, yet wait patiently; what must be must, and at the time appointed for it. Foul air the doubter ⁴ breathes; by his faith he lives, who lives right.

Tyrant, like drunkard, is mocked by ⁵

¹ 'Are torn up'; according to the Hebrew text, 'have lost their vigour'. The reference to teaching (that is, of the Law) shows that these verses refer to misdoings among God's own people. But the prophet only cites these as an instance of man's inhumanity to man in general.

² These verses, 5-11, put into the mouth of Almighty God, are a preface to Habacuc's own protest against the barbarity of the Chaldaeans. Probably, although they are cast into the prophetic form, they represent facts which had already taken place at the time when this prophecy was made; Habacuc seems to have lived under the captivity (Dan. 14. 32).

³ The Hebrew text here is obscure; some think it means the Chaldaeans had their faces set towards the east, or perhaps simply 'forward'. ⁴ Literally, 'Then a wind (or spirit) will be changed, and he (or it) will pass by, and he will fall down; this is the strength of his god'. The Hebrew text, which is slightly different, gives a doubtful sense and is perhaps corrupt.

⁵ It is not clear whether this means God has raised up the Chaldaeans in order to punish the Jews, or in order to exhibit his justice by punishing, later, the Chaldaeans themselves.

false dreams of glory.¹ See him whet his appetite, not death itself nor the grave more insatiable; gather up a tribe here, a nation there, heap his plate with them!

6 One day, what a by-word they will make of him! What riddling taunts shall be hurled at him! As here follows:

So thou wouldst hoard up the possessions that are none of thine, load thyself with base dross,² and it should go on for ever? All unawares the foe shall spring, worry thee, harry thee, make a helpless prey of thee. So manylands thou hast plundered, plundered thyself shalt be; enough nations are left for that; for men's blood shed, and for fields ravaged, plundered the city shall be, and all that dwell there.³

9 Ill-gotten gains thou wouldst amass to deck that house of thine; make it an eyrie, too high for envious hands to reach? Nay, with this undoing of many peoples thou hast done thy own house despite, thy own life is forfeit; stone from ruined wall cries out against thee, and beam from gaping roof echoes the cry.

12 City thou wouldst found, city's walls build up, with deeds of bloodshed and of wrong? What, has not the Lord of hosts uttered his doom, toil of nations shall feed the fire, and all their labour be spent for nothing? It is the Lord's glory men must learn to know, that shall cover the earth, flooding over it like the waters of the sea.⁴

15 Thou wouldst pour out a draught for thy neighbour, a draught thy own hand has poisoned; bemuse him as with wine, to leave him stripped and bare? This was to cover thyself with shame, not with glory; drink thou in thy turn, and grow dizzy! A round for thee, now, from yonder cup the Lord holds in his hand; how shamefully is that glory of thine bespewed!
17 Wrong done to Lebanon, scathe of the

roaming beasts, shall recoil on thee; fear shall overtake them,⁵ city of thine and all that dwell there, for men's blood shed, and for fields ravaged.

What avails image, that carver should be at pains to carve it? In metal his own hands have melted shall a man put his trust? Cheating likenesses, dumb idols all! And thy prayer was, stock and stone should wake up and come to thy aid, senseless things that cannot signify their will;⁶ nay, breath in their bodies have none, for all they are tricked out with gold and silver!

And all the while, the Lord is in his holy temple. Keep silence, earth, before him.

3 A prayer of the prophet Habacuc for Shigionoth.⁷

I have heard, Lord, the tale of thy renown, awe-stricken at the divine power thou hast. Reveal that power in these latter days, in these latter days make it known once more! And though we have earned thy anger, bethink thee of mercy still. God coming near from Teman, the holy One from yonder hills of Pharan! See how his glory overspreads heaven, his fame echoes through the earth; the brightness that is his, like light itself, the rays that stream from his hand, masking its strength; pestilence his outrider, the wasting sickness⁸ in his train! There stood he, and scanned the earth; at his look, the nations were adread; melted were the everlasting mountains, bowed were the ancient hills, his own immemorial pathway, as he journeyed. I saw the Ethiop quail in his tent,⁹ the dwellings of Madian astir with terror.

Is it the rivers, Lord, that have awaked thy anger; should it be the rivers? Or has the sea earned thy vengeance, that thou comest thus mounted on thy horses, on thy victorious chariot; that bow of thine

¹ Literally, 'Behold, the breath (or life) of him who is incredulous will not be straight within him, but the just man will have life in his faith. And as wine deceives the drinker, so shall a proud man be, and he will not be adorned'. The Latin here is evidently trying to restore sense to a passage unintelligible in the Hebrew text. The word 'faith' in the Old Testament usually means faithfulness (to one's word); here the context suggests that it means confidence.

² 'Base dross'; literally, 'thick mud', a mistaken attempt to identify a Hebrew word which means 'borrowers' pledges'. In the next verse, the verb 'worry' or 'bite' is, in Hebrew, closely allied to a word meaning 'usury'.
³ Here and in verse 17 below the Latin version has probably misunderstood the Hebrew construction, referring 'the city and all that dwell there' not to Babylon but to her victims.

⁴ Verses 12-14 seem to be a cento of quotations; cf. Mic. 3. 10, Jer. 51. 58. Is. 11. 9.
⁵ Literally, 'it shall frighten them'; the last word is masculine in the Latin, feminine in the Hebrew. The Hebrew text of this verse is very obscure, and may well be corrupt.

⁶ 'Signify their will'; literally, 'teach'. If the text is sound, the contrast must be with the true God as Lawgiver.
⁷ 'For Shigionoth' appears to be a musical direction, of uncertain meaning. The Vulgate Latin renders 'for faults of inadvertence'.
⁸ 'The wasting sickness'; this is the rendering of the new Latin Psalter; the Vulgate Latin translates, 'the devil'.
⁹ Literally, 'the tents of Ethiopia under affliction'. The Vulgate gives a less probable rendering, 'the tents of Ethiopia (required) for their guilt'.

brought into full play, which grants to Israel the assurance of thy succour?¹ Earth is torn into ravines; the mountains tremble at the sight. Fierce falls the rain-storm, the depths beneath us roar aloud, the heights beckon from above; sun and moon linger in their dwelling-place;² so bright thy arrows volley, with such sheen of lightning glances thy spear.

12 Nay, if thou ride through the world so angrily, with thy disdain striking the nations dumb, it is to rescue thy own people, rescue thy own anointed servant, that thou goest out to battle. Down fall the turrets in yonder castle of godlessness, down sink the foundations to their very base; lights thy ban on its princes, on the heads of its warriors, whose blustering rage would overthrow me, confident now as some petty tyrant who oppresses the poor in secret.

15 Over the sea, over the ooze beneath its

waves, thou hast made a path for thy horses to tread.

Such was the tale that set my whole frame trembling; at the rumour of it my lips quivered with fear; there was a faintness overcame my whole being, my steps faltered as I went. Now with tranquil heart let me await this day of doom; upon the enemies of our people it is destined to fall.³ What though the fig-tree never bud, the vine yield no fruit, the olive fail, the fields bear no harvest; what though our folds stand empty of sheep, our byres of cattle? Still will I make my boast in the Lord, triumph in the deliverance God sends me. The Lord, the ruler of all, is my stronghold; he will bring me safely on my way, safe as the hind whose feet echo already on the hills.

(For the chief singer, to the harp's music.⁴)

¹ 'Which grants to Israel the assurance of thy succour'; literally, 'the promises which thou hast made to the tribes', see Gen. 49. 24. The new Latin Psalter has 'thy quiver so full of arrows', a reading based on certain manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek. ² 'The heights beckon from above; sun and moon linger in their dwelling-place'; the new Latin Psalter reads (with certain manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek) 'the sun forgets to dawn in splendour, the moon lingers in her bower'. ³ This is the rendering given by the new Latin Psalter; no satisfactory sense is offered by the Vulgate here: 'Let rottenness enter into my bones, and fester beneath me, that I may have rest in the day of affliction, that I may go up to this people of ours which is girded for battle'. ⁴ The musical direction here printed in brackets is omitted in the new Latin Psalter; the Vulgate has confused it with the text of the canticle.

THE PROPHECY OF SOPHONIAS

To Sophonias, that was descended from Ezechias through Amarias, Godolias and Chusi, this message came from the Lord, at the time when Josias son of Amon reigned in Juda.

Fall to I must, and weed yonder plot of ground, the Lord says; rid it, says he, of man and beast, of bird in air and fish under water; and down shall the godless come too, never a man left alive upon it. All Juda, all the citizens of Jerusalem, shall feel the stroke. Not a trace shall they leave behind, yonder gods of the country-side, acolyte and priest of theirs not a memory; forgotten, all that worship the host of heaven from the roof-tops, all that worship...¹ take they their oaths to the Lord, or swear they by Melchom; forgotten, all that turn their backs on the Lord, and will neither seek nor search for him.

Silence, there, to greet the Lord! Here is day of his appointing, here is great sacrifice of his preparing; all his guests bidden, all their cleansing done. The Lord's sacrifice! A day of reckoning it shall be, king and prince I will call to account, all that go clad in foreign bravery, all that spurn yonder threshold,² and fill the house of the Lord their God with deeds of treachery and wrong. What an outcry that day, the Lord says, from the Fishmongers' Gate, what lamenting from the New Town! How the hill-sides will echo to the noise of your ruin! Ay, lament indeed, you that dwell in Mortar Valley; of the merchant folk no more is heard; here is an end of all that trafficked in silver.

Time, then, to call for lamps, and search Jerusalem through! Trust me, I will find them out, spoiled natures, like wine that has settled on its lees, the men who think

to themselves, From the Lord nothing is to hope, nothing to fear. Ransacked their wealth shall be, and their homes ruined; houses they build they shall never dwell in, vineyards they plant they shall drink of never. Nearer, nearer comes the great day of the Lord's reckoning, ay, and soon; bitter the bruit of its coming; here is peril to cow the bravest heart. Day of vengeance, day of strain and stress, day of ransack and ruin; dim and dark, overcast with cloud and storm! City is none so well fortified, pinnacle is none so high in air, but shall hear braying of trumpets and the battle-cry. Guilty wretches, they shall grope in the dark, flesh and blood of them cheap as dust and dung; silver and gold of them powerless to buy off the Lord's present vengeance. Burns through the land the fire of his slighted love; takes full toll, and speedily, of all that dwell there.

Band together, men of a nation so little loved, bind yourselves in one; ere resolve can bear fruit, like flying chaff passes the day.³ Before the divine vengeance falls on you, before the day of divine retribution comes, to the Lord betake you! To honest doing and patient suffering betake you, men of humble heart wherever you be, men obedient to his will; it may be, when the hour of the Lord's vengeance comes, you shall find refuge.

Gaza and Ascalon to rack and ruin left, Azotus stormed ere the day is out, root and branch destroyed is Accaron! Out upon the forfeited race⁴ that holds yonder strip of coast-land; the Lord's doom is on it, the little Chanaan of the Philistines; wasted it shall be, and never a man to dwell in it. There on the coast-land shepherds shall lie at ease, there shall be folds for flocks; and

¹ It is difficult to explain the run of this verse except on the supposition that a word has been lost; e.g. 'on the hill-tops', or 'at the forest shrines'.

² It is uncertain what is meant by 'leaping over the threshold'; probably it was some superstitious practice (cf. I Kg. 5. 5).

³ This passage appears to be addressed to the Jewish people scattered about the world. There is considerable obscurity about the sense, perhaps due to corruption of the text. 'Ere resolve can bear fruit, like flying chaff passes the day'; the Latin version has, 'Before the command brings forth the passing day like chaff', which yields no appropriate sense. For 'resolve', cf. Jg. 5. 15; the phrase is no doubt a proverb.

⁴ In the Hebrew text, 'the Cerehtite race'.

who shall dwell there? The remnant that is left of Juda's race; there they shall find pasturage, take their rest, when evening comes, in the ruins of Ascalon, when the Lord their God brings them relief, restores their fortunes again.

8 And what of Moab, what of Ammon? Doubt not I have heard the blasphemous taunts they uttered against my own people, as they encroached upon its borders. As I am a living God, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, no better shall Moab and Ammon be than Sodom and Gomorrha, all waste and brushwood and salt-pits, for ever desolate; of my own people enough remnant shall be left, a nation still, to plunder and to conquer them. Pride that would mock and overreach his own people he, the Lord of hosts, knows how to punish; see what terror he strikes into them! Peak and pine they, gods of the other nations; rise they from their places, one by one, to adore him, island-dwellers of the world.

12 You too, men of Ethiopia, shall feel my sword.

13 That hand shall stretch out northward, and make an end of Assyria; Nineve shall be left forlorn, a trackless desert.¹ Flocks shall lie down there . . . all the wild things of earth; bitter and hedgehog make their dwelling in its doorways, bird-song there shall be in the windows, and raven perched on lintel; so ebb the strength of it. And this was the proud city that dwelt so free from alarms, thinking to herself, Here I stand, with no rival; a desert now, lair of the wild beasts! Hisses the passer-by in mockery, and shakes his fist.

3 Out on the rebellious city, the defiled city, so full of wrong!² Never the call heard, the warning heeded; trust in the Lord is none; nay, they would keep God at a distance. Here be rulers no better than ravening lions, judges like wolf that prowls at night, and not a bone left on the morrow; 4 prophets that are heedless men and treacherous, priests that profane the sanctuary

and do violence to the law. And all the while the Lord is there in the midst of it! Not his the blame; never morning passes but he makes known his award for their enlightening, without fail; and still injustice goes on unashamed! Short work I have made of other nations; crumbling battlements, unfrequented streets, with never a foot-fall, their cities lie ruined and forlorn, with none to dwell in them; Ah, thought I, now at least thou wilt learn to fear me, wilt profit by the warning! Here at least is a city that may be left habitable, send them what plagues I may! But no, early and late they would be at their perverse doings still!

Hope, then, is none,³ till the day, long hence, when I will stand revealed;⁴ what gathering, then, of the nations, all kingdoms joined in one! And upon these, my doom is, vengeance shall fall, fierce anger of mine shall fall; the whole earth shall be consumed with the fire of my slighted love. And after that, all the peoples of the world shall have pure lips, invoking one and all the Lord's name, straining at a single yoke in the Lord's service. From far away, beyond Ethiop rivers, my suppliants shall come to me, sons⁵ of my exiled people the bloodless offering shall bring. No need, then, to blush for wayward thoughts that defied me; gone from thy midst the high-sounding boast; no room, in that mountain sanctuary of mine, for pride henceforward; a poor folk and a friendless I will leave in thy confines, but one that puts its trust in the Lord's name.

The remnant of Israel, strangers now to treachery and wrong, the true work ever on their lips! Yonder flock may graze and lie down to rest, none to dismay it. Break into song, fair Zion, all Israel cry aloud; here is joy and triumph, Jerusalem, for thy royal heart. Thy doom the Lord has revoked, thy enemy repulsed; the Lord, there in the midst of thee, Israel's king! Peril for thee henceforth is none. Such is the message yonder day shall bring to Jeru-

¹ The Latin version, through a mis-reading of the text, gives 'the fair one' instead of 'Nineve'. It looks as if there was some slight omission in verse 14; the word for 'flock' in the Hebrew is only used of domesticated animals.

² The Latin version gives 'the redeemed city, the dove', but this seems due to a faulty understanding of the Hebrew text. Cf. Jer. 25. 38.

³ Literally, 'Therefore thou must wait for me', but the verb commonly expresses an attitude of pious longing, and it looks as if the faithful remnant, not the generality of the Jewish people, were being addressed.

⁴ Literally, 'the day when I will rise up and catch my prey'; the Septuagint Greek, 'the day when I will rise up to bear witness'.
⁵ In the Hebrew text, 'daughters'; there is some ground for suspecting a faulty reading in the manuscripts.

- 17 salem: Courage, Sion! What means it, the
unnerved hand? Thou hast one in the
midst of thee, the Lord thy God, whose
strength shall deliver thee. Joy and pride
of his thou shalt be henceforward; silent
till now in his love for thee, he will greet
thee with cries of gladness.
- 18 Truants that were lost to the covenant
I will reclaim; of thy company they are,
thou shalt be taunted with them no
longer;¹ only for thy persecutors that hour
shall be the hour of doom. Lamé sheep
medicined, and strayed sheep brought
home! Lands that despised them shall
hear name and fame of them now. Name
and fame you shall have, all the world over,
the Lord says, when I call you back and
gather you in; when you see the fortunes
of Israel retrieved at last.

¹ Here again, in verses 17 and 18, most modern editors question the soundness of the Hebrew text; in the Latin version, the difficulties are partly disguised.

THE PROPHECY OF AGGAEUS

IT was in the second year of Darius' reign, on the first day of the sixth month of it, that a message came from the Lord through the prophet Aggaeus; came to Zorobabel, son of Salathiel, that was governor of Juda, and to the high priest, Josue son of Josedec. And thus it ran: Word from the Lord of hosts to his people, that will not restore his temple, but cry, Too early yet! Listen, the Lord said to them through the prophet Aggaeus, is it not too early yet for you to have roofs over your heads, and my temple in ruins? Think well on it, says the Lord of hosts; here is much sown, and little reaped, nor eating brings you a full belly, nor wine a merry heart; such clothes you wear as leave you shivering, such wages win as leak out at purse's bottom! Think well on it, says the Lord of hosts; up to the hill-side with you, fetch timber and restore my temple, if content me you will, the Lord says, if honour me you will! So much attempted, so little attained; store you brought into your houses withered at my breath; would you know the reason for it? says the Lord of hosts. Because to your own houses you run helter-skelter, and my temple in ruins! That is why the skies are forbidden to rain on you, earth to afford its bounty; ban of barrenness lies on plain and hill, wheat and wine and oil and all the earth yields, man and beast and all they toil to win.

What made they of it, Salathiel's son Zorobabel, and the high priest, Josue son of Josedec, and all the people with them?

That voice they could not choose but heed, that message from the Lord their God sent to them by the prophet Aggaeus, and they were sore adread of the divine warning. Yet here was divine encouragement; Aggaeus, the Lord's own messenger,¹ gave them the Lord's own assurance he was at their side. So the Lord put heart into them, governor and priest and people alike; and they set to work building up the temple of the Lord God of hosts.

2 This was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius.

Afterwards, on the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the Lord sent another message through the prophet Aggaeus. To Zorobabel, and Josue, and all the people with them his word was: Tell me, those of you who saw this house in its former brightness, what make you of it now? It is no better in your eyes than a very nothing. Take heart, Zorobabel; Josue, son of Josedec, take heart! And you, too, people of the land, the Lord of hosts bids you put heart into the work; is not he, the Lord of hosts, at your side?

... the promise I gave when you escaped from Egypt; my own spirit shall be among you, do not be afraid.²

A little while now,³ the Lord of hosts says, and I mean to set heaven and earth, sea and dry land rocking; stirred all the nations shall be, hither shall come the prize the whole world treasures,⁴ and I will fill

¹ Literally, according to the Latin version, 'Aggaeus, an angel from among the angels of the Lord', but this is probably due to a misunderstanding of the Hebrew text. ² It looks as if some words had fallen out between these verses 5 and 6, including a verb to govern 'the promise'. Some editors print the end of verse 5 as a parenthesis, and make the sentence run: 'The Lord of hosts bids you take heart and perform (is not he, the Lord of hosts, at your side?) the word which I covenanted with you when you escaped from Egypt'.

³ Literally, 'a single little while', but the addition gives no satisfactory sense. The Hebrew text is difficult, and perhaps corrupt; the Septuagint Greek gives 'only once more', a phrase interpreted in Heb. 12. 26 as looking back to the experience of Israel when the law was given on mount Sinai (Ex. 19). ⁴ Literally, 'the object of the whole world's desire shall come'. The Septuagint Greek has, 'the choice (treasures) of the whole world shall come'. Either of these might represent the peculiar language of the Hebrew text, 'they shall come, the object of the whole world's desire' (which could just be rendered, 'they shall come to the object of the whole world's desire' i.e. the temple). 'The brightness of my presence'; literally, 'glory', but the word, when used in connexion with the temple, regularly implies a theophany; (cf. III Kg. 8. 11, Ez. 10. 4).

this temple with the brightness of my presence, says the Lord of hosts.

9 Silver or gold, what matters it? the Lord
10 of hosts says. Both are mine! Bright this
new temple shall be, he tells you, as never
the first was; here, he tells you, his blessing
shall rest.

11 Then, on the twenty-fourth day of the
ninth month, in this second year of king
Darius, another message came from the
12 Lord to the prophet Aggaeus, bidding him,
in the name of the Lord of hosts, make
enquiry of the priests upon a matter touch-
13 ing the law. And the question was this:
Here is one carries consecrated meat in the
fold of his garment, and with this same
fold chances to touch bread or broth, wine
or oil, or what food you will; does this food
become consecrated thereby? And the
14 priests said No. Why then, Aggaeus went
on, let some other man touch this food, one
that is contaminated by the contact of a
dead thing, will the food be defiled? And
they answered, Defiled it is.

15 Then Aggaeus opened his mind to
them: Here is a whole people, a whole race,
the Lord says, that shews defiled under my
scrutiny. Never an enterprise of theirs,
never an offering they bring, but is defiled.
16 But now, mark well how you thrive hence-
forward. Whilst none would be at pains to

set pillar on base, here in the Lord's
temple, how fared it with yonder twenty-
bushel heap of corn? Look closer, and it
was but ten bushels. Did you think to
press fifty quarts into the vat? There were
but twenty. Sirocco I sent and mildew,
18 smote all your crops with hail, and you
would not come back to me, the Lord says.
Mark well how you thrive henceforward,
19 from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth
month, when you laid the foundations of
the Lord's temple; mark it well. Not yet
20 has the corn ripened, not yet have vine and
fig, pomegranate and olive, had time to
blossom; but on all these my blessing lies
henceforward.

And this further message Aggaeus had
21 from the Lord, on that twenty-fourth day
of the month, for Zorobabel, the governor
of Juda: Earth and heaven both I mean to
set rocking; royal thrones shall be over-
23 turned, and the power of Gentile king-
doms brought to nothing; overthrown they
lie, chariot and charioteer, down come
horse and rider, friend turning his sword
against friend; but thou, son of Salathiel,
24 says the Lord of hosts, thou, Zorobabel,
art my servant still; on that day I will take
thee to my side, keep thee there, close as
signet-ring; it is a divine choice that has
fallen on thee, says the Lord of hosts.

¹ This had been done in some sort much earlier, under king Cyrus (Esd. 3. 10), but the work was interrupted, and doubtless had to start again from the beginning.

THE PROPHECY OF ZACHARIAS

IT was in the second year of Darius' reign, and the eighth month of it, that a message from the Lord came to the prophet Zacharias, son of Barachias, son of Addo. And thus it ran: Beyond question, your fathers incurred the Lord's displeasure; and now this word thou must proclaim from the Lord of hosts, Come back to me, he bids you, and I, he promises, will come back to your side. Prophets there were long since, that warned those fathers of yours in his name, they should turn away from ill living and rebellious thoughts; yet neither heed nor hearing, he says, would they give me; not for you to follow their example. Gone, the men of an earlier day; prophets that spoke to them might not live on for ever, but warning of mine, promise of mine, entrusted to the prophets that were my true servants, live on yet. See how the fulfilment of them overtook your fathers, till at last they must needs repent, must acknowledge the Lord of hosts had not threatened them, sinners and rebels, in vain!

Then, on the twenty-fourth day of Sabbath, which is the eleventh month, word came from the Lord afresh, and once more it came to Zacharias, son of Barachias, son of Addo. A vision appeared to me in the night, of one that was mounted on a sorrel horse, at a stand among the myrtle-trees, down in the Valley; and never a horse in all his company but was sorrel, roan or white. Scarce had I asked, My Lord, what be these? when the angel that inspired me¹ promised he would shew me the meaning of it; and with that, my answer came from him who stood among the myrtle-trees, These have gone out on the Lord's errand, patrolling the earth. And to him, now, the angel of the myrtle-wood, those others made their report: All earth we have pa-

trolled, said they, and everywhere is safety, everywhere is rest. Ah, Lord of hosts, my angel monitor said, wilt thou never relent, never take pity upon Jerusalem and the towns of Juda? Here be seventy years come and gone. And with that, the Lord answered him; gracious his words were, gracious and full of comfort. Cry it abroad, now, my monitor said to me, this message from the Lord of hosts: Jealous, right jealous my love for Zion's hill, deep, full deep my anger against the heathen that are so well content! I would have punished Jerusalem but lightly, it was these drove home the blow. And now, the Lord says, I am for Jerusalem again, bringing pardon with me; temple shall be built there for the Lord of hosts, Jerusalem shall see mason's plummet busy once again. And this, too: A promise from the Lord of hosts! Yonder towns shall yet overflow with riches; Zion shall yet receive comfort, Jerusalem be the city of my choice.

Then I looked up, and what saw I? Here were four horns;² and when I asked my guide what they should be, he told me, Upon these horns, Juda and Israel and Jerusalem were tossed about. After that, the Lord sent me another vision of four blacksmiths; What errand, said I, have these? Why, said he, yonder horns made such havoc of Juda till now, never a man might lift his head; what should be the blacksmiths' errand but to turn them back?³ Polled they must be henceforward, the heathen folk that once tossed Juda to the winds.

2 When next I looked up, I saw a man there that carried a measuring-line; so I asked him, whither he was bound? For Jerusalem, said he, to measure length and breadth of it. And at that, my angel

¹ Literally, 'the angel who spoke in (or, by means of) me'. The Hebrew text can also be rendered, 'the angel who spoke to me' (cf. Num. 12. 6 and 8). But see note on 2. 3. ² The horns evidently represent four (or perhaps two) enemies of the Jewish people, but they cannot be identified with certainty. ³ 'Turn them back'; literally, 'scare them away'. It seems probable that there is an error in the manuscripts, and that some word more appropriate to the activities of blacksmiths originally appeared there.

monitor would have gone out on his errand, but here was a second angel come out to meet him.¹ Speed thee, said he, on thy way, and tell that pupil of thine:² So full Jerusalem shall be, of men and cattle both, wall it shall have none to hedge it in; I myself, the Lord says, will be a wall of fire around it, and in the midst of it the brightness of my presence.

6 Away, away, from the north country get you gone, the Lord says; what if I have scattered you, far as the four winds? Away with thee, Sion; wouldst thou still make thy home with widowed Babylon? This promise the Lord of hosts makes: After . . .

. . . glory,³ I hold his warrant against the nations that plunder you; apple of my eye⁴ he touches, that touches you. Lift I my hand, they shall be at your mercy that are your masters now; doubt shall be none it was the Lord who sent me.

10 Sion, poor maid, break out into songs of rejoicing; I am on my way, coming to dwell in the midst of thee, the Lord says. There be nations a many that shall rally that day to the Lord's side; they, too, shall be people of mine, but with thee shall be my dwelling.

Doubt there shall be none it was the Lord of hosts sent me to thy aid.⁵ Juda the Lord shall claim for his own, his portion in a holy land; still Jerusalem shall be the city of his choice.

13 Be silent, living things, in the Lord's presence; yonder in his holy dwelling all is astir.

3 Another vision the Lord shewed me; here was an angel of his, and before this angel stood the high priest Josue, with the Accuser at his right hand bringing

accusation against him. But to the Accuser² the divine answer came, The Lord rebuke thee, Satan; the Lord, that makes choice of Jerusalem, rebuke thee! What, is not this a brand saved from the embers?⁶ Then, for he saw Josue standing there in his presence very vilely clad, the angel gave it out to his attendants they should take away these vile rags from him; Guilt of thine, said he, I have set by; thou shalt have new garments to wear instead. A clean mitre they should give him besides. And so, when the new mitre was on his head and the new garments were about him, the angel of the Lord rose up and gave Josue his commission from the Lord of hosts: My beckoning follow thou, my commands keep thou, people of mine thou shalt govern, house of mine shalt have in thy charge, and in their company, that here stand about thee, shalt come and go. This for the hearing of the high priest Josue, and others his co-assessors, names of good omen all.⁷

Time is I should bring hither my servant, that is the Dayspring. Stone is here I will set before yonder Josue; a stone that bears seven eyes, device of my own carving, says the Lord of hosts. All the guilt of this land I will banish in a single day. That shall be a day of good cheer, the Lord of hosts says, friend making glad with friend under vine and under fig-tree.

4 Once the angel monitor roused me to my senses, as though I had lain asleep; Now, said he, what seest thou? Why, I said, here is a lamp-stand meets my eyes, all of gold. A bowl this lamp-stand has at the top of it, and from the bowl run seven pipes, to feed the seven lamps that crown

¹ Although the prophet is given direct vision, it seems that he only understands the meaning of it through the medium of the angel who 'speaks in him' (cf. 1. 9). This angel monitor comes and goes between heaven and earth (5. 5), he 'goes out' from the divine presence, exactly like the deluding spirit in III Kg. 22. 22, with some revelation about the measuring of Jerusalem, but is intercepted on his way by the assurance that the city needs no measuring.

² Literally, 'that young man' or 'that child'. Conceivably the reference is to the man mentioned in verse 1, but more probably Zacharias is the 'child', not in years but in experience (III Kg. 3. 7).

³ No plausible explanation has been suggested to account for the words 'after glory', and it seems likely there has been an omission in the manuscripts; the more so, because Almighty God is the speaker in verse 8, and not in verse 9.

⁴ For 'my eye' the Hebrew text gives 'his eye'.
⁵ The sudden change of speaker perhaps indicates that, all through this chapter, we are reading a series of prophetic fragments, not a continuous prophecy.

⁶ Cf. Am. 4. 11. The idea is not, in all probability, that of something rescued from a conflagration but that of a log which is saved from overnight to light this morning's fire—Josue is a link between the pre-exilic and the post-exilic period.
⁷ The meaning of verses 8-10 will have depended on some kind of symbolism with which we are no longer conversant. 'Names of good omen'; literally, 'names of sign'. 'The Dayspring' seems a translation from the Septuagint Greek, which is ambiguous; probably, in accordance with the Hebrew text, it meant 'The Branch'. See further 6. 12 below, and note. It is not clear whether the 'stone' is a fresh metaphor for describing God's servant, or needs some other explanation.

3 it. And there are two olive-trees hanging
over it, one to the right and one to the left
4 of the bowl. Then in my turn I asked a
question of the angel, Tell me, what does
5 all this mean? What, said my monitor,
canst thou not recognize it? Not I, my
Lord, I answered.

6 And thereupon the angel told me . . .
... Word from the Lord to Zorobabel:¹
By arms, by force nothing canst thou; my
7 spirit is all, says the Lord of hosts. Vain is
towering height of thine, great mountain;
down to plain's level thou must stoop at
Zorobabel's coming; stone from thee he
must quarry and smooth to be his coping-
8 stone, how fair, how fair!² This message,
9 too, I had from the Lord: Yonder temple
hand of Zorobabel has founded, hand of
Zorobabel shall finish. No more you shall
doubt that I come to you on the Lord's
10 errand. Humble fortunes of yesterday who
dared belittle? Rejoice they now, to see
plummet at work in Zorobabel's hand . . .

... What should they be, those seven,
but eyes the Lord has, glancing this way
and that to scan the earth?

11 Then I asked him about the two olive-
trees, to right and left of the lamp-stand;
12 and there was more I would know, What
of the two olive-shoots, close beside the
two golden taps that feed yonder pipes of
13 gold?³ What said he, canst thou not tell?
14 Not I, my Lord, I answered. What should
these be, he said, but the two newly-
anointed ones that stand in his presence,
who is Master of the whole earth?

5 Once again I looked up, and there
before me was a scroll, that had wings
2 to fly with. So when he asked, what saw I,
A scroll, I said, that flies past, twenty
cubits long and ten broad. Here is ban,
3 said he, that runs all the world over; thief
is none, perjurer is none but shall be

judged⁴ by the tenour of it. It shall go out
4 under my warrant, says the Lord of hosts,
making its way into house of thief, house
of perjurer that wrongs my name, and
clinging close till it makes an end of all,
wood-work and stone-work both.

Again the angel visited me, and bade me
5 look well at the revelation that was sent
me. What is it? I asked. Bushel-measure
6 is this, he told me; And it is nothing other,
said he, than guilt of theirs,⁵ spread abroad
over the whole earth. Then he lifted up
7 the cover, that was a talent's weight of lead,
and what should I see but a woman sitting
there within? Godlessness, he told me,
8 is the name of her; and with that he thrust
her back into the barrel, and fastened down
the cover of lead. And now, looking up,
9 I saw two other women appearing, that had
wings spread out to the wind, strong as a
hawk's wings; and these carried the barrel
off, midway between heaven and earth.
When I would know whither they carried
10 it, the angel told me, To Sennaar, where it
must have a shrine built for it; there it
must be set up, and rest on a pedestal of its
own.

6 Once more yet I looked up, and had
a vision of four chariots, coming out
of a pass between two mountains that were
all of bronze. Of the horses, the first pair
2 were sorrel, the second black, the third
white, the fourth a sturdy pair of roans.
3 And when I asked of my angel monitor
what these might be, Here be four winds,
4 he told me, going out on their errand; their
place is in his presence, who is Master of
the whole earth. So out they went, chariot
5 drawn by black horses turning north-
wards; the white followed these, and the
6 roans turned southwards, the sturdiest
pair of all . . .

... Went out on their errand,⁶ fain to

¹ Verses 6-10 seem to interrupt the thread of the narrative, and some think they have been accidentally misplaced. ² Literally, in the Latin, 'And he shall bring out a primary stone, and shall equalize grace to the grace of it'; in the Hebrew text, 'And he shall bring out the stone, the top, a roaring, Grace, grace to it'. It seems likely that the text has been badly preserved.

³ The Hebrew text seems to imply that there were two shoots communicating between the olive-trees and the pipes, as if to feed the lamps with oil. But the text is difficult, and perhaps corrupt, nor does this image fit in well with verse 14. Taking the Latin as it stands, we may perhaps conjecture that the two trees represent the priesthood and the kingship, the two shoots (not mentioned earlier) representing Josue and Zorobabel respectively. ⁴ Instead of 'judged' the Hebrew text has 'declared innocent'; it can hardly be doubted that there has been some error of copying. ⁵ 'Guilt of theirs', presumably that of the Jews during their captivity. The Latin version here of, following the Hebrew text, gives 'eyes' instead of 'guilt'; but 'guilt' is the rendering of the Septuagint Greek, and a very slight error in Hebrew script would account for the mistake.

⁶ It seems likely that there is some defect in the text, which makes no mention of the sorrel horses, and implies (as it stands) that the roans first went southwards, and then went out in an unspecified direction.

8 traverse the whole world through. And a great cry came to me,¹ See, where they reach the north country! All is well in the north country, my heart is content.²

9 And a message from the Lord came to
10 Zacharias: From yonder emissaries of the exiled Jews, Holdai, Tobias and Idaias, toll thou must take; this very day bestir thee, and make thy way to the house of Josias, son of Sophonias, whither they have repaired, newly come from Babylon.

11 Gold and silver thou must take from them, and make crowns, to crown the high priest,
12 Josue son of Josedec...³ This message thou shalt give him from the Lord God of hosts: Here is one takes his name from the Dayspring;⁴ where his feet have trodden, spring there shall be. He it is shall rebuild

13 the Lord's temple; builder of the Lord's temple, to what honours he shall come! On princely throne he sits, throne of a priest beside him,⁵ and between these two, what harmony of counsel! For Helem, Tobias, Idaias, and Hem the son of Sophonias, the crowns they gave⁶ shall win remembrance in the temple of the Lord.

15 Men shall come from far away, to work at the temple's rebuilding; you shall not doubt, then, it was the Lord of hosts gave me my warrant. Will you but heed the voice of the Lord your God, this shall be your reward...⁷

7 In the fourth year of Darius' reign, another message from the Lord came to Zacharias; it was on the fourth day of Casleu, the ninth month. This was the

occasion of it; here was Sarasar, with Rogommelech and others of his company, sending envoys to implore the Lord's favour.⁸ A question they put to the priests,
3 there in the temple of the Lord of hosts, and to the prophets besides: Must I yet mourn, yet rid myself of defilement, when the fifth month comes round, as my wont has been these many years past?⁹ Then
4 came this message to me from the Lord of hosts: Ask this, of priests and people both;
5 was it indeed fast of mine you kept, all these seventy years, the fifth month and the seventh observing ever with fasting and lament, you, that when food and drink
6 were set before you, shared them with none?¹⁰

Bethink you, what warnings gave he by the prophets of an earlier day, when Jerusalem was yet safe and prosperous, she and the cities about her, populous the western valleys, populous the hill-country of the south. (Such was the word the Lord sent
8 to Zacharias.¹¹) A message from the Lord
9 of hosts: Come now, the true award, the tender heart that pities a neighbour's need! Widow and orphan, the alien and
10 the friendless, wrong no more; brother against brother plot no more! And would
11 they listen? Shrank every shoulder from the burden, deaf ears they turned him, hardened their hearts to adamant. Heed
12 his law they would not; heed they would not, when the Lord of hosts inspired those older prophets to speak in his name. What wonder if his divine anger was aroused
13 beyond measure? What wonder, says the

¹ Literally, 'he cried and said to me', the subject of the verb remaining unexpressed. ² Literally, 'they have given my spirit rest in the north country'. The sense is perhaps that they had executed vengeance (cf. Ez. 5. 13); but the interpretation of the allegory must have depended on a situation with which we are no longer familiar.

³ It is possible that two crowns at once were set on the head of Josue, to convey some mystical lesson. But it is more natural, especially in view of what follows, to infer that some words have dropped out of the text, indicating that the second crown was for Zorobabel.

⁴ 'The Dayspring', as in 3. 8 above, is 'the Branch' (or, 'the Shoot') in the Hebrew text. It seems clear that the first half of Zorobabel's name is referred to. 'Where his feet have trodden'; literally, 'from under him'.

⁵ The Latin and the Hebrew are ambiguous here; the meaning may be 'he shall be priest on his throne', or 'a priest shall be on his throne'. The latter sense is given by the Septuagint Greek, and those authors who adopt the rival interpretation are at a loss to explain what is meant by 'these two'.

⁶ Literally, 'the crowns', but it seems fairly clear that the same persons are referred to as in verse 10, though with some curious differences of nomenclature.

⁷ The form of the sentence in the Hebrew text suggests that the obedience of the Jewish people will produce some effect which still remains to be expressed; if so, we have to suppose another gap in the manuscripts.

⁸ The interpretation of this verse is very doubtful; the persons referred to are not mentioned elsewhere.

⁹ The fifth month was that in which Jerusalem had fallen; it had evidently been a time of fasting during the Captivity; now that the temple is in building, they ask, should the commemoration cease?

¹⁰ Literally, in the Latin, 'And when you ate and drank, did you not eat and drink for yourselves?'; in the Hebrew text, 'And when you ate and when you drank, were not you the eaters and you the drinkers?'

¹¹ A general accusation of selfishness is perhaps intended; cf. Deut. 16. 14 and elsewhere.

¹² Some think the words were included here by accident; if not, they are a somewhat confusing repetition of the rubric in verse 1. It is clear that they interrupt the run of the paragraph; verses 9 and 10 are a message delivered (in the first instance) not by Zacharias but by the older prophets mentioned in verse 7.

Lord of hosts, they should call in vain on me, that in vain had warned them? So it was I scattered them in unknown countries, left their land a desert, where none came or went; a land so fair, by its own inhabitants laid waste.

8 This word, too, came from him: A message from the Lord of hosts! Great ruth have I for Sion, and sore it grieves me. To Sion I will return, so runs his promise, and make in Jerusalem my home; The loyal city, men shall call her, and that mountain where dwells the Lord of hosts, The holy mountain. This, too: Trust me, there shall yet be aged folk in the streets of Jerusalem, men and women both, that go staff in hand, they are so bowed with years; thronged they shall be, those streets, with boys and girls at play in the open. And this: Hard to believe? So now they find it, poor remnant of a people; but should I, the Lord of hosts, find it hard to perform? And this, too: See if I do not rescue my people from the east country and the west, bring them back to dwell here, in the midst of Jerusalem; they my people, and I their God, in truth and loyalty either to other bound.

9 A message from the Lord of hosts! Take courage, then, you that still hold fast by¹ the commands the prophets gave you, when the foundations of yonder house were a-laying, and the Lord of hosts had no temple yet. Before that time, labour went unrewarded, for man and beast; so hard pressed were you, none might come or go in safety; every man, in those days, I left at his neighbour's mercy. But now, says the Lord of hosts, this remnant of my people shall enjoy better fortune; a happier seed-time is theirs. Its fruit the vineyard shall yield, the land its harvest, heaven its rain, and all for this remnant to enjoy.

13 Breed of Juda, breed of Israel, by-words of misfortune once, when heathen folk fell to cursing their enemies; happy deliverance, they shall be names of blessing now!

14 Your fears vanquish, go bravely on; he, the Lord of hosts, gives you his warrant for it. Time was, says he, when your fathers had

roused my anger, and I was ever planning mischief against you; no respite then! Today, for the good estate of Juda and Jerusalem plan I no less eagerly; vanquish your fears. And for your part, this do: deal honestly with your neighbours, give ever in your market-place the true, the salutary award; harbour no ill thoughts one against another, nor set your hearts on the oath falsely sworn; every deed of wrong is hateful to me, the Lord says.

And word came to me from the Lord of hosts, bidding me say this in his name: Fasts you kept ever, when three months of the year, or four, six months or nine were gone, shall be all rejoicing and gladness for the men of Juda now, all high festival, will you but love true dealing and peaceful ways. This promise I give you from the Lord of hosts: What alien throngs, from what far cities, shall make pilgrimage yet! And ever, as fresh towns they reach, says pilgrim, Come with us, and welcome: court we the divine favour, to the Lord of hosts repair we; says townsman, Go with you I will. No nation so populous, no kingdom so strong, but shall betake itself to Jerusalem, to find the Lord of hosts and court his divine favour. This, too: A time is coming, when there is never a man of Jewish blood but shall have ten Gentiles at his heels, and no two of the same speech; clinging all at once to the skirts of him, and crying, Your way is ours! The tale has reached us, how God is there to protect you.

9 Burden of the Lord's doom, where falls it now? On Hadrach's land: ay, and Damascus shall be its resting-place: all men's eyes are fixed on the Lord, all the tribes of Israel are watching him now. Perilously near is Emath, and yonder cities of Tyre and Sidon, so famed for wisdom. This Tyre, how strong a fortress she has built, what silver and gold she has amassed, till they were common as clay, as mire in the streets! Ay, but the Lord means to dispossess her; cast into the sea, all that wealth of hers, and herself burnt to the ground! At the sight of it, how Ascalon

¹ Literally, 'listen to'; but the people of Juda could not be listening, there and then, to prophecies uttered two years earlier. ² The latter part of this verse seems out of place, and some think the Hebrew text has been incorrectly transmitted. A very slight alteration would give the sense, 'The cities of Syria belong to the Lord, just as much as the tribes of Israel.'

trembles, how Gaza mourns, and Accaron, for hopes belied; no chieftain in Gaza, no townsfolk left in Ascalon now; in Azotus dwells a bastard breed. So low will I bring the pride of yonder Philistines; snatch the blood-stained morsel from their mouths, the unhallowed food theirs no longer; ¹ servant of our God he shall be that is left surviving, a clansman ² in Juda; so shall Accaron be all one with the Jebusite. I have sentinels that shall march to and fro, guarding this home of mine, and none shall take toll of it henceforward; my eyes are watching now. Glad news for thee, widowed Sion; cry out for happiness, Jerusalem forlorn! See where thy king comes to greet thee, a trusty deliverer; see how lowly he rides, mounted on an ass, patient colt of patient dam! ³ Chariots of thine, Ephraim, horses of thine, Jerusalem, shall be done away, bow of the warrior be unstrung; peace this king shall impose on the world, reigning from sea to sea, from Euphrates to the world's end. How should they be ransomed, but by the blood of thy covenant with me, those thy fellow-countrymen, in waterless dungeons bound? To these sheltering walls, O patient prisoners, return; you have my warrant, double recompense shall be granted you. Bow of mine is Juda, Ephraim my shafts employ; Greece, look to thy sons when I match the sons of Sion against them, sword in a warrior's hand! See him there, in visible form, high above them, the Lord God, that volleys down shaft of his lightning, sounds with the trumpet, rides on the storm-wind of the south! He, the Lord of hosts, will be their protection; with sling-stones for teeth, flesh of men eat they, drink blood like revellers at their wine; not sacrificial bowl, nor altar's horns, so drenched with blood. His own people, his own sheep, will not the Lord God in that hour defend them? His

own sacred trophy themselves shall be, to this land of his beckoning all men's eyes; ⁴ a people how blessed and how fair! ⁵ So well with corn and wine furnished, both man and maid shall thrive. ⁶

10 For rain in spring whom but the Lord entreat we? He it is, none else, fashions the snow; ⁷ waters the crops on this farm or that. Vain the false god's foretelling, vainly diviner cheats us, and dreams delude; comfort they have none to give; such ways Israel has followed, like a flock of sheep untended, and to its cost. What marvel if my anger blazed out against the shepherds? A reckoning I must have with yonder buck-goats; ay, the Lord of hosts would keep strict count of his flock, the sons of Juda.

Who but Israel is the proud charger I will ride into battle? Corner-stone, he, of the building, peg of the tent's rope, bow that shall win the day; spoilers of the world he, none other, shall send forth. Warriors they shall be that go out to battle trampling all before them in the mire; does not the Lord go out to battle at their side? Well mounted, their enemies could yet nothing win. Such aid the men of Juda shall have, the sons of Joseph such deliverance; in pity I will restore them, and all shall be as it was before I cast them off from me; I am the Lord their God, shall I not heed them? Ephraim, of great warriors the peer! Glad all hearts shall be, as when the wine-cup goes round; children of his shall acclaim the sight, and triumph lustily in the Lord.

Flock of my ransoming, see how they gather at my call! Thriving now as they throve long since, yet scattered through the world, in those distant lands they shall remember me; with spirits revived, they and their children shall return. Back from Egypt, back from Assyria I will summon them, rally them, to Galaad and Lebanon

¹ Some think this verse implies that the Philistines will be converted to Jewish customs, abstaining from meat with blood in it and other forbidden food. But it may be Philistia is compared to a beast of prey; cf. Am. 3. 12. ² Literally, 'a chieftain', but this makes the sense difficult; some scholars, by a different pointing of the Hebrew text, would read 'a clan'.

³ Literally, 'and a colt, the foal of an ass'; the implication seems to be that the king will come in less than royal state. See Mt. 21. 5. ⁴ Literally, 'And the Lord their God will deliver them in that day, like the flock of his people, because (they shall be like) stones of sanctification that are lifted up as a standard over his land'. ⁵ 'A people how blessed and how fair'; literally, 'What is the goodness of it and what is the beauty of it!' Or possibly 'of him', but the word 'beauty' would be out of place in this context.

⁶ The reference of verses 11-17 is obscure; the conflict between Jewish and Greek culture did not make itself felt until nearly three hundred years after Zachary's time. ⁷ The word here used in the Hebrew text probably means lightning.

bring them home; and that home shall be
 11 too small for them. Crossed, yonder
 straits, the sea's wave checked, depths of
 the river disappointed of their prey! As-
 syria's pride brought low, empire of Egypt
 12 cut down! In the Lord they shall find
 strength, under his protection come and
 go; so runs the divine promise.

11 Fling thy gates wide, Lebanon, for
 the fire to come in, and devour thy
 2 cedars! Lament, neighbour pine-tree, for
 cedar overthrown; here be lordly ones
 plundèred; lament, oaks of Basan, for the
 3 secret forest that is cut down! Hark, how
 the shepherd-folk lament, their fine
 mantle¹ gone, how roars lion for the
 thickets of Jordan stripped!

4 This message the Lord my God sent
 me:² To this flock that is a-fattening for
 slaughter thou must play the shepherd.
 5 What, would they slay without remorse,
 yonder lords of the flock, sell carcass, and
 thank the Lord that so enriches them; are
 6 there shepherds so unmerciful? Nay, I will
 be unmerciful too, the Lord says, to all
 that dwell on earth; I will leave every son
 of Adam at the mercy of his neighbour, or
 the king that rules over him; broken and
 bowed the land shall be, and no redress
 shall they have from me henceforward!

7 Poor sheep fattening for slaughter, take
 charge of your flock I must; and two staves
 I made me, for the better tending of it, one
 I called Beauty, and the other Cords.
 8 Before a month was up, of three shepherds
 I had rid them, yet had I no patience with
 them, and they of me grew no less weary.
 9 No more will I tend you, said I; perish all
 of you that will perish, be lost all that will
 be lost; and for the residue, let them de-
 10 vour one another; I care not. With that,
 I took up the staff I called Beauty, and cut
 it in two; in token that my covenant with

all the world should be null. Null it was
 11 thenceforward; and doubt they might not,
 the starvelings of the flock that looked up
 to me, the Lord's word had come to them.

... And now, said I, pay me my wages,
 12 if pay you will; if not, say no more. So they
 paid me for my wages thirty pieces of
 silver. Why, the Lord said, here is a
 13 princely sum they rate me at! Throw it to
 the craftsman yonder. So there, in the
 Lord's temple, I threw the craftsman my
 thirty pieces of silver...³

Then I took my other staff, Cords, and
 14 cut it in two; in token that all brotherhood
 was at an end between Juda and Israel.⁴
 And the Lord said, Gear of a foolish shep-
 15 herd thou must take to thee now. See if
 16 I do not find me such a shepherd for this
 land of theirs, as will leave lost sheep un-
 counted, strayed sheep unsought, hurt
 sheep unhealed; and such as are left whole,
 feed he will not, but eat ever the fattest of
 them, tearing only the hoofs away. Out
 17 upon the false shepherd⁵ that abandons his
 flock! Sword shall pierce the arm of him,
 and the right eye of him, till arm is withered
 and eye darkened quite.

12 Burden of the Lord's doom, where
 falls it now? On Israel. Word from
 the Lord, who spread heaven out, founded
 earth, fashions the life that beats in man!
 This is my decree, that Jerusalem's walls
 (ay, and the whole of Juda shall man those
 ramparts) be offered to all the nations
 round about for a fatal cup;⁶ to all the
 world Jerusalem shall be a stone immove-
 able; lift it who will, shall be torn unmer-
 cifully. Sec where they muster to the
 attack, all the kingdoms of the world!
 Time now, the Lord says, to dazzle steed
 2 and craze rider's wits; for Juda, the sun-
 shine of my regard, the heathen must ride
 in darkness. Vainly do yonder chieftains of

¹ The word used in the Hebrew text may mean either 'mantle' or 'magnificence'. In the present context, it may perhaps refer to the shade of the trees, now lost to the shepherds through felling; the beasts have similarly been robbed of their covert in the thickets (literally, 'the pride') of the Jordan valley.

² No plausible account has been given either of the meaning of this prophecy (verses 4-17), or of the occasion upon which it was delivered.

³ It is not easy to see who could be the employers mentioned in such a context, and it may even be doubted whether these two verses have not been misplaced. In Mt. 27. 9, 10, where they are quoted in a considerably different form, Jeremy, not Zachary, is mentioned as their author. But see note there.

⁴ If the text is correctly preserved, this part of the parable looks as if it referred to a situation several centuries earlier than Zachary's time.

⁵ Literally, 'shepherd that is an idol', or perhaps (according to the Hebrew text) 'shepherd of nothingness'.

⁶ Literally, 'Behold, I will make Jerusalem a lintel of drunkenness to all peoples round about; ay, and Juda, too, shall be in the siege against Jerusalem'. In the Hebrew text, a cup is probably meant rather than a lintel; and the second half of the verse runs, 'Ay, and against Juda, too, it shall be, in the siege (or, stronghold) against Jerusalem'.

Juda look to the garrison of Jerusalem to be their succour, in the strength of the Lord their God; chieftains of Juda themselves shall be my instruments then, fire-brand in the forest, spark among the dry sheaves, to devour all the nations right and left of them. Jerusalem shall stand, when all is over, where Jerusalem stood; but to the country folk of Juda the Lord grants deliverance first; clan of David, citizens of Jerusalem shall not boast themselves better than the rest.¹

When that day comes, the men of Jerusalem shall have the Lord for their stay; the lowest fallen among them shall seem royal as David's self, and David's clansmen a race divine, as though an angel of the Lord marched at their head.

Never a nation that marched on Jerusalem but I will hunt it down, when that day comes, and make an end of it.

On David's clan, on all the citizens of Jerusalem, I will pour out a gracious spirit of prayer; towards me they shall look, me whom they have pierced through.² Lament for him they must, and grieve bitterly; never was such lament for an only son, grief so bitter over first-born dead.

When that day comes, great shall be the mourning in Jerusalem, great as Adadremmon's mourning at Mageddo;³ the whole land in mourning, all its families apart. Here the men of David's clan, yonder their women, here the men of Nathan's, yonder their women, here the men of Levi's, yonder their women, here the men of Semei's, yonder their women; apart they shall mourn, whatever families there be, and all their women-folk apart.

13 When that day comes, clansmen of David and citizens of Jerusalem shall have a fountain flowing openly, of guilt to rid them, and of defilement.

¹ Instead of 'first', the Septuagint Greek and the Latin version give 'as at first', apparently by an error. Verses 8-14, with the whole of chapter 13, seem to form a collection of prophetic fragments rather than a continuous prophecy.

² A variant reading in some manuscripts gives 'him' instead of 'me'. On critical grounds, it is less plausible, but it seems to have been current in very early times (see Jn. 19. 37; also Apoc. 1. 7).

³ The reference may be to II Par. 35. 25; but many battles were fought in the neighbourhood of Mageddo.

⁴ The meaning of the second half of this verse is quite uncertain. Literally, 'between thy hands', a difficult phrase most inadequately interpreted by some moderns as meaning 'on thy back'. If the sacred author had meant 'between thy arms', he would surely have said so, as in IV Kg. 9. 24.

⁵ Literally, 'my lovers'; elsewhere in the Old Testament this word always refers to false gods, as the 'lovers' with whom Israel committed adultery. If the false prophet is referred to, it is not easy to see what injuries he had sustained, why any question was asked about them, what answer was expected, or what was meant by the answer given.

⁶ 'Neighbour'; the word is not likely to be what the prophet wrote. Elsewhere it is only a legal term meaning 'a second party'. The second half of the verse may be a continuation of the first; but if so the direction 'Smite!' cannot be addressed to the sword, which would require a feminine, not a masculine formation of the verb.

A time shall come, says the Lord of hosts, when I will efface the memory of the false gods; the very names of them shall be forgotten; banish, too, the false prophets, and the unclean spirit they echo. Dares one of them prophesy again, all men will turn against him, even the parents that begot him; Still at thy lying, and in the Lord's name? Thou shalt die for it! And with a javelin's thrust father and mother will take the life they gave.

When that day comes, never a prophet but shall rue the false vision he trusted in. Deceitful garb of sackcloth each one shall throw aside; No prophet am I, but a simple peasant, that grew up to follow Adam's trade!⁴

Ask they, What wounds be these in thy clasped hands?⁵ Thus wounded was I, he shall answer, in the house of my friends.⁶

Up, sword, and attack this shepherd of mine, neighbour of mine, says the Lord of hosts.⁷

Smite shepherd, and his flock shall scatter; so upon the common folk my vengeance shall fall. All over this land, the Lord says, two thirds of them are forfeit to destruction, only a third shall be left to dwell there; and this third part, through fire I will lead them; purged they shall be as silver is purged, tried as gold is tried. Thiers on my name to call, their plea mine to grant; My own people, so I greet them, and they answer, The Lord is my own God.

14 The Lord's appointed time is coming, when spoil of thee shall be divided in thy midst. All the nations of the world I will muster to the siege of Jerusalem; taken the city shall be, and its houses pillaged, and its women-folk ravished; of the defenders, half will go into exile, and leave but a remnant in the city.

3 And then the Lord will go out to battle
 4 against those nations, as he did ever in the
 5 decisive hour. There on the mount of
 6 Olives, that faces Jerusalem on the east, his
 7 feet shall be set; to east and west the mount
 8 of Olives shall be cloven in two halves,
 9 with a great chasm between, and the two
 10 halves shall move apart, one northward,
 11 one southward. Down the clefts of that
 12 sacred hill-side you shall flee, each of them
 13 now leading to the next; flee as you fled
 14 before the earthquake, in Ozias' time, that
 15 reigned over Juda; on, on he comes, the
 16 Lord my God, with all his sacred retinue.
 17 Light there shall be none that day, all
 18 shall be frost and cold; ¹ one day there shall
 19 be, none but the Lord knows the length of
 20 it, that shall be neither daylight nor dark,
 21 but when evening comes, there shall be
 22 light. Then a living stream will flow from
 23 Jerusalem, half to the eastern, half to the
 24 western sea, winter and summer both; and
 25 over all the earth the Lord shall be king,
 26 one Lord, called everywhere by one name.
 27 What shall be the land's frontiers? The
 28 desert, and Geba, and Remmon ² that is
 29 south of Jerusalem. What of the city? It
 30 shall be built up high, and its true limits
 31 keep, from gate of Benjamin to main gate
 32 and corner gate, from tower of Hananel to
 33 the king's wine-press. A populous city, no
 34 ban resting on it thenceforward; a secure
 35 dwelling-place.
 36 And what of the visitation that shall
 37 smite down the assailants of Jerusalem?
 38 Wasted away the flesh of them, till they can
 39 keep their feet no longer; wasted away eye
 40 in socket and tongue in mouth; with great

tumult of mind the Lord will bemuse them
 that day, each of them laying hands on his
 fellow, brother engaging brother in fight.
 Juda meanwhile, shall set about the re-
 gaining of Jerusalem, ³ and find the spoils
 of every neighbouring people amassed
 there, gold, and silver, and of raiment
 great abundance; but as for horse and
 mule, camel and ass, and all the cattle in
 yonder camp, these will have perished by
 the same plague as their masters.

Yet of all the nations that sent their
 armies against Jerusalem there shall be
 some remnant left; and these, year by year,
 shall make pilgrimage, to worship their
 King, the Lord of hosts, and keep his feast
 of Tent-dwelling. Come and worship their
 King they must, the Lord of hosts; else no
 rain shall fall on them, all the world over.
 What then of Egypt's folk, that rain have
 none? What if they refuse to go on pil-
 grimage? Why, for their neglecting of this
 feast, the same plague shall fall on them
 which the Lord sent on the heathen armies
 aforesaid. ⁴ Be it Egypt, or be it any other
 nation, that will not keep the feast of Tent-
 dwelling, punished it shall be in this
 fashion or in that.

Spoils from the enemy's bridle-rein
 shall be consecrated on that day to the
 Lord's service, till there is never pot or pan
 in his temple but rivals the altar's bowls for
 costliness; ⁵ Nay, never pot or pan in all
 Jerusalem but shall be consecrated to the
 Lord of hosts, for any who will to come and
 take it and see the victim in it; trafficking
 there shall be no more in the Lord's
 temple, when that day comes. ⁶

¹ The sense of this verse is doubtful, and it seems possible the text needs emendation; perhaps the prophet wrote 'there shall be neither light nor darkness, heat nor cold'. ² For 'the desert, and Geba, and Remmon' the Latin version has 'the desert from the hill of Remmon'. ³ 'Set about the regaining of Jerusalem'; in the original simply 'fight against Jerusalem'. But it is clear from the context that we have gone back to the situation described in verse 2, where Jerusalem is enemy-occupied. The Vulgate here gives the form 'Judas', instead of the more usual form 'Juda', perhaps with the idea that Judas Machabaeus is referred to. ⁴ The Hebrew text is obscure, and perhaps corrupt, but it seems most likely that the sense given above was the general sense of it. The Latin version gives no satisfactory meaning here. ⁵ Literally, 'On that day that which is on the horse's bridle shall be holy to the Lord, and the caldrons in the Lord's house will be like bowls before the altar'. The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning that the bells on the trappings of the horses (it is difficult to see what horses) will be inscribed, 'Holiness to the Lord'. ⁶ This verse seems to imply that only consecrated vessels might be used in seething the victim before a sacrifice; and further, that some charge was made by the Temple authorities for the use of the vessels in question.

THE PROPHECY OF MALACHIAS

HERE follows burden of the Lord's doom for Israel, that was entrusted to Malachias.

- 2 Oh, but I have dealt lovingly with you! the Lord says. Would you know, wherein I shewed my love? This tell me; was not Esau brother to Jacob? Yet to Jacob I proved myself a friend, the Lord
3 says, no friend to Esau; I have made a waste of yonder mountain-side, of all his
4 lands a dragon-haunted desert. Ay, but, says Edom, what if we have fallen on evil days? Give us time to repair the ruins! Trust me, says the Lord of hosts, as fast as they build, I will pull down; land of rebellion men shall call it, brood the Lord
5 hates, and for ever. Glad sight, to make you cry God praise from end to end of Israel!
6 Son to father, servant to master gives his due. Your father I, where is the honour, your master I, where is the reverence you owe me? Such complaint the Lord of hosts makes, and to whom? To you, priests, that care so little for my renown. Ask you what
7 care was lacking, when the bread you offer at my altar is defiled, ask you what despite you have done me, when you write down the Lord's table a thing of little moment?
8 What, no harm done, when victim you offer in sacrifice is blind? No harm done, when it is lame or diseased? Pray you, says the Lord of hosts, make such a gift to the governor yonder, will he be content? Will he make favourites of you?
9 Ay, says the Lord of hosts, the guilt is yours. To the divine presence betake you, and sue for pardon; which of you finds
10 favour with him? Never a man of you but must be paid to shut door, light altar-fire; no friends of mine, says the Lord of hosts,
11 no gifts will I take from such as you. No corner of the world, from sun's rise to sun's

setting, where the renown of me is not heard among the Gentiles, where sacrifice is not done, and pure offering made in my honour; so revered is my name, says the Lord of hosts, there among the Gentiles;¹ and you? That you should hold it so cheap! That you should think to yourselves, The Lord's table is desecrated now; it makes no matter what food lies there, or what fire burns it! Weary work, say you,
12 and dismiss it with a sigh. Beast mangled, beast gone lame, beast that is ailing you present to me, and the bloodless offering with it. And should the Lord of hosts accept the gift you make him?

Cursed be the knavery that offers the Lord gelt beast, when vows are a-paying, and all the while there is an entire beast left at home!² Offers it to the Lord of hosts, the great King, no name in all the world so terrible!

2 It is for you, priests, to see that this law of mine is obeyed. Give me
neither heed nor hearing, says the Lord of hosts, let my name go unhonoured, and with sore distress I will visit you; falls my curse on all the blessings you enjoy, falls
3 my curse. . . .³ to the punishing of your heedlessness. Arm of yours I will strike motionless, bury your faces in dung, ay, the dung of your own sacrifices, and to the dung-pit you shall go. So you shall learn
4 your lesson; my law I gave you, says the Lord of hosts, in token of my covenant with Levi's family. Live they should and thrive, but the fear of me I enjoined upon
5 them; none but should fear, and hold my name in reverence. Faithfully they handed
6 on tradition, the lie never on their lips; safe and straight was the path they trod at my side, and kept many from wrong-doing.

¹ The applicability of this utterance to the Christian Sacrifice needs no emphasizing. Its applicability to the conditions of the prophet's own time has been the subject of much discussion; can it be supposed that he thought of heathen sacrifices as offered, unwittingly, to the true God? Or did he picture the Dispersion of the Jews, even then, as a world-wide phenomenon? ² 'Gelt', literally, 'spoil'; 'entire', literally, 'male'. Some such contrast is evidently intended; cf. Lev. 22. 24. ³ The repetition, 'falls my curse', is difficult to explain, except on the supposition that a word or two has dropped out in the manuscripts.

7 No utterance like a priest's for learning; from no other lips men will expect true guidance; is he not a messenger¹ to them
8 from the Lord of hosts? That path you have forsaken; through your ill teaching, how many a foothold lost! Nay, says the Lord of hosts, you have annulled my covenant with Levi altogether. What wonder if I have made you a laughing-stock, a thing contemptible in all men's sight, priests that so ill kept my command, gave award so partially?

10 Have we not all one Father, did not one God create us all? No room, then, for brother to despise brother, and unmake the covenant by which our fathers lived.²
11 Here is great wrong in Juda, here are foul deeds done by Israel and Jerusalem!³ Juda, that was once content to be set apart for the Lord, has profaned that holy estate, has taken wives that worship a god he knew not. Doer of such a deed, set he or followed the ill example, shall be lost to the dwelling-place of Jacob, for all his offerings made to the Lord of hosts. And anon, weeping and wailing, you drench the Lord's altar with your tears! What marvel if I heed your sacrifices no more, gift of yours is none can appease me? And the reason of it? Because the Lord bears witness to her wrongs, that wife of thy manhood's age, whom now thou spurnest, thy partner, thy covenanted bride! Yet doer of this is the same man as ever, the will of him is unchanged; he asks nothing better, now as before, than to breed a God-fearing race; to that will, men of Juda, keep true. Spurn her not, the wife of thy manhood's age; what though the God of Israel gives thee leave to send her away if she suits thee ill? Garment of her, says the Lord of hosts, is yet stained with the wrong thou didst her. Will of thine forgo not, wife of thine spurn not.⁴

Oh, but the Lord is weary of your doings! And little wonder, when you think so amiss of him; telling yourselves, Foul is fair in the Lord's sight, and wrongdoing well likes him; God that judges us is none.

3 See where I am sending an angel of mine, to make the way ready for my coming! All at once the Lord will visit his temple; that Lord, so longed for, welcome herald of a divine covenant. Ay, says the Lord of hosts, he is coming; but who can bear the thought of that advent? Who will stand with head erect at his appearing? He will put men to a test fierce as the crucible, searching as the lye that fullers use. From his judgement-seat, he will refine that silver of his and cleanse it from dross; like silver or gold, the sons of Levi must be refined in the crucible, ere they can offer the Lord sacrifice duly performed. Then once more the Lord will accept the offerings of Juda and Jerusalem, as he did long since, in the forgotten years. Come I to hold assize, not slow to arraign the sorcerer, the adulterer, the forsworn, all of you that deny hired man his wages, widow and orphan redress, the alien his right, fearing no vengeance from the Lord of hosts.

In me, the Eternal, there is no change, and you, sons of Jacob, are a people still. What though you have refused my claims, left them unhonoured, as your fathers did before you? Nay, says the Lord of hosts, you have but to relent towards me, and I, in my turn, will relent. Would you know the manner of it, bethink you that it is not for man to wrong God, as you wrong me; out of all question you wrong me, over your tithes and first-fruits. Ay, here is sworn conspiracy; it is myself you wrong, the whole brood of you! Do but

¹ Here, as often elsewhere, the Latin translates 'angel'.

² This verse does not seem closely connected either with what precedes it or with what follows it. The prophet may have been thinking of other misdemeanours, such as those mentioned in Neh. 5.

³ This difficult passage, verses 11-16, is generally understood as referring to the intermarriage of the Jews with surrounding nations; cf. Esd. 9 and 10. But Malachi's protest is concerned only with foreign brides, not with foreign bridegrooms; and he seems only to envisage those cases in which a Jewish wife has been divorced to make room for a Gentile rival.

⁴ Literally, 'Did not one man do (or, make)? And his spirit is left surviving. And what does one man seek, except the seed of God? Guard therefore your spirits, and do not despise the wife of thy youth. When thou hatest her, dismiss her, says the Lord, the God of Israel; but wrong shall cover her (or, his) garment, says the Lord of hosts. Guard your spirits, and do not despise'. The Hebrew text, which gives 'his (not her) garment', is even more obscure throughout; and numerous explanations have been suggested, without throwing much light on the passage.

⁵ Literally, 'You are cursed with a curse' (the Latin, however, has 'with distress'). The meaning seems to be, not that Juda is under a divine curse (which would destroy the logic of the sentence), but that the Jews have bound themselves under a curse to offer God resistance (cf. Jg. 21. 1 and 18).

carry your tithe into the tithe-barn, for my temple's needs, and see if I do not open the windows of heaven for you, rain down blessing to your hearts' content! Ban of mine shall fall on the locust,¹ and to your crops he shall do no harm; nowhere in all your country-side, I promise you, shall vine cast its fruits; the envy of all nations you shall be, says the Lord of hosts, a land of content.

13 And now, says the Lord of hosts, your complaints have had their way with me.
14 Complain you did: Who serves God serves him for nothing; what reward is ours for keeping command of his, attending with sad mien the Lord of hosts? Here are proud folk more to be envied than we, ill-doers that yet thrive, abusers of his patience that escape all harm! So they used to talk among themselves, his true worshippers, till at last the Lord gave them heed and hearing; and now he would have a record kept in his presence of all that so worshipped him, all that prized his renown.
17 Dear they shall be to me, says the Lord of hosts, when I declare myself at last; never to loyal son was father more gracious; then

you shall think better of it, and know them apart, the just that serve God and the sinners that are none of his.

4 Trust me, a day is coming that shall scorch like a furnace; stubble they shall be before it, says the Lord of hosts, all the proud, all the wrong-doers, caught and set alight, and neither root nor branch left them. But to you that honour my name there shall be a sunrise of restoration, swift-winged, bearing redress; light-hearted as frisking calves at stall you shall go out to meet it,² ay, and trample on your godless enemy, ashes, now, to be spurned under foot, on that day when the Lord of hosts declares himself at last.

Yours to keep the law ever in mind, statute and award I gave to assembled Israel through Moses, that was my servant. And before ever that day comes, great day and terrible, I will send Elias to be your prophet; he it is shall reconcile heart of father to son, heart of son to father; else the whole of earth should be forfeit to my vengeance.³

¹ Literally, 'the devourer'.

² Literally, 'But to you that fear my name a sun of justice shall rise, and healing in her wings; and you shall go out, and leap like calves from the stall'.

³ It is not clear what kind of disagreement between the older and the younger generation, or perhaps between the past and the present, is indicated. 'The whole of earth', or perhaps, 'the whole land'.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MACHABEES

NOW turn we to Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, that was the first to reign over all Greece.

This Alexander marched out from his own land of Cethim, and overcame Darius, king of the Medes and Persians. Battles he waged a many; nor any fortress might hold out against him, nor any king escape with his life; and so he journeyed on to the world's end, spoiling the nations everywhere; at his coming, silence fell on the earth. So great the power of him, so valiant his armies, what wonder if his heart grew proud? All those lands conquered, all those kings his tributaries! Then, all at once, he took to his bed, and the knowledge came to him he must die. Whereupon he summoned the noblest of his courtiers, men that had shared his own upbringing, and to these, while he had life in him yet, divided up his kingdom. So reigned Alexander for twelve years, and so died.

And what of these courtiers turned princes, each with a province of his own? Be sure they put on royal crowns, they and their sons after them, and so the world went from bad to worse. Burgeoned then from the stock of Antiochus a poisoned growth, another Antiochus, he that was called the Illustrious. He had been formerly a hostage at Rome, but now, in the hundred and thirty-seventh year of the Grecian empire, he came into his kingdom. In his day there were godless talkers abroad in Israel, that did not want for a hearing; Come, said they, let us make terms with the heathen that dwell about us! Ever since we forswore their company, nought but trouble has come our way. What would you? Such talk gained credit, and some were at pains to ask for the royal warrant; whereupon leave was given them, Gentile usages they should follow if they would. With that, they must have a game-place at Jerusalem, after the Gentile fashion, ay, and go uncircumcised; forgotten, their loyalty to the holy covenant, they must

throw in their lot with the heathen, and become the slaves of impiety.

And now that he was firmly established on his throne, Antiochus would be lord of Egypt, and wear two crowns at once. So, with overwhelming force, with chariots and elephants and horsemen and a great array of ships, he marched on Egypt, and levied war against king Ptolemy, that could not hold his ground, but fled away, leaving many fallen. So Antiochus made himself master of all the strongholds in Egypt, and ransacked it for spoil; then, in the hundred and forty-third year, he turned his victorious march against Israel. With all that great army of his he came to Jerusalem and entered the sanctuary in royal state; the golden altar, the lamp-stand with its appurtenances, the table where bread was set out, beaker and goblet and golden bowl, curtain and capital and golden facings of the temple, all alike were stripped. Silver nor gold was spared, nor any ornament of price, nor hoarded treasures could he but find them; and thus laden he went back to his own country, first shedding a deal of blood, and speaking very blasphemously.

Loud mourning there was in Israel, mourning in all the country-side; wept ruler and elder, pined man and maid, and colour fled from woman's cheeks; bridegroom took up the dirge, bride sat in her bower disconsolate; here was a land that trembled for its inhabitants, a whole race covered with confusion.

Two years passed, and then the king sent his chief collector of revenue to visit the cities of Juda. To Jerusalem he came, with a great rabble at his heels, and won credence with idle professions of friendship. Then he fell suddenly on the town and grievously mishandled it, slaying Israelites a many, plundering the city and setting fire to it. Houses and encircling walls of it were thrown down in ruins, women and children carried off into slavery, cattle driven away. And as for David's Keep, they enclosed it with high,

strong walls, and strong towers besides, to
 36 serve them for a fortress; garrisoned it with
 a godless crew of sinners like themselves,
 and made it fast, storing it with arms and
 provisions, besides the plunder they had
 37 amassed in Jerusalem, which they be-
 stowed there for safety. Alas, what peril of
 38 treachery was here, what an ambush laid
 about the holy place, what devil's work
 39 against Israel! What a tide of guiltless
 40 blood must flow about the sanctuary, till it
 was a sanctuary no more! Little wonder if
 the inhabitants of Jerusalem took to flight,
 leaving their city to strangers; mother so
 unnatural her own children must forsake.
 41 Her sanctuary a desert solitude, her feasts
 all lament, her sabbaths derided, her great-
 42 ness brought low! Her pride was the
 measure of that abasement, her glory of
 that shame.

43 And now came a letter from king An-
 tiochus to all the subjects of his realm, bid-
 ding them leave ancestral custom of this
 race or that, and become one nation in-
 44 stead. As for the heathen, they fell in
 45 readily enough with the royal will; and in
 Israel itself there were many that chose
 slavery, offering sacrifice to false gods and
 46 leaving the sabbath unobserved. Both in
 Jerusalem and in all the cities of Juda the
 king's envoys published this edict; men
 must live by the law of the heathen round
 47 about, burnt-sacrifice, offering and atone-
 48 ment in God's temple should be none, nor
 49 sabbath kept, nor feast-day. And, for the
 more profanation of the sanctuary, and of
 50 Israel's holy people, altar and shrine and
 idol must be set up, swine's flesh offered,
 51 and all manner of unhallowed meat; chil-
 dren be left uncircumcised, and their inno-
 cent lives contaminated with rites unclean,
 abominable; till the law should be for-
 gotten, and the divine precepts fashioned
 52 anew. Durst any neglect the royal bidding,
 he must die.

53 Through the whole of his dominions the
 king's writ ran, and commissioners were
 54 appointed besides to enforce it; no city of
 55 Juda but was ordered to do sacrifice. Many
 there were, traitors to the divine law, that
 took their part, and much mischief they
 56 did, driving the men of Israel to seek refuge
 57 in hiding, where refuge was to be had. It
 was on the fifteenth of Casleu, in the hun-

dred and forty-fifth year, that king An-
 tiochus set up an idol to desecrate God's
 altar;¹ shrines there were in every town-
 58 ship of Juda, offering of incense and of
 victims before house doors and in the open
 street; never a copy of the divine law but
 59 was torn up and burned; if any were found
 60 that kept the sacred record, or obeyed the
 Lord's will, his life was forfeit to the king's
 edict. Month by month such deeds of
 61 violence were done, in all townships where
 men of Israel dwelt, and on the twenty-
 62 fifth of the month sacrifice was made at the
 shrine that overshadowed the altar. Death
 63 it was for woman to have her child circum-
 cised in defiance of the king; there in her
 64 own house she must be hung up, with the
 child about her neck, and the circumciser,
 too, must pay for it with his life. Many a
 65 son of Israel refused the unclean food,
 preferring death to defilement; and die
 66 they must, because they would not break
 God's holy law. Grievous, most grievous
 67 was the doom that hung then over his
 people.

2 In those days it was that Mattathias
 came forward, son of John, son of
 Simeon, a priest of Joarib's family; he was
 for Jerusalem no more, but would take up
 his dwelling on the hill-side at Modin.
 Five sons he had, John, that was also called
 2 Gaddis, Simon (or Thasi), Judas (or
 3 Machabaeus), Eleazar (or Abaron), and
 4 Jonathan (or Apphus) and these saw well
 what foul things were a-doing in Juda's
 5 country and the city of Jerusalem. Alas,
 6 what needed it, cried Mattathias, I should
 have been born into such an age as this?
 To see my people and the holy city alike
 brought to ruin, to sit by while the enemy
 overcame her, and in her very sanctuary
 8 the alien had his will? Temple of hers like
 a churl's lot disregarded, rare treasure of
 9 hers into exile carried away; young and
 old, in the open streets of her, put to the
 sword! Never a race in heathendom but
 10 may parcel out her domains, grow rich
 with the spoil of her! Gone, all her fair
 11 adornment; the mistress is turned maid;
 laid waste, yonder sanctuary, that was our
 12 prize and pride, by Gentile feet dis-
 honoured! And would we live yet?
 13

With that, they tore their garments 14

¹ Cf. Dan. 11. 31, Mt. 24. 15.

about them, Mattathias and his sons, and went clad in sackcloth, mourning right bitterly. And now the pursuivants of king Antiochus came to Modin; take refuge there who might, he must do sacrifice none the less, and burn incense, and leave the following of God's law. Out went the folk of Israel to meet them, some complaisantly enough, but Mattathias and his sons firm in their resolve. And they singled out Mattathias from the rest; A man of mark, said they, and a great chieftain thou; brethren and sons thou hast a many. Wilt thou not be the first to come forward and do the king's bidding, with the whole world, and the men of Juda everywhere, and what is left of Jerusalem? To be the king's friend, thou and thy sons with thee, gold and silver and much else for thy reward! Loud rang the answer of Mattathias: What though king Antiochus have the whole world for his vassals? Obey the edict who will, forsaking the custom his fathers lived by, both I and son of mine, both I and clansman of mine, will obey the law handed down to us. Mercy of God! What needs it we should leave his will undone, his claims unhonoured? To deaf ears king Antiochus proclaims the sacrifice; we swerve not from the law's path, right or left.

Before he had done speaking, a Jew came to offer the false gods sacrifice, there in full view of all, before the altar at Modin, as the king bade. Mattathias took fire at the sight of it; one heave of anger his heart gave, and his zeal for the law could contain itself no longer; there on the altar the sacrificer was slain. Nor spared he the pursuivant of king Antiochus that enjoined it; the altar, too, he pulled down.

Not Phinees himself struck a better blow for the law, when he slew Zamri, the son of Salom!¹ And now Mattathias raised a cry in the city, Who loves the law? Who keeps the covenant unbroken? Out with you, and follow me! So fled he with his sons into the hill-country, leaving his possessions behind, there in the city.

Many there were that went out into the desert at this time, for love of truth and right; took children and women-folk and cattle with them, and settled down there,

castaways in a flood of misfortune. But news of it reached Jerusalem, and the king's men that were in David's Keep; here were rebels lurking in the waste country, and drawing many over to their side. So they went out in pursuit, and offered battle; on a sabbath day, as it chanced.² What, still stubborn? cried they. Come out, and yield yourselves to the king's pleasure; your lives shall be spared. But the Jews' answer was, come out and yield to the king's pleasure they might not; law of the sabbath rest forbade it. So the attack began in good earnest; but the Jews made no resistance, never a stone flew, never a hiding-place of theirs was put in a state of defence; Die we all, they said, innocent men, and let heaven and earth bear witness, it was for no fault of ours we died. Thus, because it was a sabbath day when the attack was made, these men perished, and their wives and children and cattle with them; a thousand human lives lost.

Great grief it was to Mattathias and his company when they heard what had befallen them; and now there was high debate raised: Do we as our brethren did, forbear we to give battle for our lives and loyalties, and they will soon make an end of us! Then and there it was resolved, if any should attack them on the sabbath day, to engage him, else they should be put to death all of them, like those brethren of theirs in the covert of the hills. Now it was that the Assidaeans rallied to their side, a party that was of great consequence in Israel, lovers of the law one and all; and all who would escape from the evils of the time made common cause with them, and came to their assistance. So, mustering their forces, they wrought indignant vengeance upon sinners that were false to the law, till they were fain to take refuge among the heathen; wherever they went, Mattathias and his company, they threw the altars down, and whatever children they found uncircumcised, from one end of Israel to the other, they circumcised by right of conquest.³ Ere long, they drove the tyrant's minions before them, and to such good purpose that Gentile was

¹ Cf. Num. 25. 7.² The words 'as it chanced' are not in the original, but it does not seem to be implied that the king's men purposely chose the sabbath day for making their assault.³ It is not clear whether we are meant to understand that Gentile as well as Jewish children were circumcised.

none, king though he were, could restrain the law's observance; against their onslaught the powers of evil could not make head.

49 Meanwhile, the life of Mattathias was drawing to an end. And this charge he gave to his sons: Here be days when tyrant and blasphemer have their will, when all is calamity and bitter retribution. The more reason, my sons, why you should be jealous lovers of the law, ready to give your lives for that covenant your fathers knew.

50 Your fathers, what deeds they did in their time! Great glory would you win, and a deathless name, let these be your models.

51 See how Abraham was tested, and how trustfulness of his was counted virtue in him; see how Joseph in ill fortune was true to the commandment still, and came to be ruler of all Egypt. Here was Phinees, our own father, that grew hot in God's cause, and earned the right of priesthood inalienable; and Josue, that for his loyalty was given command of Israel; and Caleb, that spoke out in the assembly, what broad acres were his! David, for the tender heart of him, left a dynasty that fails not; Elias heaven opened, that was champion of the law; by faith Ananias, Azarias and Misael overcame the furnace, nor Daniel's innocence might ravening lions devour. No generation but proves it; want they never for strength that trust in God.

62 What, would you fear the tyrant's threats?

63 In dung and worms his glory shall end; all royal state to-day, and to-morrow there shall be no news of him; gone back to the dust he came from, and all his designs brought to nothing!

64 Nay, my sons, take courage; in the law's cause rally you, in the law's annals you shall win renown. Here is your brother Simon, trust me, a man of prudence; to him ever give heed, he is your father now.

65 And here is Judas Machabaeus, from boyhood's days a warrior; let him be your leader, and fight Israel's battles. All lovers of the law make free of your fellowship;

66 bring your country redress, and pay the Gentiles what they have earned; yet heeding ever what the law enjoins. With that, he gave them his blessing, and became part

67 of his race. He was a hundred and forty-six years old when he died; his sons buried him where his fathers were buried, at

Modin, and great lament all Israel made for the loss of him.

3 And now his son Judas, that was called Machabaeus, came forward to succeed him; nor any of Judas' clan, nor any that had taken his father's part, but lent him their aid still; right merrily they fought Israel's battle. Here was one that brought his race renown; as great a warrior as ever donned breastplate, or armed himself for the fight, or drew sword to save his camp from peril; lion-hearted his deeds, not lion itself more relentless in pursuit. Traitors he ever sought out and hunted down, ever with fire-brand the oppressors of his people dislodged, till enemy was none but was daunted by the fear of him, traitor was none but fled in confusion, so well sped he the work of deliverance. Great deeds, that kings rued bitterly, Jacob with exultation heard, posterity holds blessed evermore! From city to city he went, riding Juda of its law-breakers, averting the vengeance guilt of theirs had deserved; no corner of earth but he was renowned there, for one that had been able to rally a doomed people.

How sped Apollonius, that mustered a great force, of Gentiles and Samaritans both, to fight against Israel? No sooner Judas heard of it, than he met and routed and slew him; fell many and fled more, leaving their spoils behind them. The sword of Apollonius Judas himself carried away; and this it was he evermore used in battle.

And next it was Seron, captain of the armies in Syria, heard what a great retinue and faithful following Judas had; and nothing would serve, but he must win renown and high favour at court by crushing Judas, and all other his companions that defied the king's edict. So he made all ready, and marched in with a strong muster of the ungodly at his heels, to be even with the men of Israel. As far as Bethoron pass they reached, and there Judas met them with his company, no better than a handful. These, when they saw such a host facing them, were for counsels of prudence; What, they said to Judas, should we offer battle to foes so many and so strong, faint as we be from a day of hungry marching? Nay, said Judas, nothing forbids great

numbers should be at the mercy of small; what matter makes it to the God of heaven, few be his soldiers or many when he grants deliverance? Armed might avails not to win the day; victory is from above. What though they come to meet us in the proud confidence of superior strength, and think it an easy matter to slay us, slay our wives and children, plunder our goods? Life and loyalty at stake, we will offer battle none the less; and he, the Lord, will crush them to earth at our coming; never be afraid. And with that, all unawares, he fell upon Seron and his army, that were crushed, sure enough, by his onslaught; all down the pass of Bethoron he gave them chase, down into the plain, and eight hundred of them had fallen before ever they took refuge in the country of the Philistines. By this, the neighbouring peoples had begun to take alarm, so formidable did Judas and his brethren appear to them, and the renown of him reached the king's court; all the world was talking of Judas and his victories. An angry man was king Antiochus when the news came to him; he sent word round, and had all his army summoned together, a brave array, be sure of it. The treasury must be opened, to provide the troops with a whole year's pay, and keep them in readiness for every need. Why, what was this? So heavily had Judas suffered, so great the discord he had aroused by the abolishing of its ancient usages, that scant revenue had come in from it, and the treasury was in default! Whence, now, to defray the cost of that largesse he had made so often, and with so lavish a hand? Never was king before him could rival his munificence. Here was the king in great confusion of mind; and his thought was, to march into Persia and take toll of those countries; great store of money he might there amass. He left Lysias behind, that was a man of high rank and royal blood; he was to administer all the business of the kingdom, from Euphrates down to the Brook of Egypt, and have charge of the young prince Antiochus, until the king's return. Half his army he entrusted to Lysias, and the elephants besides; and he signified all that he would have done, concerning Judas and Jerusalem particularly. A force must be

sent to overpower all that fought for Israel, or were yet left in Jerusalem, and make a clean riddance of them; no trace of these must be left; all through the country settlers must be brought in from abroad, and the lands allotted between them. With that, the king left his capital of Antioch, taking the remainder of his army with him; it was the hundred and forty-seventh year of the empire. Soon he was across Euphrates river, and on the march through the high countries.

Three generals Lysias appointed for the task; Ptolemy son of Dorymenes, Nicanor and Gorgias, nobles all that were high in the royal favour; with forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse they were to march on Juda and make an end of it, as the king had ordered. So out they went, with all this army at their back, marched in, and pitched their tents near Emmaus, down in the valley. Be sure the traders all about were apprised of their coming, and made their way into the camp with great sums of silver and gold, and a retinue of servants besides, thinking to buy Israelite slaves; levies, too, from Syria and Philistia made common cause with the invader.

Judas, then, and his brethren found that matters had gone from bad to worse; here were the enemy encamped within their frontiers; they heard, besides, what orders the king had given for the destruction and taking away of their people. And the word went round among them, Now to restore the lost fortunes of our race; now to do battle for people of ours, sanctuary of ours! So a general assembly was called; they must make ready for the fight, and pray besides, to win mercy and pardon. Not at Jerusalem; Jerusalem lay there, no city but a desert waste, nor any of her sons came and went; her sanctuary defiled, her citadel garrisoned by the alien, she was but a haunt of the Gentiles. Sad days for the men of Jacob; pipe nor harp sounded there now. At Maspha, then, they gathered, looking across towards Jerusalem; time was when Maspha, too, had its place of prayer. All that day they fasted, and wore sackcloth, and covered their heads with ashes, and tore their garments about them.

What sights were these? Here, lying open, was a copy of the law, such as the heathen were ever making search for, . . .

49 the counterpart of their own images.¹ Here they had brought priestly vestments, and offering of first-fruits and tithes; here Nazirites were gathered, ripe and ready for the payment of their vows. And a loud cry rose to heaven, What shall we do for these, thy votaries? Whither escort them now? Sanctuary of thine is all profanation and defilement, priesthood of thine all misery and despair. And now, see where the heathen muster their armies to destroy us! Needs not we should tell thee, how murderous their intent. Lord, but for thy aid, how shall we resist their onslaught? Loudly their voices, and loud the trumpets rang.

55 Thereupon Judas chose out who should be their leaders, one with a thousand, one with a hundred, one with fifty, one with ten men to follow him; he sent home, too, all such as the law holds exempt; all that had but just built house, or married wife, or planted vineyard, and whoever had no stomach to the fight.² Then they moved camp, and pitched their tents southward of Emmaus. Now for girded loins, cried Judas, and brave hearts! By to-morrow's light, you must engage yonder heathen, sworn enemies to us, and to the ground we hold sacred. Better die in battle, than live to see our race and our sanctuary overpowered. Be it what it may, heaven's will be done!

4 That night, a detachment of five thousand foot and a thousand picked horsemen left their lines, under the command of Gorgias, thinking to reach the Jewish camp and strike a sudden blow at it; for guides, they had men of the Jerusalem garrison. But Judas had word of it; out he went, and all his valiant company with him, to attack the main body of the king's army at Emmaus, while the defences of the camp were yet scattered. So Gorgias, making his night attack on the camp of Judas, and finding it empty, made no doubt they had given him the slip, and fell to scouring the hill-country for them; meanwhile, came day-break, and there was Judas down in the valley. True, there were

but three thousand at his back, for defence and attack very ill arrayed; and here was this army of heathen folk, both strong and well protected, with cavalry circling about them, men bred to war! But Judas cried to his fellows, What, would you be daunted by the numbers of them? Would you give ground before their attack? Bethink you, what a host it was Pharaoh sent in pursuit of our fathers, there by the Red Sea, and they escaped none the less. Now, as then, besiege we heaven with our cries; will not the Lord have mercy? Will he not remember the covenant he had with our fathers, and rout, this day, yonder army at our coming? No doubt shall the world have thenceforward, but there is one claims Israel for his own, and grants her deliverance.

And now the heathen folk caught sight of them as they advanced to the attack, and left their lines to give battle. Thereupon Judas' men sounded with the trumpet, and the two armies met. Routed the Gentiles were, sure enough, and took to their heels across the open country, sword of the pursuer ever catching the hindmost. All the way to Gezeron they were chased, and on into the plains by Idumaea,³ Azotus and Jamnia, with a loss of three thousand men. When Judas and his army came back from the pursuit, Not yours, he told them, to run greedily after the spoils of the camp; there is battle still awaiting us over yonder. Not far away, in the hill-country, lie Gorgias and his army; first meet you and beat you the enemy, and then you shall fall to your pillaging unafraid. Even as he spoke, they were ware of a company that watched them from the hill-side. But by now the camp was on fire, and it needed no more than the smoke of it to warn Gorgias of his defeat; that sight took the heart out of Syria, the more so when it proved that Judas and his army were in the valley, all appointed for battle, and they fled for their lives, down into the plain of Philistia. So to the pillaging of the camp Judas returned; what gold and silver they found there, what garments of blue and sea-purple, what rich treasures! Be sure there was singing of songs on their homeward

¹ As the sentence stands, it can only mean that heathen pursuivants had confiscated the scriptures, as being objects of veneration to the Jews no less than idols were to themselves. But it seems possible that the text is deficient. ² See Deut. 20. 5-8.

³ For 'Idumaea' some Greek manuscripts read 'Judaea'. Neither reading gives a good sense, and it seems possible that the name of Accaron, or some other Philistine town, has been accidentally miswritten.

journey, as they praised God in heaven,
 God who is gracious, whose mercy endures
 25 for ever. Here was a day of signal deliverance for Israel.

26 And what of Lysias? News reached him, through the survivors, of what had befallen, and he was both sick and sorry at the hearing; his own will crossed, and his
 27 master's command ill carried out! So, in the following year, he made a muster of sixty thousand picked men, with five thousand
 28 horse, to crush the rebellion; into Judaea they marched, and encamped at Bethoron, where Judas met them with ten
 29 thousand.¹ At the sight of their great numbers, this was Judas' prayer: Blessed art thou, Saviour of Israel, who didst make
 30 use of thy servant David, a giant's onset to overthrow! Victory thou didst give, over an invading army, to Saul's son Jonathan
 31 and the squire that bore him company! So may yonder host, left at Israel's mercy, unlearn its confidence in strength and in
 32 speed; strike terror into them, let their manhood melt away, as they tremble at the approach of doom; sword of thy true lovers
 33 be their undoing, triumph-song of thy worshippers their dirge! With that, battle was joined, and of Lysias' men, five thousand
 34 were left dead on the field. What should he do? Here were his troops fled in disorder, here was Judas in command of brave men, that would as soon have an honourable death as life itself. Back he went to Antioch, and there levied soldiers for a greater expedition yet against Judaea.

36 And now Judas and his brethren had but one thought; the enemy vanquished, they would betake themselves to Jerusalem, to cleanse and restore the sanctuary. So the whole army fell into rank, and they climbed
 37 the hill of Zion together. What saw they? The holy place desolate, the altar profaned, charred gates, courts overgrown with brushwood, like forest clearing or
 38 mountain glen, the priests' lodging in ruins. Upon this, there was rending of garments, and loud lament; dust they cast
 39 on their heads, and fell face to earth; then, as the trumpet's note gave the summons, raised their cries to heaven.

41 And what did Judas? First, he sent a force to engage the citadel's garrison, while

the holy place was a-cleansing; then he
 4 chose priests, without blot or blemish, and true lovers of the law besides, who thereupon
 4 cleansed the sanctuary, nor any stone that was polluted with idolatry but they had it away into a place unclean. And next,
 4 he must concern himself with the altar of burnt-sacrifice, that was now all defiled. And it was good counsel they took; the
 4 altar must be destroyed, else the day when the Gentiles polluted it should be remembered to their shame. So destroy it they did, and laid up the stones in a place apt
 4 for their purpose, there on the temple hill. Here they must remain, until the coming of a prophet that should give sentence, what was to be done with them.

Then they raised a new altar in place of the old, using stones that had never felt the pick, as the law bade;² repaired shrine and
 4 inner walls, and rid both temple and temple courts of their defilement. New
 2 appurtenances, too, the temple must have, lamp-stand, incense-altar and table be restored to it; incense be put on the altar,
 2 lamps kindled to light the holy place, loaves set out on the table, and veils hung
 2 up; then at length their task was accomplished. On the twenty-fifth of Casleu, the
 2 ninth month, in the hundred and forty-eighth year, they rose before daybreak, and offered sacrifice, as the law bade, on the
 2 new altar they had set up. This was the very month, the very day, when it had been polluted by the Gentiles; now, on the same
 2 day of the same month, it was dedicated anew, with singing of hymns, and music of harp, zither and cymbals. Thereupon all
 2 the people fell down face to earth, to adore and praise, high as heaven, the author of their felicity; and for eight days together
 2 they celebrated the altar's renewal, burned victim and brought welcome-offering with glad and grateful hearts.

They decked the front wall of the temple, at this time, with gold crowns and
 2 escutcheons, consecrated the gates and the priest's lodging anew, and furnished it with doors; and all the while there was great rejoicing among the people; as for the taunts of the heathen, they were heard no more. No wonder if Judas and his brethren, with the whole assembly of Israel,

¹ For 'Judaea' the Greek manuscripts have 'Idumaea', and for 'Bethoron', 'Bethsura'. Cf. verse 61 below.

² See Ex. 20. 25.

made a decree that this feast should be kept year by year for eight days together, the feast-day of the altar's dedication.¹ Came that season, from the twenty-fifth day of Casleu onwards, all was to be rejoicing and holiday. At this time, too, they fortified the hill of Sion, with walls and strong towers all about; never more should Gentile feet profane it. Judas put a garrison there, and would have it strong enough to command Bethsura; a bulwark Israel must have against attack from the frontiers of Edom.

5 Great indignation had the Gentiles that lived round about, when they heard that altar and temple were standing as of old. Their first thought was to rid their own territory of Jacob's breed, and all at once they set about to murder and harry them. So Judas must needs take arms against them, Esau's race in Idu-maea, and the men of Acrabathane, that were keeping Israelite folk under strict siege; and signally he defeated them. Nor might he overlook Bean's tribe and the treachery they shewed, ever catching Israel at unawares by laying an ambush in his path. These he chased into their strongholds and besieged them there; laid them under a ban² and burned the strongholds to the ground, with their defenders in them. Then he crossed over into Ammon, where he came upon strong resistance and a great muster of men, that had one Timotheus for their leader; often he engaged them, and as often put them to rout; when he had defeated them, and taken Gazer with its daughter townships, he marched back into Judaea.

But by this all the heathen folk in the country of Galaad were making common cause against the Israelites who dwelt there, eager to be rid of them. And these, taking refuge in the stronghold of Datheman, sent dispatches to Judas and his brethren. Here be all the neighbours, they wrote, banded together for our destruction. Even now, Timotheus at their head, they are setting about the reduction of this our fortress; come speedily to the rescue; they have taken cruel toll of our lives already. Slain, all those clansmen of ours that had their dwelling in the Tubin coun-

try, carried away, their wives, their children, and their goods; nigh upon a thousand warriors then and there have perished.

This letter was still in the reading, when all of a sudden came other envoys from Galilee, their garments rent about them; their message was, Ptolemais, Tyre and Sidon were up in arms together, and all Galilee was overrun with heathen folk, bent on massacre. Grave tidings, these, for Judas and his people; met they in high debate, and took counsel how they might best aid their brethren in peril of assault. And now Judas must share the command with his brother Simon; Pick thy men, said he, and make for Galilee, while Jonathan and I march into Galaad. Part of his army he left to defend Judaea, with Joseph son of Zachary and Azarias for its captains; Here is your charge, said he; and see to it that you do not embroil yourselves with the Gentiles while we are gone. To Simon and to Galilee three thousand men were allotted; to Judas and to Galaad eight thousand. As for Simon, when he reached Galilee, full many a battle he must fight with the Gentiles, that he drove ever before him, till he pursued them at last to the very gates of Ptolemais. Of the enemy, some three thousand fell, and his men had the spoiling of them; the Israelites that dwelt in Galilee and Arbata he took home with him, and their wives and children and all they had; great rejoicing there was when he brought them back safe to Judaea.

Meanwhile Judas Machabaeus and his brother Jonathan had crossed the Jordan, and marched for three days through the desert. There the Nabuthaeans came to meet them, and gave them friendly welcome, and told them of all that had befallen their brethren in the Galaad country; how there were many whom their fellow-citizens had brought to bay in such great fortified cities as Barasa, Bosor, Alima, Casphor, Mageth and Carnaim; besides many others cut off in the rest of the Galaadite towns. And to-morrow, he was told, the heathen mean to occupy these cities with their army, seizing upon the Israelites and making an end of them, all in one day's work. Whereupon Judas and his men suddenly turned aside from their

¹ Cf. Jn. 10. 22.² Cf. Jos. 6. 17, 18 and other passages.

course into the desert of Bosor, and took the city; all its men-folk he put to the sword, and carried off the spoil of it, and
 29 burned it to the ground. At night-fall they continued their journey, and reached the
 30 Israelitic stronghold.¹ What a sight was this that met their eyes, when day broke! A great rabble of men past all counting, that brought up scaling-ladders and engines, as if they would take the stronghold by storm. Here was the battle fairly begun; and the cry of them went up to heaven, loud as clarion-call, and a great cry, too,
 32 was raised within the city. Now, cried Judas to his men, now to fight for your brethren's deliverance! And hard at the enemy's heels he followed, with three companies of warriors that blew trumpets as they went, and cried aloud in prayer. The name of Machabaeus once heard, how fled
 33 Timotheus' army at his approach! How grievous the blow that fell on them, when
 34 eight thousand fell in a single day! Once more Judas turned aside, to Maspha; took it by storm, slew men of it, took spoil of it,
 36 burned it to the ground; then on to seize Casbon, and Mageth, and Bosor, and the remaining cities of Galaad.²

37 Yet, when all was done, Timotheus put another army into the field, and encamped close by Raphon, across the stream. What learned Judas from the scouts he had sent forward? Here were all the neighbouring
 39 tribes assembled in great force, with hired support from Arabia besides, camped beyond the stream ready to engage him; so out he marched to offer battle. Wait we,
 40 said Timotheus to his captains, till Judas and his army reach yonder stream. Cross he and challenge us, we may not speed; beyond doubt he has the mastery of us.
 41 Fear he the passage, and encamp on the further side, then cross we boldly, the day
 42 is ours. But Judas, when he drew near the ravine, had muster-masters in attendance by the stream, that were charged to let none linger behind, but send every man
 43 across into battle. So he crossed, chal-

lenging them, and all the army at his heels, and sure enough the Gentile host was routed at their coming; threw arms away, and sought refuge in the temple at Carnaim.³ Upon taking the city, he burned its
 44 temple to the ground with all that were sheltered in it; so was Carnaim vanquished, and could make head against Juda no more.

And now Judas gathered all the Is-
 45 raelites in the Galaad country, high and low, with their wives and children, a whole army of them, to come back with him to Juda. They journeyed safely as far as
 46 Ephron, that was a great city and well fortified, the very gate of Juda; turn to right or left they might not, their road lay through the heart of it. And what must
 47 they do, the townspeople, but stand to the defence of it, and barricade the entrance with great boulders! Thereupon Judas made peaceful overtures to them; Grant
 48 us leave, said he, to make our way through your country to ours, nor any harm shall befall you; we ask but the right of passage, and on foot. But open the gates they would not; so Judas made a cry through the camp,
 49 every man should go to the assault,⁴ there where he stood; and go to the assault they
 50 did, the fighting men of his company. All day and all night they attacked the city, and Judas was given the mastery of it. Never a male creature there but was put to
 51 the sword; the city was plundered and pulled down; and so he passed on through the streets of it, all paved with dead men. Jordan they must still cross, there by
 52 the great plain that faces Bethsan; and to the
 53 last Judas went ever to and fro, rallying the stragglers and encouraging the people on their journey, till the land of Juda was reached. Glad and merry were men's
 54 hearts as they climbed up Sion mountain, and there offered burnt-sacrifice in thanks for their safe home-coming, with never a life lost.⁵

So fought Judas and Jonathan in Galaad, and their brother Simon in Galilee at

¹ The word 'Israelite' is not in the original; but evidently the stronghold was either that mentioned in verse 11 above, or else one in which the Israelites of Bosor had taken refuge.

² There is some uncertainty about the names here; 'Casbon' is perhaps the 'Casphor' of verse 26, and 'Bosor' should perhaps be identified with the 'Barasa' (in the Greek, Bossora) of the same verse. Bosor has already been destroyed in verse 28.

³ *iv.* 40-43. It is not clear whether Timotheus was testing the courage of his opponents, or taking an omen from the course of events (cf. I Kg. 14. 9, 10). Perhaps we are not meant to picture the crossing as taking place unopposed.

⁴ 'Go to the assault'; literally, according to the Greek, 'to encamp'; but cf. the use of the corresponding Hebrew verb in Jos. 10. 31 and elsewhere.

⁵ Literally, 'Because none of them had fallen until all returned safe and sound'; cf. note on Mt. 1. 25.

56 the gates of Ptolemais; meanwhile, what
of Joseph son of Zachary, and Azarias, that
had charge of the garrison? News came to
them of victories gained, and great deeds
57 done, and nothing would serve but they
must make a great name for themselves
too, by offering battle to the Gentiles
58 round about. So orders went out to the
army, to march on Jamnia, where Gorgias
59 and his men came out to meet them. Back
fell Joseph and Azarias to the frontiers of
Judaea in great disorder, with a loss to Is-
60 rael of two thousand men; such defeat they
brought on our arms, because they would
61 not listen to Judas and his brethren, but
must be great warriors like the rest. Not
62 of that race they sprang that should afford
Israel deliverance.

63 But as for Judas and his company,¹ they
were held high in honour, both among Is-
raelite folk, and wherever the renown of
64 them was heard; all flocked to greet them
with cries of acclaim. But still he and his
65 brethren would be on the march, reducing
the men of Edom in the south country; on
Hebron and its daughter townships the
blow fell, neither wall nor tower of it but
66 was burned to the ground. Then he moved
camp, to march on Philistia, and would
67 make his way through Samaria.² Priests
there were that took up arms and fell in
battle that day, rashly desirous of a war-
rior's renown.³ And now Judas turned
68 aside to Azotus, in the country of the
Philistines; altars he pulled down, images
of their gods burned to ashes, gave up their
cities to plunder, and so came back again
to the land of Juda.

6 King Antiochus was still on his jour-
ney through the high countries, when
he heard tell of a city in Persia called Ely-
mais, renowned for its treasures of silver
2 and gold; here was a temple of great mag-
nificence, that had golden armour in it,
breastplate and shield left there by Philip's
3 son, Alexander of Macedon, the first over-
lord of Greece. Thither he marched, intent
on seizing the city and plundering it; but
seize it he might not, because the townsfolk

4 had news of his purpose, and came out to
offer battle. So he was put to the rout, and
must take himself back to Babylon,
grievously disappointed.

And here, in the Persian country, a mes-
5 senger reached him with tidings from
Juda. Fled were his armies, and Lysias, 6
that erstwhile marched out with so brave
a retinue, had left the Jews masters of the
field. Now they were strong and well-
armed, such spoil they had taken from the
armies they overthrew; gone was that de-
7 filing image he had set up over the altar at
Jerusalem; high walls, as of old, protected
the sanctuary; nay, they had made shift to
fortify his own stronghold of Bethsura.

What news was this! The king was all 8
bewilderment and consternation; he took
to his bed, fallen into a decline for very
sadness that his hopes had failed him.
Long time he languished under the double 9
burden of his grief, and knew at last he was
a-dying. So he called his friends about 10
him, and bade them farewell; Here is sleep
quite gone from me, said he; so dazed is
this heart of mine with doubt unresolved.
Thus runs my thought: How comes it that 11
I have fallen upon such evil times, such a
flood of calamity as now engulfs me; I, that
in the days of my greatness loved men well,
and was well beloved? And now returns 12
the memory of all the havoc I made in
Jerusalem, spoil of gold and silver I robbed
from it, doom of mine against the towns-
13 folk, and for no fault. Past all doubt, here
is the source of all those miseries that have
come upon me; look you, how I die con-
sumed of grief, in a strange land! Then he 14
sent for Philip, one of his trusted friends,
and gave all the kingdom into his charge;
crown and robe and ring he delivered to 15
him, bidding him seek out prince Antiochus,
and bring him up as heir to the throne. Then
and there died king Antiochus, in the hundred
and forty-ninth year of the Grecian empire. 17
And Lysias, hearing of his death, crowned this same prince
Antiochus, that he had brought up from
boyhood, giving him the name of Eupator.

Meanwhile, what of the Jews that dwelt 18

¹ 'Judas and his company'; the Latin here has 'the men of Juda', which yields no good sense, 'Juda' and 'Israel' being convertible terms at this period. The Greek has, 'the man Judas and his brethren'.

² 'Samaria' is probably a false reading for Maresa, which lay on the route between Edom and the Philistines.

³ Most of the Greek manuscripts have a different and very curious reading, 'Priests there were that fell in battle that day, because he (Judas?) desired to play the warrior, with which design he went into action unadvisedly'.

about the holy place? Here was the gar-
 rison of the citadel hemming them in,
 seeking ever to do them injury, and to sus-
 19 tain the Gentile cause. So Judas was fain
 to make an end of it, and summoned the
 20 whole people to rally for the siege. Rally
 they did, and began the siege in the hun-
 dred and fiftieth year, with much con-
 21 triving of catapults and engines. But some
 of the defenders slipped out; and these,
 with traitors of Israelite stock to support
 22 them, went off to gain the king's audience.
 Wilt thou never bring redress, they asked,
 23 and do our brethren right? Jews are we,
 that resolved we would be loyal to thy
 father, his policy furthering, his will obey-
 24 ing. What came of it? Our own fellow
 Israelites would have no more of our com-
 25 pany, slew all they could lay hands on,
 robbed us of our possessions. Not us only,
 but all the country about them, their vio-
 26 lence threatens; even now they stand
 arrayed against the citadel of Jerusalem,
 ready to take it by storm, and have fortified
 27 Bethsura. Forestall their plans thou must,
 and speedily, or they will go further yet,
 and there will be no holding them.

28 Angered by these tidings, the king sent
 for all his trusted friends, for his army cap-
 29 tains and his commanders of horse; mercen-
 aries, too, were hired from foreign
 countries, and from the islands out at sea,
 30 till he could put a hundred thousand foot
 and twenty thousand horse into the field,
 besides thirty-two elephants, inured to
 31 war. Through Edom they marched, and
 invested Bethsura; long they held it be-
 sieged, and built engines to attack it, but
 these, by a brave sally, the defenders
 burned to ashes.

32 Meanwhile, Judas drew away from the
 citadel, and encamped at Bethzacharam,
 33 close to the king's army. Ere dawn broke,
 the king was astir, and his men marching
 hot-foot towards Bethzacharam, where the
 armies made ready for battle, with a great
 34 blowing of trumpets. As for the elephants,
 they were blooded to battle with juice of
 35 grape and mulberry, and so divided here
 and there among the troops. A thousand
 foot-soldiers were assigned to each, in coat

of mail and helmet of bronze; with each
 went five hundred picked horsemen; these 16
 were waiting ready for every beast at its
 station, and must go wherever it went,
 never leaving its side. On the back of every 17
 beast was a strong protecting tower of
 wood, cunningly fitted; and thirty-two
 valiant men were appointed to do battle
 from this height, over and above the Indian
 that was the beast's driver.¹ The re- 18
 mainder of the cavalry were stationed on
 either wing, to daunt the oncoming host
 with a clamour of trumpets,² and harass
 them as they stood tight packed in their
 ranks. Brightly the sun shone down on 19
 shield of gold, shield of bronze, till all the
 mountain-side gave back the glancing rays
 of them, and dazzled like points of fire.
 Part of the king's army was drawn up on 20
 the heights, part on the level plain; warily
 they came on and in good order; and ever 21
 as they went, murmur of voices, tramp of
 feet, and clash of arms daunted the coun-
 try-side around them, so great yonder army
 was, and so valiant. But Judas and his men 22
 closed with them, and gave battle; and of
 the king's soldiers, there were six hundred
 that fell.

What did Eleazar that day, the son of 23
 Sauran?³ Here was one of the beasts that
 went decked in royal trappings, and
 towered high above the rest; There rides 24
 the king, thought he, and with that, he gave
 his life, to win deliverance for his country,
 and for himself imperishable renown.
 Bravely he ran up to it, there in the heart 25
 of the press, slaying to right and left of
 him, men falling on either side, till he 26
 could creep in between the very feet of the
 elephant; crouched there, and dispatched
 it, and so, crushed by its fall to earth, died
 where he lay.

But now, finding the royal forces so 27
 strong, and so determined in their attack,
 the Jews withdrew from the encounter.
 To Jerusalem the king's men followed 28
 them, and now here was the king en-
 trenced against Judaea and mount Zion
 itself. With the defenders of Bethsura he
 had made terms; yield up the city they
 must, so ill were they victualled for a siege,

¹ The meaning of the original is, that each elephant carried no less than thirty-two fighting men. The statement is perhaps due to some error in the copying of the Greek manuscripts. ² There is no mention of trumpets in the Greek original. But the text is obscure, and perhaps corrupt. ³ In the Greek, 'Eleazar Sauran', perhaps a corruption of 'Abaron' (2. 5 above).

50 in a year when the land lay fallow;¹ thus
Bethsura was in the king's hands, and he
51 put a garrison there. But it was against the
holy place itself that he turned his arms,
and long he beleaguered it; what catapults
he brought to bear on it, what engines!
Flew fiery darts, flew stone and javelin
and arrow from mangonel and arbalest, and the
52 slings took their turn. As for the Jews,
they met engine with engine, and fought
53 on day after day; but the seventh year had
come round, and what store was left in the
city had been eaten up by the new citizens
rescued from Gentile countries, so food
54 was none to be had. Only a few defenders
were left in the holy place now; the rest,
overtaken by famine, had dispersed to their
homes.

55 But Lysias could not wait; he had news
from Antioch. That same Philip, whom
king Antiochus, on his death-bed, had ap-
pointed to bring up the young prince as
56 heir to the throne, was now returned at the
head of his army from the land of the
Medes and Persians, and would fain take
57 charge of the realm. So Lysias must be-
take himself to the king and his generals,
with such words as these: Our plight grows
daily worse; scant food is left us, and here
is a fortress well defended; all the business
58 of the realm claims our care. What remains,
but to make friendly advances, offer terms
to the besieged and to all their country-
59 men? Give we leave they should follow
their own customs as of old, which customs
neglecting, we have brought all this ill-will
60 and all this trouble upon us. King and
chieftain fell in with his design; offer peace
61 they did, and the offer was accepted. So,
upon terms with the king and his generals,
62 the Jews gave up their stronghold; and
what must the king do, once he had set foot
on mount Sion and discovered the strength
of its defences, but break his oath, and have
63 all the walls of it pulled down! Then, with
all haste, he took leave of it, and returned
to Antioch, where he found Philip in pos-
session, and levied war on him, taking the
city by storm.

7 It was now, in the hundred and fifty-
first year, that Demetrius, the son of
Seleucus, escaped from Rome and landed
with a small retinue at one of the sea-ports,

where he was proclaimed king. No sooner
2 had he set foot in the palace of his an-
cestors, than his men laid hold of Antio-
chus and Lysias, meaning to bring them
into his presence. But he was warned of it,
3 and gave it out, sight of them he would
have none; so they were dispatched by the
4 troops, and Demetrius established himself
on the royal throne.

To him came certain Israelites, enemies
5 of the law and of religion, with Alcimus at
their head, a man who coveted the high-
priestly office. And thus, in the royal pre-
6 sence, they defamed their own people:
Here be Judas and his brethren have made
away with all thy friends, and driven us out
7 of our country! Do but send some trusted
agent to survey the scene of it, the havoc
this man has wrought upon our own per-
sons and upon the king's domain; ay, and
to punish his partisans, with all who com-
8 fort them. The king's choice fell on Bac-
chides, a courtier that was loyal to him, and
had charge now of all the realm east of
9 Euphrates. Of the havoc wrought by
Judas he should be judge, and with him
went the traitor Alcimus, now confirmed
in the high priesthood; thus should the
royal vengeance fall on Israel.

So they took the road, and reached the
10 land of Juda with a great army at their
heels. Envoys they sent out, to cheat Judas
and his brethren with fair promises; but
11 from these they got no hearing; the sight
of such armed strength was enough. It
12 was a company of scribes that went out to
meet Alcimus and Bacchides, asking for
honourable terms; of all Israel, the As-
13 sidaeans were foremost in demanding
peace; Here is a priest of Aaron's line, said
14 they, in yonder company, fear we no trea-
chery from him. Fair promises he made
15 them, and swore they should take no harm,
nor their friends neither; and they took
16 him at his word. And what did he? A full
sixty of them he seized and put to death in
one day. Not idly the word was written,
Bleeding corpses of thy true lovers they
17 have strewn about on every side of Jeru-
salem, and there was none to bury the
18 dead. After this, all alike dreaded the new-
comers and shrank from them; here was
neither trust nor troth, when covenant and
sworn promise went for nothing. So
19

¹ Cf. Lev. 25. 4.

Bacchides left Jerusalem and pitched his camp at Bethzecha, where he made search and laid hands on many that had deserted from his own army; some of the Jews he massacred besides, and had their bodies
 20 thrown into the Great Cistern; then he left the whole country in Alcimus' charge, with troops to maintain him. So off went
 21 Bacchides to his master, and Alcimus remained to make the best of his high
 22 priesthood. Be sure all the malcontents in Judaea rallied to his side, and took possession of the country, to Israel's great mischief.

23 Little it liked Judas, to see Alcimus and his crew mishandling the men of Israel as never the Gentiles had; from end to end
 24 of Juda he passed, executing vengeance on such as had left his cause, till they might
 25 take the field no longer. Everywhere Judas and his company had their way, and the sight of it warned Alcimus he was no match for them; so he, too, went back to the king,
 26 loud in his complaints. Thereupon the king sent out an army for the people's undoing, with Nicanor at the head of it, that was one of his most notable princes, and had a grudge against Israel to satisfy. This
 27 Nicanor, reaching Jerusalem with a great army, made peaceful overtures to Judas and his brethren, but treacherously; Need is none there should be blows given between us, he said. Let me come with a handful of men, and parley we together
 29 under safe conduct. Come he did, and the greeting between them was friendly enough, but Judas was like to have been
 30 seized, then and there, by the enemy; and when he had proof of Nicanor's treachery, he went in dread of him and would parley with him no longer.

31 Nicanor, then, his plot being now manifestly discovered, would take to the field; it was close to Capharsalama that he engaged Judas; and his army, routed with a loss of five thousand men, must needs take
 33 refuge in the Keep of David.¹ It was after this that Nicanor made his way to mount Sion, where some of the priests and elders came out to greet him in friendly fashion, and shew him how burnt-sacrifice was

offered there on the king's behalf. But
 34 nothing could they get from him but mockery and contempt; he did despite to their sacred persons, and sent them away with threats. In his anger, he swore to
 35 them nothing would serve but he should have Judas and Judas' army at his mercy; if not, he would burn the temple down, as soon as ever he returned in safety. So, in high disdain, he left them; and the priests
 36 must take themselves back within the walls, where they stood before altar and temple, praying very mournfully. Lord,
 37 they said, thou hast chosen this house to be the shrine of thy name; here thy people should offer prayer, and sue for thy favour. Do thou avenge thyself on chieftain and
 38 army both; die they at the sword's point! Wouldst thou forget their blasphemy; should they escape with their lives?

After this, Nicanor left Jerusalem, and
 39 pitched his camp at Bethoron, where he was met by a fresh army from Syria; Judas,
 40 in his camp at Adarsa, had but three thousand men. And this was the prayer Judas prayed: Time was, Lord, when Senna-
 41 cherib's men were loud in their blasphemy, and thy angel must go out to smite them down, a hundred and eighty thousand of them. This day a new enemy
 42 overwhelm with our onslaught, and let all the world know what comes of threatening thy holy place; for his ill-doing, ill requite him!

It was the thirteenth of Adar when the
 43 two armies met; sure enough, Nicanor's army was overwhelmed, and himself the first to fall in the encounter; whereupon
 44 the rest, seeing their leader gone, cast weapons away and took to their heels. For a whole day the pursuit of them went on, all the way from Adazer to the approaches of Gazara, and ever there were trumpets sounding the hue and cry. Out came
 45 Jewish folk from all the villages round about, to head them off,² till at last they turned at bay and fell at the sword's point all of them, never a man left. Spoil of them
 46 was plundered where they lay; as for Nicanor, the Jews cut off the head from his body, and that right hand he lifted up so

¹ According to Josephus, who usually follows the sacred narrative closely, it was Judas who was defeated and forced to take refuge in Jerusalem; this would accord better with what follows, and it seems possible that the text has been incorrectly preserved. ² 'To head them off'; the Latin has 'and tossed them with the horn', probably through a misunderstanding of the word used in the Greek text.

defiantly, and took them away, to be hung
48 up in full sight of Jerusalem. Glad men
they were that day, and kept high festival,
49 decreeing that never thenceforward should
the thirteenth day of Adar go unobserved.
50 And for a little while the land of Juda had
peace.

8 Judas had heard tell of the Romans,
and their renown. Here was a power-
ful nation, that would entertain overtures
none the less from such as coveted their
friendship, plighting their word faithfully.
2 A powerful nation indeed; what battles
they had fought, what exploits achieved
yonder among the Galatians, their con-
3 quered vassals now! In Spain, too, they
had done great feats of arms; and at last,
by policy and patient striving, won over
the whole country, made themselves mas-
ters of all the silver and gold that was
4 mined there. Came peoples from far away,
kings from the furthest corners of earth, to
offer battle, they were overwhelmed and
signally defeated; those nearer at hand
5 were content to pay yearly tribute. Had
they not crushed and conquered Philip,
and Perseus king of the Greeks, and all
others that had levied war upon them?
6 And what of Antiochus the Great, that
ruled all Asia, and came against them with
a hundred and twenty elephants, with
horsemen and chariots, and a great array
besides? The Romans overcame him,
7 caught him alive, and demanded both
from him and from his heirs rich tribute,
and hostages, with other conditions of sur-
8 render; took away from him India, Media,
and Lydia, that were his most cherished
provinces, and gave them to king Eumenes
9 instead. Later, word came that the men of
Hellas were for marching in and making an
10 end of them; what was the issue of it? One
of the Roman generals was sent out to
engage them; fell many in battle, wives and
children were carried off into exile, goods
plundered, the land conquered, its for-
tresses destroyed, and they are slaves to
this day.
11 So it was with all the kingdoms and
islands that defied their will; the Romans
crushed them and took their lands away.
12 But to their friends, that would live at

peace with them, they were ever good
friends in return. Kingdoms both far and
near became their vassals, nor any that
heard their name but feared it; helped they 13
any man to a throne, the throne was his;
their good will lost, his throne was lost too;
so high was their renown.

Yet, with all this, was never one of them 14
that wore crown, or went clad in purple for
his own aggrandizement. A senate-house 15
they would have, where a council of three
hundred and twenty met day by day, pro-
viding ever for the good estate of the
commonalty; and every year they would 16
entrust one man with the rule and govern-
ance of their whole country, the rest
obeying him, without any debate or con-
tention moved.¹

So now Judas made choice of two en- 17
voys, Eupolemus, son of John, son of
Jacob, and Jason, son of Eleazar; to Rome
they should go, and there make a treaty of
good will and alliance. Rome's task it 18
should be to rid them of the Grecian yoke;
from the Greeks it was plain they could
expect nothing better than grinding slav-
ery. So, after long journeying, to Rome 19
they came, and were admitted to the senate
house, where they gave their message as
follows: We have been sent to you by 20
Judas Machabaeus and his brethren, and
by our countrymen at large, to make a
treaty of alliance with you; fain would they
be enrolled among your confederates and
friends. This proposition liked the Romans 21
well; and they wrote back to the Jews on
22 tablets of bronze, that should be kept in
Jerusalem to serve them for a memorial of
treaty and alliance made, to this effect:
Well speed they at all times, the Roman 23
and the Jewish peoples, by sea and land
alike; far removed from either be alarm of
war, assault of the enemy! Yet if war be- 24
fall, and threaten the Romans first, or any
ally of theirs in any part of their dominions,
such aid the Jewish people shall give as the 25
occasion demands, ungrudgingly. For the
needs of the enemy they shall nothing find
or furnish, be it corn, or arms, or money,
or ships, according to the agreement made
at Rome; and they shall observe these
undertakings with no thought of their own 26
advantage. In like manner, if the Jews be 27

¹ These verses record only the impression which had reached Judas; it is not necessarily accurate in all points.

first threatened, it shall be for the Romans to give aid as the occasion demands, most willingly; providing neither corn nor arms, money nor ships, to any that take part against them, according to the agreement made at Rome;¹ and they shall observe these undertakings honourably. Upon these terms the Romans and the Jewish people are agreed; if hereafter it should be the will of both parties² to enlarge or to restrict them, they may do so at their discretion, and such enlargement or restriction shall have force accordingly. As for the wrong done by king Demetrius, we have sent him warning. What meanest thou, to burden with so heavy a yoke the Jewish people, our friends and allies? Let them complain of thee once more, and we will surely give them redress, by land and sea levying war against thee.

9 While this was afoot, news came to Demetrius that Nicanor and his men had perished in the encounter. But he would still have his way; Bacchides and Alcimus should be sent back to Judaea, and the northern command³ of his army with them. Marching out along the Galgala road, they encamped at Masaloth in Arbella; the town was surprised, and many of its inhabitants massacred. Then, in the first month of the hundred and fifty-second year, they began an attack on Jerusalem, moving their camp to Berea. It was a force of twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse; Judas, encamped at Laiza, had three thousand picked followers with him, but these were greatly daunted when they saw what heavy odds were against them, and began to desert their lines, till no more than eight hundred of them were left. One by one they slipped away, and raise fresh levies he might not, with the battle so hard upon his heels; what wonder if Judas lost heart, and was unmanned? Yet said he to the remnant that was left him, Up, go we to the attack, and try conclusions with the enemy! In vain they sought to dissuade him; Speed we may not, they said; let us save our skins now, we may yet join hands with our brethren,

and do battle hereafter; why, we are but a handful! Nay, said Judas, that may I never do; what, shew them our backs? If our time is come, die we manfully in our brethren's cause, nor suffer any foul blot to fall on our name!

By this, the opposing army had moved forward out of its lines, and stood fronting them; here were the two bodies of horse, the slingers and archers going on before the rest, and the choice troops that would bear the shock of the encounter; here was Bacchides himself, on the right wing. This side and that the phalanx drew nearer, with a great blowing of trumpets, and Judas' men, they raised a great cry on their own part, till the earth rang again with the noise of the two armies. Thus begun, the battle went on from morning till dusk. On the right, where he saw Bacchides' army was strongest, Judas made the attack, and all the most valiant of his men with him; broke their line, and chased them all the way to mount Azotus. But now those on the left, seeing their right wing routed, cut off Judas and his men from the rear; now indeed the battle grew fierce, and there were many fell wounded on either part, till at last Judas fell, and with that, all the rest took to their heels.

As for his body, his brothers Jonathan and Simon recovered it, and so buried him where his fathers were buried, in the city of Modin. Great lament all Israel made over him, and long they mourned him; Here is a great warrior fallen, they said, that once brought his people deliverance! What other battles Judas fought, deeds did, greatness achieved, you shall not find set down here; too long the record of them.

Once Judas was dead, there was no corner in Israel but treason began to shew its face there, and lawlessness to abound; under such leadership the whole country, at this time much distressed by famine, went over to Bacchides. Good care he took to choose out godless men, that should have the governance of his territory; and these raised a hue and cry after Judas' partisans, haling them before Bacchides to be punished and used spitefully; never,

¹ The Latin has, 'according to the agreement made by the Romans'. ² 'Both parties'; according to the Latin version, 'either party', but such a stipulation would make the whole treaty ineffectual. ³ 'The northern command'; literally, 'the right wing'. Presumably this means the right extremity from Demetrius' point of view.

since prophecy died out among them, had the men of Israel known such distress. And now all that had loved Judas rallied to Jonathan instead; Since thy brother's death, they told him, none is left to take the field against our enemies as he did, this Bacchides and all else that bear a grudge against our race.¹ There is but one way of it; this day we have chosen thee to be our ruler, our chieftain, to fight our battles for us. So, from that day forward, Jonathan took command, in succession to his brother Judas. Bacchides no sooner heard of it than he marked him down for death; but of this Jonathan had warning, and took refuge, with his brother Simon and all his company, in the desert of Thecue. It was there, by Asphar pool, they halted; and it was there that Bacchides, well informed of their movements, crossed Jordan at the head of his army and came upon them, one sabbath day.

This was the manner of it. Jonathan had sent his brother John, that was in command of the camp followers, on an errand to his good friends the Nabuthaeans. They had brought a deal of their household stuff with them; would the Nabuthaeans take it into safe keeping? But, as they went, some of Jambri's folk came out from Madaba, seized John and all that he had with him, and went off with them. Afterwards, Jonathan and Simon heard that the men of Jambri had a great wedding toward; they must bring home the bride from Nadabatha,² and with much pomp, because her father was a notable Chanaanite chief. So, to avenge the death of their brother John, they climbed the hill-side and lay in ambush there. What a sight was this met their eyes! All manner of rout and display; the bridegroom, his friends and his brethren, passing on their way to the trysting-place, with beating of drums, and making of music, and all manner of warlike array! Then rose they up from their ambush and laid about them, till many fell wounded, and the rest fled into the hills, leaving all

their spoil behind them. So turned they wedding mirth into funeral dirge, to avenge the murder of their brother, and withdrew to the banks of Jordan again.³

Hearing of these alarms, Bacchides marched down to Jordan bank one sabbath day, in great force. Up now! cried Jonathan to his men; engage our enemy we must. Gone is the vantage we had till now; here is armed force confronting us, and all around us is Jordan stream, Jordan banks full of marshes and thickets; escape is none. Cry we rather upon heaven, for deliverance out of the enemy's hand. So the battle was joined; and here was Jonathan exerting all his strength to deal a blow at Bacchides, who declined the encounter! What did Jonathan then? With all his company, he leapt into Jordan. So now, to reach them, the enemy must swim for it across the stream.⁴ A thousand men of his following Bacchides lost that day, and was fain to return to Jerusalem.

After this, they took to fortifying the cities of Judaea with high walls and barred gates, making strongholds at Jericho, Ammaum, Bethoron, Bethel, Thamnata, Phara and Thopo; here garrisons were set, for the harrying of Israel. Bethsura, too, Bacchides fortified, and Gazara, and the Citadel itself, keeping all of them well manned and provisioned; ay, and the great men of all the country round must yield up their children as hostages, to be held in Jerusalem citadel for safe keeping. Then, in the second month of the hundred and fifty-third year, came an order from Alcimus, the dividing wall of the temple's inner court should be dismantled. The Prophets' Building⁵ he had already cleared away, and begun the dismantling, when himself was smitten down, and all his plans interrupted. Dumbstricken and palsied, he never spoke again, even to dispose of his goods, but died there and then, in great torment.

Alcimus dead, Bacchides was for Judaea no longer; away he went to the king's

¹ The meaning of the Greek text is, 'all those of our own race that bear a grudge against us'.
² 'Nadabatha'; the Latin version has 'Madaba', presumably a copyist's error. ³ *ib.* 35-42. This incident is given by Josephus as if it followed the events described in verses 43-49; but he has probably misunderstood the sequence of the narrative. In verse 35, the Latin version seems to suggest that Jonathan asked the Nabuthaeans for the loan of their equipment, but the account given in the Greek text is more natural.

⁴ Literally, 'and they swam across the Jordan to them'. The Greek text has 'and they did not swim across the Jordan to them'. The meaning, in either case, can only be a matter of conjecture.

⁵ The Prophet's Building (literally, Work) was presumably the name given to some part of Zorobabel's temple; no allusion is made to it elsewhere.

court, and for two years the land was at
 58 peace. But ere long there was conspiracy
 afoot among the godless party; here were
 Jonathan and his men living secure of their
 safety; let Bacchides come in again, he
 might seize them all, and make one night's
 59 work of it. To Bacchides, then, they went,
 60 and imparted their scheme to him; where-
 upon he raised a great army for marching on
 Judaea, but first sent word privately to his
 partisans there, bidding them seize Jona-
 than and his company for themselves.
 Word went abroad, and the plan miscar-
 61 ried; it was Jonathan¹ seized fifty notables
 of Judaea, that were the authors of the
 62 conspiracy, and put them to death. Then,
 with Simon and the rest of his following,
 he removed to Bethbessen, out in the
 desert, and set about rebuilding it, to make
 a stronghold for them.
 63 Bacchides had news of this; mustering
 his whole force, and sending word to his
 64 Jewish supporters, he marched in and
 pitched his camp so as to command Beth-
 bessen. Long time he besieged it, and
 65 brought up engines against it; meanwhile,
 Jonathan had left his brother Simon in
 command of the city, and was roaming the
 country-side. When he came back, it was
 66 with a band of men at his heels; smote he
 Odares and his clan, smote he the men of
 Phaseron where they lay encamped; every-
 where laid about him, and still gained
 67 strength.² As for Simon and his company,
 they made a sally out of the town, and set
 68 fire to the engines; afterwards they en-
 gaged Bacchides himself, and worsted
 him, so that he must pay dearly for plot
 and tryst of his that came to nothing. So
 69 enraged was he with the malcontents
 whose counsel had brought him into Ju-
 daea, he put many of them to death, and
 was for marching home again with the rest
 70 of his following, when Jonathan, hearing
 of it, sent envoys to offer peace, and an
 71 exchange of prisoners. This offer he gladly
 accepted, and carried out the terms of it,
 giving his word he would do Jonathan no
 72 more injury as long as he lived, and re-
 storing all the prisoners he had ever taken
 in the land of Juda. So he took himself
 back to his own country, and never came

that way again. Israel had a respite from
 73 fighting at last, and Jonathan took up his
 dwelling at Machmas, whence he ruled the
 people thenceforward, ridding the land of
 godless folk altogether.

10 And now, in the hundred and six-
 tieth year, came Alexander, a son of
 Antiochus the Illustrious, and took pos-
 session of Ptolemais, where he was re-
 ceived with royal honours. A great force
 2 king Demetrius levied, when he heard of
 it, and went out to give him battle; at the
 3 same time, he wrote to Jonathan, in such
 loving terms as should flatter his dignity.
 No time to be lost, thought he, in making
 4 friends with this man, before he takes to
 comforting Alexander against us; for
 5 wrong done to himself, and his brother,
 and all his race, he bears us a grudge yet.
 So he empowered Jonathan to muster an
 6 army, and to make weapons of war, as the
 ally of Syria; the hostages, too, in the
 citadel were to be given back to him.

When Jonathan came to Jerusalem, and
 7 read this letter aloud, not to the townsfolk
 only, but to the citadel garrison, great was
 8 the fear fell on all who listened; here was
 Jonathan commissioned to levy troops by
 the king's own order! The hostages were
 9 surrendered without more ado, and given
 back to their parents; and he himself took
 10 up his quarters in Jerusalem, where he set
 about building up the city and repairing it.
 It was the walls needed rebuilding, so he
 11 told his workmen; on every side, the hill of
 Sion must be defended with hewn stone;
 and punctually they obeyed him. As for
 12 the alien folk that guarded the strongholds
 Bacchides had left, they fled incontinently;
 what matter if their posts were abandoned?
 13 They were for home. Only Bethsura was
 14 garrisoned now, and that by traitors to
 God's law and commandment; it was all
 the refuge they had.

King Alexander heard of these overtures
 15 made by Demetrius; heard, too, the story
 of Jonathan and his brethren, battles
 fought, and deeds done, and labours en-
 16 dured. Why, said he, this man has not his
 match anywhere; time it is we should court
 his friendship and alliance. With that, he
 17

¹ The name Jonathan is not given, but it seems the natural one to supply in the context. Josephus, perhaps through a misinterpretation, attributes the massacre to Bacchides. ² *et.* 65, 66. The original here is strangely worded, and perhaps corrupt.

wrote him a letter, and these were the terms of it: King Alexander, to Jonathan his brother-prince, greeting! We have heard tell of thee, a man so valiant, and so well worthy of our friendship; in token whereof, we appoint thee high priest of thy own race henceforward, and to have the title of the King's Friend. With that, he sent him a purple robe and a gold crown; Take ever our part, said he, and hold fast the bond of friendship. So, when the seventh month came round, in the hundred and sixtieth year, Jonathan clad himself with the sacred vesture at the feast of Tent-dwelling; an army he levied besides, and made weapons of war in great abundance.

Sick and sorry Demetrius was when he heard of these doings; Here is an ill day's work, said he, to let Alexander forestall us in making alliance with the Jews, to his great comfort! From me, too, they shall have a message of entreaty, they shall have honours and gifts; the Jews shall be my good friends yet. And thus he wrote: King Demetrius, to the people of the Jews, greeting! Here is welcome news we have of you; right well you have kept troth with us, honouring the treaty when you might have taken part with our enemies. In that loyal mind continue, and your good offices shall not go unrewarded; much immunity you shall enjoy, much largesse receive.

By these presents, I exempt both you and all Jews from the poll-tax; salt-tax and coronation dues I remit and forgo, with my right to a third part of your seed-corn, and half your fruit-crop. From this day forward, now and for ever, I resign all this; from Juda and from the three cantons of Samaria and Galilee¹ lately added to it, there shall be no toll taken. For Jerusalem, it shall be a place set apart, a free city with its own confines, mistress of its own tithe and tribute; nor claim I any rights over the citadel there, I make it over to the high priest, to garrison it as he will. All persons of Jewish blood in all my realm that were taken away as prisoners from Juda shall now be set free gratuitously, and no distraint made on their revenues or cattle. Feast-day and new moon and sabbath, and

all other such solemnities as are appointed to be observed, with the three days before and after the feast itself, shall be days of immunity and respite for all the Jews in my realm; nor any business done or debate moved to their detriment at such times. In the king's army, Jews may be enrolled up to the number of thirty thousand, paid according to the common rate of the royal troops; and the same shall be free to serve in all the fortified towns of our empire. Jews may be employed besides in all positions of trust, and appointed governors,² yet live still by their own laws, that have royal sanction in the land of Juda. The three cantons taken from Samaria and added to Judaea shall be accounted part of Juda, under a single government, with no allegiance but to the high priest.

Ptolemais, with all the country that lies about it, I hereby convey as a free gift to the temple precincts at Jerusalem, to defray the temple expenses.³ To this gift I add a sum of fifteen thousand silver sicles yearly, out of the royal dues that belong to me. With this sum, arrears shall be made good in payments for the temple building, withheld till now by such as had charge of the matter; and restitution made, to the priests now in office, for the five thousand sicles that were confiscated year by year from the temple treasury.⁴ Debtor to the king, whatever be the charge against him, that takes sanctuary in the temple or its precincts, shall be left at liberty, and no distraint made upon goods of his within these dominions. Payment shall be made besides from the royal treasury for the finishing and repairing of the temple fabric; as also for building up and making strong the walls of Jerusalem, and restoring the fortresses of Judaea.

But in vain were such promises made to Jonathan and the Jewish folk, nor credence found they any nor assent. Could they forget all the mischief Demetrius had done in Israel, all the tyranny they had endured? Alexander it was had all their good wishes; his was the first offer of terms that reached them, and all the while it was his cause they cherished. By this, Alexander

¹ Samaria and Galilee, here evidently treated as a single unit; the three districts concerned had actually been Samaritan (verse 38). ² And appointed governors; according to the Greek text, and let their governors be men of their own race'. ³ A fine touch; cf. verse 1. ⁴ *ut. vi. 42.* The Latin here differs from the Greek text, which is less intelligible.

had mustered a great force, and marched
 49 against Demetrius. When the two kings
 met, it was Demetrius' men took to their
 heels, and Alexander gave chase, pressing
 50 them hard; fiercely the battle raged till
 sun-down, and before the day was over,
 Demetrius fell.

51 Hereupon Alexander sent an embassy
 to Ptolemy, king of Egypt, addressing him
 52 in these terms following. Take notice I
 have returned to my kingdom, and sit now
 on the throne of my fathers, in full pos-
 session of my princely rights. Would I re-
 gain Syria, needs must I should overthrow
 53 Demetrius; overthrow him I did, on field
 of battle, with all his army, and here I sit
 54 in his place. And should we not be upon
 terms of friendship, thou and I? Let me
 have thy daughter to wife; a niggardly
 wooer thou shalt not find me, nor she
 55 either. And what answer made king Ptole-
 my? An auspicious day, said he, this day
 of thy return to the land and throne of thy
 56 fathers! Boon thy letter asks of me thou
 shalt have; but first meet we together, face
 to face, yonder at Ptolemais; there will I
 pledge my word to the articles thou
 57 namest. So here was king Ptolemy come
 from Egypt, with his daughter Cleopatra,
 all the way to Ptolemais, in the hundred
 58 and sixty-second year; and there king
 Alexander met him and took his daughter
 Cleopatra to wife, and they held the wed-
 ding with great magnificence, as kings will.

59 King Alexander had sent word to Jona-
 than, he should come and keep tryst with
 60 him; so to Ptolemais Jonathan went with
 great state, and met the two kings there.
 Gifts a many he made them, of silver and
 gold and much else, and was high in favour
 61 with them. It chanced that certain Is-
 raelites, pestilent fellows of the traitorous
 party, came there to bring charges against
 him. But to these the king would not
 62 listen; he would have Jonathan change his
 garments, and go clad in purple, and when
 this was done, a seat he must have beside
 63 the king himself. Take him out into the
 heart of the city, Alexander said to his
 vassals, and there make proclamation,
 none may bring charge against him on any

pretext, or in any fashion molest him. No
 64 thought had his accusers, when they heard
 such proclamation made, and saw Jona-
 than there dressed in purple, but to escape,
 one and all, as best they could; he himself
 65 was loaded with honours, enrolled among
 the king's chief friends, and made a prince,
 with a share in the governance of the king-
 dom. So Jonathan made his way back to
 66 Jerusalem undisturbed, and well content.

Then, in the hundred and sixty-fifth
 67 year, came Demetrius, son of that other
 Demetrius, from the island of Crete, and
 landed in his native country; ill hearing
 68 indeed for Alexander, who returned at
 once to Antioch. Demetrius¹ gave com-
 69 mand of his army to Apollonius, that was
 governor of Coelesyria, and a great array
 it was he levied. From Jamnia, where he
 took up his quarters, this Apollonius sent
 word to the high priest Jonathan: What
 70 wilt thou defy us, and all alone? Here am
 I mocked and flouted by the resistance
 offered me, up yonder in the hills! Nay, if
 71 such confidence thou hast in thy own re-
 sources, come down and meet us in the
 plain; try we conclusions there! Trust me,
 I am master of the field; what I am, what
 72 my troops are, thou shalt learn upon a little
 enquiry; stand thou canst not, they will
 tell thee, before onslaught of ours. Twice,
 on their native soil, thy fathers fled in dis-
 73 order, and wilt thou make head against
 such an array of horse and foot, here in the
 plain, where rock is none, nor gravel-bed,
 to aid thy flight?

Roused by this challenge, Jonathan
 74 marched out from Jerusalem with a muster
 of ten thousand men; his brother Simon
 joined hands with him; and together they
 75 appeared before the gates of Joppe. Enter
 they might not, for Apollonius had a gar-
 rison there, but must needs attack it;
 whereupon the citizens took alarm, and
 76 themselves opened the gates. Thus came
 Joppe into the power of Jonathan; the
 77 news reached Apollonius, and he brought
 up three thousand horse, with a great array
 of men besides. To Azotus he marched, as if
 78 he meant to pass them by, but all the while
 he was luring them on into the plain;²

¹ It seems possible that the word 'Demetrius' may have been inserted for the sake of clearness; Josephus treats Apollonius throughout as fighting on the side of Alexander (in spite of verse 88).

² 'All the time he was luring them on into the plain'; this seems to be the meaning of the Greek text, although Joppe and Azotus were both on the sea-board, far away from any hill-country. The Latin has 'immediately he went out into the plain', which yields no satisfactory sense.

in horse lay his strength and his confidence. To Azotus Jonathan followed him, and battle was joined.

79 Apollonius, by a secret feint, had left a thousand horsemen encamped in their rear; so all at once Jonathan found himself cut off by an ambush. Round his army they rode, casting javelins into the ranks, from morning till night-fall; but ever it stood firm, at Jonathan's bidding, till the horses were tired out at last. Then, the force of the cavalry once spent, out came Simon with his troops to attack the main body, which thereupon broke and fled. Scattered over the open country, in vain they rallied at Azotus, and took refuge in the precincts of their god Dagon; both Azotus and all the neighbouring cities Jonathan burnt and plundered, and Dagon's temple, with all that took shelter there, was burnt with the rest. So perished, by sword and fire, some eight thousand men; as for Jonathan, he had no sooner encamped before Ascalon, than the townsfolk opened the gates to him, and gave him honourable welcome.

87 So Jonathan came back to Jerusalem, and the army behind him, laden with spoils. More than ever, when he heard of it, did king Alexander heap honours upon him; a buckle of gold he sent him, ever the gift kings make to men of blood royal, and Accaron, with all the country-side about it, granted him for his domain.

11 And now Ptolemy, king of Egypt, levied a great army, countless as sand on the beach, and a fleet besides; to win Alexander's realm his treacherous design was, and add it to his own. To Syria he came, full of fair speeches, and all the towns opened their gates to welcome him; such welcome Alexander himself had prescribed; was not the king of Egypt his father-in-law? And never a town king Ptolemy entered, but he left a guard of soldiers there. When he reached Azotus, here was Dagon's temple burnt, here was the town itself and all its neighbourhood in ruins; the dead lay unburied, where they fell in battle, or in heaps by the road-side. All this they shewed him, and told him, with malicious intent, how it was Jonathan's doing; but no word said king Ptolemy. As for Jonathan, he went to meet

the king at Joppe, with a deal of pomp; there they greeted one another, and passed the night, nor would Jonathan return to Jerusalem till he had escorted the king as far as the river called Eleutherus.

All the cities of the sea-coast, as far as maritime Seleucia, king Ptolemy occupied, and with no friendly purpose towards Alexander; it was to Demetrius he sent envoys instead. Come, said he, a pact between us! My daughter thou shalt have in Alexander's place, and therewithal the throne of thy fathers; here is an ill son-in-law I have chosen, that went about but now to kill me! Thus, to find pretext for dethroning his rival, king Ptolemy defamed him; took his daughter away, and gave her to Demetrius. His estrangement from Alexander now come to an open breach, what must he do next but enter the city of Antioch, and there assume the double crown, as ruler of Egypt and Asia both? As for Alexander, that was then in Cilicia, quelling a revolt in those parts, he came out to do battle when the news reached him; but Ptolemy brought up his army, met him with a superior force, and routed him. Thus Egypt had the mastery; and when Alexander fled to Arabia for refuge, Zabdiel, an Arabian, cut off his head and sent it to the conqueror. Three days later, Ptolemy himself lay dead; whereupon the garrisons he had left in the towns were massacred by the citizens, and the royal power passed to Demetrius in this, the hundred and sixty-seventh year.

Now it was that Jonathan mustered the men of Judaea to deliver an attack on the Gentile citadel in Jerusalem; engines a many they brought against it. Nor wanted there Jews of the godless party, traitors to their own race, that went off and told Demetrius it was being attacked; the news greatly angered him, and he hastened to Ptolemais, bidding Jonathan raise the siege and come to meet him in conference without more ado. This message notwithstanding, Jonathan would have the siege go forward; certain elders of Israel, and certain of the priests, he chose out to bear him company, and so put his own life in peril, going off to meet the king at Ptolemais, with gold and silver and garments and other gifts in great number. He was received graciously enough; let his own

traitorous fellow-countrymen bring what
 26 accusations they would, the king would not
 be behind his predecessors in making
 much of Jonathan, for all his courtiers to
 27 see. He was confirmed in the high priest-
 hood, and what other high dignities he
 held aforetime, and declared besides the
 chief of the king's friends.

28 And now Jonathan had a favour to ask;
 exemption from tribute for Judaea, and the
 three cantons, and Samaria with its neigh-
 bouring townships;¹ he promised in return
 29 a payment of three hundred talents. To
 this the king agreed, writing thus to Jona-
 than upon the matter raised: King Demetrius,
 30 to his brother prince Jonathan, and
 to the people of the Jews, greeting. We
 31 send you herewith, for your better in-
 formation, a copy of the instructions we
 have given to our cousin Lasthenes in your
 32 regard. King Demetrius, to Lasthenes, his
 33 good father, greeting. Whereas the people
 of the Jews have ever been trusty friends
 to us, our pleasure it is to reward them for
 34 the loyalty they have shewn us. We there-
 fore confirm them in the possession of all
 Judaea, the three cities of Ephraim, Lydda
 and Ramathan, that formerly belonged to
 Samaria, and all their neighbouring town-
 ships. . . to all those who do sacrifice at
 35 Jerusalem; instead of the yearly revenues
 hitherto set apart for the king from harvest
 and fruit-gathering.² Tithe and tribute
 that was ours we also remit to them; nor
 lay any claim to the salt-pits, or the crowns
 which from time to time were bestowed
 36 upon us. Of all this we give them a full
 discharge, that shall be valid in perpetuity.
 37 See to it that a copy of this decree shall be
 made, and handed over to Jonathan, who
 shall set it up in a public place on the holy
 mountain.

38 Here, then, was the whole realm at peace
 under Demetrius' rule, nor any rival had
 he; what must he do but disband all his
 soldiers and send them home, except the
 foreign troops he had levied from the
 islands out at sea? Bitterly they hated him
 for it, the men who had served under his
 39 fathers; and there was one Tryphon that
 took good note of these discontents in the

army. This Tryphon was formerly of
 Alexander's faction, and now he had re-
 course to Emalchuel, the Arabian, that had
 care of Alexander's son Antiochus. Much
 4 persuasion he used with him, to let Antiochus
 return to his father's throne; much
 told him of Demetrius, and how the sol-
 diers were disaffected against him.

Time passed, and Tryphon was in
 Arabia still. Meanwhile, Jonathan was
 urgent with king Demetrius to withdraw
 the garrisons from Jerusalem citadel and
 the other strongholds, where they bore
 arms yet, and against Israel. Nay answered
 4 Demetrius, that I will do and more:
 great honours I have in store, for thee and
 for thy people both, when the time is ripe
 for it. For this present, it were well done
 4 to send troops for my own protection; here
 is all my army revolted from me! Three
 thousand picked men Jonathan dispatched
 to Antioch, to the king's side, and right
 glad he was at their coming. What though
 4 the citizens, a hundred and twenty thou-
 sand strong, were banded together against
 his royal person, driving him to take refuge
 4 within the court, and occupying the city
 streets in warlike fashion? He had but to
 call the Jews to his aid, and they rallied at
 his summons; posted themselves here and
 there about the streets, and in one day slew
 4 a hundred thousand men, setting fire to the
 town besides. There was spoil enough for
 the winning, that day when they saved the
 king's life. The townsfolk, when they saw
 4 how easily the Jews got the mastery of
 them, had no more stomach for fighting:
 they were loud in their entreaties: A truce!
 4 A truce! Havoc enough yonder Jews have
 made of us and of the city! And so, flinging
 5 away their weapons, they came to terms.
 Prince and people both had good proof,
 by now, of the Jews' valour; back they went
 to Jerusalem high in repute among the
 Syrians, and laden with spoils.

Demetrius, now firmly established on
 the throne, his dominions all at peace,
 recked little enough of his promises; from
 Jonathan he was estranged altogether, left
 his services unrequited, and much
 mischief did him besides. It was now that

¹ 'The three cantons, and Samaria with its neighbouring townships'; some think this is a copyist's error for 'the three cantons which had belonged to Samaria, with their neighbouring townships', cf. verse 34. ² The sentence is obscure, and perhaps the text has been inaccurately transmitted. For 'Ephraim' the Greek has the form 'Apbaerema', which the Latin interprets as a common noun, 'sequestration'.

Tryphon came back, and with him the young prince Antiochus, that took the style of king and had himself crowned; all the disbanded armies of Demetrius rallied to them, and turned upon their former master, who fled routed before them; Tryphon, meanwhile, got possession of the elephants, and Antioch fell into his hands. Thereupon came a letter from the young Antiochus to Jonathan, confirming him in the high priesthood, and in possession both of Judaea and of the three cantons; he was acclaimed as the king's friend, and a present of golden cups sent for his use, with the right to drink out of gold ware, to dress in purple, and to carry the golden buckle. His brother Simon, too, was made lord of the sea-coast, from Tyre to the frontiers of Egypt.

And now Jonathan was on the march, across the river, patrolling the cities everywhere, with all the armies of Syria gathered to aid him. . . . He came to Ascalon, where the townfolk welcomed him with all honour; came to Gaza, where they shut the gates on him, and he must needs undertake the siege of it. But when he had spread fire and rapine through the country-side, the men of Gaza asked for terms, which he gave them, carrying off their sons as hostages to Jerusalem. Then he went on patrolling the country, all the way to Damascus. News reached him that the chiefs of Demetrius' faction were making head at Cades, in Galilee, with a whole army to support them, and their design was to remove him from office. So he went to meet them, leaving his brother Simon in charge of Judaea.

As for Simon, he made an assault upon Bethsura, and kept it for a long while besieged, till at last it obtained terms of surrender; he rid the place of its defenders and took over the command of it, putting in a garrison of his own. Meanwhile, Jonathan was encamped by the waters of Genesar; here, on the plain of Asor, they were on the watch before day-break, when they saw the enemy's force coming to meet them over the level plain. These had an ambush ready for him on the hill-side, and

as he advanced to meet the main body, the men in ambush sprang up, and engaged him. At this, all Jonathan's supporters took to their heels; none stood their ground but Mathathias son of Absalom and Judas son of Calphi, that had the marshalling of his men. What marvel if Jonathan tore his garments about him, and strewed earth on his head, and betook himself to prayer? Afterwards, he offered battle afresh, and routed his enemies; as the fight went on, his own men that had deserted their ranks rallied to him, and joined in the pursuit all the way to Cades, where they encamped once more. In that day's fighting, three thousand of the Gentiles fell; and so Jonathan made his way back to Jerusalem.

12 Here was a posture of affairs suited Jonathan well enough; yet would he send delegates to confirm and renew his alliance with the Romans; Lacedaemon, too, and other countries should have letters of the same tenour. To Rome, then, his messengers went, gained audience of the senate, and told how the high priest Jonathan and the Jewish people had sent them to renew their old treaty of friendship; and the Romans gave them such letters of recommendation to this country or that, as should bring them home to Juda under safe conduct.

The message Jonathan sent to the men of Sparta was in these terms following. The high priest Jonathan, with the elders and priests and all the people of the Jews, to their brethren the Spartans, greeting. Long since, your king Arius wrote to our own high priest, Onias, claiming kinship between us, as witness the copy here subjoined; an honourable welcome Onias gave to this messenger of yours, and accepted the proposal of friendly alliance. For ourselves, we have little need of such friendship; seek we comfort, it is in the sacred books committed to our charge. Yet we thought it best to treat with you for the renewal of this brotherly compact, before any estrangement should arise between us; your embassy to us is of long ago. Never feast-day passes, nor day apt for remem-

¹ It is hardly possible to give any satisfactory account of the text as it stands. Even if we take 'beyond' as referring to the Jewish side of the Euphrates, why should an expedition into Syria bring Jonathan down to Ascalon, some forty miles west of Jerusalem? Conceivably there has been some disturbance in the text, which may have read originally, 'And he (Antiochus) began patrolling the cities across the river, with all the armies of Syria gathered to aid him; and Jonathan marched out and came to Ascalon. . . .'

brance, but you are remembered, as brothers should be, in sacrifice and prayer we offer; renown of yours is pride of ours still.
 12 In wars and calamities much involved of late, powerful kings for our neighbours and
 13 our enemies, we would not embroil you, nor other allies of ours, in these quarrels.
 14 Now, by the grace of heaven, we are delighted; our enemies lie crushed; delegates of ours, Numenius son of Antiochus and Antipater son of Jason, are on their way to Rome, friendship and alliance of former
 15 days to confirm afresh; and should we send them with no errand to you, no greeting, no word from us of brotherhood revived?
 16 Pray you, send us fair answer in your turn.

17 And, for Arius' letter to Onias, thus the copy of it ran, Arius, king of the Spartans, 18 to the high priest Onias, greeting. Spartan and Jew, written record shews it, come of one blood, Abraham's. Apprised of this, we would fain know how you do; pray tell
 19 us. And take this message in return, Cattle and whatever else is ours, is yours, and yours ours; of that, the bearer of this letter brings you assurance.

20 Then came news to Jonathan that the chiefs of Demetrius' faction were returning to the attack, and in greater force than ever; so out he marched, and met them in the Amathite country; respite he would
 21 not give them, to invade his own. Spies of his went out into the enemy's camp, and reported, all was ready for a night attack;
 22 so, when the sun was down, Jonathan would have his men keep watch, ready armed all night for battle, and posted sentries round his lines. The enemy, hearing
 23 of such preparedness on their part, took alarm and let cowardly counsels prevail;¹ they were at pains to leave watchfires burning in their camp, so that Jonathan and his men, deceived by the glow of light, knew
 24 nothing of their plans till morning; and when he gave chase, it was too late to catch them; already they had crossed the river
 25 Eleutherus. Thereupon he turned his attack against the Zabadeans, an Arabian tribe, defeating them and taking spoils
 26 from them; and so, harnessing his wagons, pressed on to Damascus, patrolling all the country round about. Meanwhile, Simon had marched out to Ascalon and

the neighbouring strongholds; thence he turned aside to Joppe, and took possession of it; rumour had reached him, the town-folk would yield the citadel to Demetrius' party, and he must have a garrison there of his own.

When Jonathan returned, he summoned the elders of the people, and took counsel with them, how best to raise strongholds in Judaea, and build up walls in Jerusalem itself. Height these must have, above all, between the Citadel and the rest of the town; he would have it cut off from the rest, standing by itself, with no opportunity to buy and sell. A great muster there was for the city's rebuilding; and where the wall had tumbled down, over the ravine on the east, he made it good; it is the part called Caphetetha. Meanwhile, Simon rebuilt Adiada in the Sephela and fortified it; bolt and bar it should have thenceforward.

And what of Tryphon? Lordship of all Asia he coveted, and a royal crown; it should be Antiochus' turn next. The danger was, Jonathan would refuse his assent, and resort to arms; Jonathan first he must seize and put to death. So he moved his quarters to Bethsan, where Jonathan came out to meet him with forty thousand men, picked warriors all of them, at his back. Here was a great retinue; and Tryphon, daunted by this show of force, was fain to give him an honourable welcome. He would admit Jonathan among his closest friends, and bestow gifts on him; let Jonathan give orders, and Tryphon's soldiers would obey. Then he asked, What needs it, such a host of men should go campaigning, when threat of war is none? It were better to disband them, and choose out a few for thy own retinue. That done, bear me company to Ptolemais; city and strongholds and troops and officers I will hand over into thy charge and so get me gone home; it was on that errand I came.

What did Jonathan? He fell into the trap, sent his men back to Juda, and kept but three thousand under arms; of these, he left two thousand in Galilee, and took but a thousand in his company. No sooner had he entered Ptolemais than the town-folk shut the gates behind him, secured his person, and put his retinue to the sword.

¹ 'Let cowardly counsels prevail'; literally, 'were dismayed in their hearts', but the context shews that in fact they beat a retreat.

49 Horse and foot Tryphon sent out to Galilee, to find the rest of his followers in the
50 Great Plain, and make an end of them; but these, hearing that Jonathan and his men had been caught and murdered, resolved to put a bold front on it, and marched in
51 battle array. Finding them ready to sell their lives dearly, their pursuers abandoned the chase, and all reached Juda safe
52 and sound. For Jonathan and his companions they made great dole, and loudly all Israel echoed their lament. Neighbouring
53 people was none but went about to overthrow them, and no wonder; their chieftain, their champion gone, now was the
54 time to fall upon them, and rid earth of their memory.

13 And what did Simon, when he heard that Tryphon had levied a strong force, for Juda's invasion and overthrow? Here was all the people in a great taking of fear; so he made his way to Jerusalem and there gathered them to meet
3 him. And thus, to put heart into them, he spoke: Need is none to tell you what battles we have fought, what dangers endured, I and my brethren and all my father's kin,
4 law and sanctuary to defend. In that cause, and for the love of Israel, my brothers have
5 died, one and all, till I only am left; never be it said of me, in the hour of peril I held
6 life dear, more precious than theirs! Nay, come the whole world against us, to glut its malice with our ruin, race and sanctuary, wives and children of ours shall find
7 me their champion yet. At these words,
8 the spirit of the whole people revived; loud came their answer, Brother of Judas and
9 Jonathan, thine to lead us now! Thine to sustain our cause; and never word of thine shall go unheeded!

10 Thereupon, he summoned all the fighting men together, and pressed on to have the walls of Jerusalem finished, till it was
11 fortified all about; and he sent Jonathan, son of Absalom, to Joppe, at the head of a force newly raised; the garrison was disbanded, and a new captain held it now.
12 Meanwhile, Tryphon had left Ptolemais, with a great army at his heels, marching on Juda; and with him went Jonathan, his

prisoner. He found Simon encamped at
13 Addus, that looks out over the plain; here was Jonathan's brother Simon taking his place, and offering battle. Envoys were
14 sent out to make his excuses: Hold we the person of thy brother Jonathan, it is because he is in default to the royal treasury
15 over his dealings with it. Thou hast but to send a hundred talents of silver, and his
16 two sons, to be surety he will not play us false when we release him, and he is a free man. Well Simon knew it was
17 treacherously spoken; yet he gave orders, both money and hostages should be surrendered. A bitter grudge Israel's people
18 would bear him, if they had cause to say, For want of money paid over and surety
19 given, Jonathan must die! Sent they were, the boys and the money both, but all was
treachery; Jonathan never came back.

And now Tryphon invaded Juda, bent on its undoing; his troops must fetch a compass by the road that leads round to Ador, and, march they where they would, Simon and his army were at their heels. Word came to Tryphon from the defenders
21 of Jerusalem citadel, he should make his way across the desert without more ado, and bring them supplies; and that same night
22 he had all his cavalry in readiness for the march, but there was a great fall of snow, and come he might not . . . into the country of Galaad.¹ When he reached Bascaman,
23 then and there he put Jonathan and his sons to death; and with that, he turned
24 about, and went back to his own country.

There lay the bones of Simon's brother
25 Jonathan, till he sent to fetch them, and gave them burial at Modin, the city of his fathers. Loud lament all Israel made for
26 him, and long they bemoaned him. Over the graves of his father and his brethren
27 Simon raised a towering monument, of dressed stone behind and before; then,
28 with father and mother and his four brethren in mind, he built seven pyramids, in rows; and all about were great columns,
29 carved with armour and ships; an abiding memorial, and a land mark to mariners at sea. Such was the tomb he raised at
30 Modin, and it may be seen to this day. Meanwhile, as they were journeying together,
31

¹ It seems clear from the context that some words have dropped out. The Greek text has, 'and come he might not, because of the snow. So he moved camp and went into the country of Galaad'. But the passage may originally have indicated what reasons Tryphon had for abandoning his campaign in Judaea.

Tryphon murdered the young king Antiochus by artifice, and succeeded to his throne, wearing the crown of all Asia; great mischief it was he did to his country.

All the fortresses of Judaea Simon repaired, building them up with high tower and stout wall, with bolt and bar; and never a garrison but had provisions laid up in store. Then he chose out envoys and sent them to king Demetrius, praying that the land might enjoy immunity after the tyrannous actions of Tryphon.¹ When king Demetrius answered the request, he wrote in these terms following. King Demetrius to the high priest Simon, the friend of kings, and to all the elders and people of the Jews, greeting. Crown of gold and robe of scarlet you sent us were faithfully delivered. Great favour we mean to shew you, by sending word to the king's officers to respect the remissions granted you. The decrees we made concerning you are yet in force; and, for the strongholds you have built, they shall be yours. Fault of yours in the past, witting or unwitting, is condoned; coronation tax you owed, and all other tribute that was due from Jerusalem, is due no longer. Fit be they for such enrolment, Jews shall be enrolled in our armies, and ever between us and you let there be peace!

Thus, in the hundred and seventieth year, Israel was free of the Gentile yoke at last; and this style the people began to use, were it private bond or public instrument they indited. In the first year of Simon's high priesthood, chief paramount and governor of the Jews.

Then it was that Simon marched on Gaza,² and beleaguered it with his army; built engines, and forced an entry into one of the towers. Out into the streets they sallied, that manned the engine, and there was a fine commotion in the city; here were the townfolk, with their wives and children, mounting the walls with their garments rent about them, and crying aloud, Simon should give them quarter; great were their fault, greater still his clemency! At that, Simon relented; harry them to the

death he would not, but he drove them out of the city, and cleansed all the houses where idols had stood; then, with singing of psalms and giving of thanks, he made his entry; and now all defilement must be put away, and such citizens it must have as did what the law commanded. After that, he fortified it, and made his own dwelling there.

And what of the Gentiles that were left in Jerusalem citadel? Enter Jewish territory or leave it they might not, buy or sell they might not, so that they were hard put to it for food, and many died of famine. At last they cried out to Simon, he should give them quarter, and give them quarter he did, but drove them out, and cleansed the citadel of its pollution. On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the hundred and seventy-first year, in came the Jewish folk singing praise and bearing palm-branches, with music of harp, and cymbals, and zither, and chanting of psalms; of such ill neighbours Israel was now rid. Every year, Simon proclaimed, holiday should be kept at this time; and he fortified that part of the temple mountain which was close by the citadel; here he dwelt, and his followers with him. And now here was his son John grown into a brave warrior; him Simon put at the head of the whole army, with his quarters at Gazara.

14 The year following, what must Demetrius do but muster his army and betake himself to Media, where he would raise levies for the war against Tryphon? When Arsaces, king of the Medes and Persians, had news of it, he gave orders to one of his chieftains, the invader must be taken alive and brought into his presence. The order was obeyed; the Syrian king, routed and captured, was brought before Arsaces, who put him safely in prison.

Thus, during Simon's days, the whole land of Juda was at peace. Ever his people's good sought he, and ever by willing hearts was obeyed and honoured. With great state he took possession of Joppe as

¹ 'After the tyrannous actions of Tryphon'; literally (in the Greek text), 'because all the actions of Tryphon were seizures'. The meaning is perhaps that Simon now recognized all the actions of Tryphon as usurpations of power; it is evident from what follows that he was not sure of his position; had the Jews, by their support of a pretender, forfeited the privileges granted in 11. 33-37? ² Josephus is perhaps right in reading 'Gazara' (less than twenty miles from Jerusalem) instead of 'Gaza'; cf. 14. 7.

a harbour,¹ and so found access to the
 6 islands out at sea. How wide spread he the
 frontiers of Israel, how firmly held its pos-
 7 sessions, captured how many of its foes!
 Gazara and Bethsura he won, ay, and the
 Citadel itself, ridding it of all defilement;
 8 there was no resisting his power. In his
 day, every man farmed his own lands in
 security, soil of Juda yielded its crops, and
 9 the trees their fruit; sat old men in the
 market-place, busy over the common weal,
 and young men wore the livery of their
 10 glorious campaigning. Never a city but he
 furnished it with store of provisions; a bul-
 wark each of them should be of sturdy
 defence. What wonder if the story of his
 renown was noised to the world's end?²
 11 Such peaceful times brought he to his
 country, when all Israel kept high holiday,
 12 every man with his own vine and fig-tree
 for shade, and enemy was none to daunt
 13 them; domestic malice undone, foreign
 tyranny shattered all around! Among his
 own folk, what comfort he gave the friend-
 14 less, how scrutinized the law, what short
 15 work made of traitor and malcontent; how
 adorned the sanctuary, how increased the
 number of its treasures!

16 To Rome, to Sparta itself, came tidings
 of Jonathan's death, and was heard right
 17 sorrowfully. When they learned that his
 brother Simon had been made high priest
 instead, master now of the land and all its
 18 cities, they wrote to him on tablets made of
 bronze, to renew the treaty of friendship
 they had with his brethren, Judas and
 19 Jonathan, before him;³ and their letters
 were read out before the whole assembly
 at Jerusalem. The Spartans wrote in these
 20 words following: The rulers and common-
 alty of Sparta, to the high priest
 Simon, the elders and priests and all the
 21 people of the Jews, greeting. Welcome
 news your ambassadors have brought us,
 of fame and credit and prosperity you
 22 enjoy. And their errand stands recorded

in our public annals; how Numenius son
 of Antiochus and Antipater son of Jason
 came on the Jews' part to renew our old
 treaty of friendship with you; how the
 23 people resolved to give them fair greeting,
 and to lay up a copy of their report in the
 public archives, that should preserve the
 memory of it among the Spartan people;
 and how an account of all this was sent to
 the high priest Simon.

Numenius was sent on a further mission
 24 to Rome, bearing a great target of gold, a
 thousand minas in weight, to renew the
 alliance there. And when all this reached
 the ears of the people...³

... Men began to ask, how they could
 25 shew their gratitude to Simon, and to his
 sons? Here was one that had restored the
 26 fortunes of his race, and rid Israel of its
 foes. So they gave him exemption from
 public burdens, and inscribed their decree
 on tablets of bronze, fastened to pillars
 which were set up on mount Zion.

And thus the inscription ran: On this
 27 eighteenth day of Elul, in the hundred and
 seventy-second year of the Greek empire,
 the third of Simon's high priesthood, there
 28 was a high assembly held at Saramel⁴ of
 priests and people, clan-chiefs and elders
 of the whole nation, that had before
 them these considerations following. All
 through the long wars of our country,
 Simon and his brethren, sons of Mat-
 29 tathias, of Jarib's clan, put their lives in
 peril, and fought for law and sanctuary
 against the common enemy, much glory
 winning for their own nation. When Jona-
 30 than, that had rallied the people and been
 their high priest, became a part of his race,
 enemies thought to invade the country and
 31 crush the power of it, violate its holy
 places; and Simon it was withstood them.
 32 Champion of his people's cause, much he
 spent to arm its warriors, and furnish them
 with pay. Juda's cities he fortified, and
 33 others besides; Bethsura on the frontiers,

¹ This is perhaps the best interpretation of a difficult phrase, 'With all his glory he received Joppe to be a harbour'. For the language used, cf. 10. 58, II Mac. 5. 20. Joppe had been captured by Jonathan (10. 76), and remained at least nominally in Jewish possession (12. 33; 13. 11); Simon's achievement, according to verse 34 below, was to fortify it.

² The implication appears to be that both Rome and Sparta sent answers in the manner described.

³ v. 24. It would be natural to assume that the end of this verse refers to the Roman people; and the Clementine Vulgate, without any manuscript authority, actually inserts the word 'Roman'. But the proceedings of verses 25 sqq. are evidently those of the Jewish people. There is a want of sequence in the narrative as it stands, and it seems possible that verses 15-24 of chapter 15 originally stood here, and were accidentally misplaced; if so, 'all this' will refer to the Roman dispatches.

⁴ This name is not found elsewhere, and probably conceals some error in the text.

once a stronghold of the enemy, garrisoned
 34 now by Jews, Joppe on the sea-coast, and
 Gazara in the Azotus region; Gazara, too,
 once hostile, with Jewish troops manned
 he, and in each town made provision for
 repairs to be done.

35 The people, seeing him so loyal a lover
 of his country's renown, made him their
 ruler and high priest; no less was due to
 such exploits, public service so faithfully
 done, such constant ambition for his
 36 people's honour. In his days it was, and by
 his means, the land was rid at last of Gen-
 tile intruders; not least the garrison of
 David's own Keep at Jerusalem, that by
 their sallying out profaned the sacred pre-
 37 cincts, and much defiled their purity; a
 Jewish garrison he set there, to guard both
 city and country-side, and built Jerusalem
 38 walls yet higher. High priesthood of his,
 king Demetrius must needs acknowledge,
 39 bestowing on him the title of king's friend,
 and loading him with honours. What could
 40 he do else? Here was Rome itself greeting
 the Jewish folk as allies, good friends, and
 kinsmen, welcoming the envoys of Simon
 41 with civic state. Here were the Jews,
 priests and people both, agreed that he
 should rule them, granting him the high
 priesthood¹ by right inalienable, until true
 prophet they should have once more.
 42 Their ruler he should be, and guardian of
 their temple; appoint officer and magis-
 43 trate, master of ordnance and captain of
 garrison, and have charge of the sanctuary
 besides. Him all must obey, in his name
 deeds be drawn up, all the country
 through; of purple and gold should be his
 44 vesture. Of the rest, both priests and
 people, none should retrench these priv-
 ileges, nor gainsay Simon's will, nor con-
 voke assembly in the country without him;
 garment of purple, buckle of gold none
 45 should wear; nor any man defy or void this
 edict, but at his peril.

The people's pleasure it was to ennoble
 46 Simon after this sort; and Simon, he
 would not say them nay; high priest, and
 of priests and people leader, governor and
 47 champion, he would be henceforward. So
 they had the decree inscribed on tablets of

bronze, and set up plain to view in the
 temple precincts; and a copy of it they put
 4 in the treasury, in the safe keeping of
 Simon and his heirs.²

15 Now turn we to Demetrius' other
 son, Antiochus.³ He it was di-
 rected a letter, from the islands over sea, to
 Simon, high priest and ruler of the Jews,
 and to the whole nation; and this was the
 tenour of it. King Antiochus, to the high
 priest Simon and to the people of the Jews,
 greeting. Here is the kingdom of my
 fathers overrun by ill folk; I mean to chal-
 lenge them, and bring back the old ways.
 To this end, I have made a great levy of
 mercenaries, and built ships of war; pas-
 sage I needs must have through yonder
 territory, ere I can take vengeance for lands
 of mine ravaged, cities of mine laid waste.
 This grant, then, I make thee; exemption,
 such as thou hadst, in the name of former
 kings, from public offerings and all other
 payment due to me; the right of minting
 money within thy own borders; for Jeru-
 salem, enjoyment of her sacred liberties;
 of weapons thou hast made, strongholds
 thou hast built, the undisturbed pos-
 session. Never a claim the king has, or
 shall have hereafter, on his subjects, but
 to thee it is remitted; and, when the king-
 dom is ours, such honours we will bestow
 as shall make thee, and thy race, and its
 sanctuary, renowned all the world over.

So, in the hundred and seventy-fourth
 year, Antiochus returned to his native
 country, and the armies rallied to him,
 until Tryphon had but a small following
 left; all down the sea-coast he fled, with
 Antiochus at his heels, till he reached
 Dora; and ever he saw the toils closing
 round him, now his troops had played him
 false. With a hundred and twenty thousand
 foot, and eight thousand horse, Antiochus
 came to the gates of Dora and began the
 1 siege of it; his ships, too, blockaded the
 coast, so that it was cut off by land and
 sea alike; enter it none might, nor leave
 it...

And now here were Numenius and his
 fellow envoys come back from Rome,⁴ with

¹ The Machabaeen high priesthood seems to have been regarded as an emergency dispensation. For the mention of the prophet, cf. 4. 46. ² *vv.* 45-49. We should perhaps take these verses as part of the decree itself; otherwise verse 48 seems a needless repetition of verse 26. ³ Antiochus was son to the Demetrius whose death is recorded in 10. 50, brother to the Demetrius first mentioned in 10. 67.

⁴ *vv.* 15-24. See note on 14. 24.

a copy of despatches sent out to kings and nations everywhere, and this was the tenour of them. Lucius, the Roman consul, to king Ptolemy, greeting. Envoys we have but now received in audience from a friendly country, to wit, Judaea; the people of the Jews, with their high priest Simon, had sent to renew their old treaty of alliance with us, and had made us a present besides, a golden target of a thousand minas weight. Agreed we then to warn kings and nations everywhere, they should not hurt or assault the Jewish people, its cities and country-side, nor comfort its enemies; and for the target of gold, our pleasure was to accept the gift of it. If then there be malcontents from Judaea sheltering among you, our bidding is you should hand them over to the high priest Simon, for such punishment as the Jewish law prescribes. Copies of this decree have been sent to Demetrius, Attalus, Ariarathes and Arsaces, and to these countries following: Lampascus, Sparta, Delos, Myndos, Sicyon, Caria, Samos, Pamphylia, Lycia, Halicarnassus, Coös, Side, Arados, Rhodes, Phaselis, Gortyna, Cnidus, Cyprus and Cyrene. A further copy has been sent to the high priest Simon and to the Jewish people...

Once again¹ king Antiochus laid siege to Dora, bringing fresh force to bear, and devising fresh engines; and ever he kept Tryphon hemmed in, so that escape was none. Thereupon Simon despatched two thousand picked men to aid in the siege, with silver and gold and a deal of tackle besides; but accept them the king would not; all his promises were forgot, and Simon a stranger now. Athenobius it was, one of the king's friends, that came to treat with him, and this was the message he bore: Cities of mine you hold, Joppe, and Gazara, and Jerusalem citadel; lands about them you have laid waste, and done Syria much mischief besides, encroaching everywhere on my domain. Needs must you should hand over cities you have occupied, revenues of Gentile lands you have detained, or else five hundred talents of

silver in exchange, and five hundred more to compensate for damage done and revenue lost; if not, we will come and overpower you by force of arms.

So came Athenobius, the king's friend, to Jerusalem, where he saw what state Simon kept, much display of gold and silver, and a great throng of attendants, till he was dazzled at the sight. Yet delivered he his errand; to which Simon made this answer: Other men's fief seized we never, nor other men's rights detain; here be lands that were our fathers' once, by enemies of ours for some while wrongfully held; opportunity given us, should we not claim the patrimony we had lost? As for thy talk of Joppe and Gazara, these were cities did much mischief to people and land of ours; for the worth of them, thou shalt have a hundred talents if thou wilt. Never a word said Athenobius, but went back to the king very ill pleased, and told him what answer was given; of Simon's court, too, and of all else he had seen.

Antiochus was in a great taking of anger; here was Tryphon newly escaped by ship to Orthosias! He must needs leave the sea-coast in charge of Cendebeaus, with a strong command both of horse and foot, while himself gave Tryphon chase. This Cendebeaus had orders to advance and threaten Judaea; Gedor² he should fortify, and there make himself fast, the better to levy war on Juda. So he marched away to Jamnia, and set about harassing the Jews; now it was an inroad, with prisoners carried away, now a massacre; and all the while he was fortifying Gedor. Cavalry he quartered there, and other troops besides, to sally out and patrol the roads into Judaea; the king would have it so.

16 It was not long before John came up from Gazara, to tell his father Simon how ill Cendebeaus was using their fellow-countrymen. And at that, Simon must have his two elder sons present, Judas and John both, and made the command over to them. Still young we were, he said, I and my brothers and my father's

¹ Some Greek manuscripts have 'on the second day', instead of 'once again', but this is probably a correction, designed to clear up a difficulty. Nothing has been said which implies that the siege described in verse 14 had come to an end; and it is not easy to account for the mention of a second siege, unless we suppose a gap in the manuscript which has been accidentally filled up by verses 15-24. ² 'Gedor' is 'Cedron' in the Greek text, here and in verse 40 below, to correspond with verse 9 of the following chapter.

kin, when we began that war on Israel's enemies which is being fought yet; under our banners once and again came victory, and the day was saved for Israel. I am an old man now, and it is yours to do what I and brother of mine did; march out, fight in our people's cause, and heaven's aid be with you!

4 Twenty thousand warriors John¹ chose out from the rest, and cavalry to support them, and away they went to fight Cendebaeus. That night they spent at Modin, and on the morrow, when they left it for the valley, what a huge array was this, both of horse and foot, encountering them! And a mountain torrent flowed in between.

6 When John brought his army to the opposite bank, and found his men had little stomach for the crossing, he made the passage first, leaving the rest to follow at his heels; then drew them up by companies, with the cavalry in between, so greatly did the enemy's cavalry outnumber them. And now the sacred trumpets sounded the charge; fled Cendebaeus, fled his army at their onslaught, and many were left dead on the field; for the rest, they were fain to take refuge behind their walls again. John went in pursuit, for all his brother Judas had been wounded in the battle, and chased them as far as the walls of Cedron . . . which he had fortified.² Nor might they find shelter in the strongholds of the Azotus territory; he burnt these to the ground; a toll of two thousand men he had taken before he returned victorious to Judaea.

11 Turn we now to Ptolemy, son of Abobus, that was in charge of all Jericho plain, and had a purse well lined with silver and gold; was he not the son-in-law of a high priest?³ But higher still his ambition ran; he would make himself master of the whole

country; murder he plotted for Simon and his sons together. It was in Sabbath, the eleventh month, of the hundred and seventy-seventh year, that Simon came down to Jericho, as ever he visited all the cities of Judaea in his great care for them; and his sons Mattathias and Judas went with him. And there, in a castle he had built for himself, Doch is the name of it, the son of Abobus gave them treacherous welcome. A great feast he made, but he had men waiting in readiness, and with these, when Simon and his sons had drunk deep, he took arms, broke into the banquetting-chamber, and slew both father and sons, with certain of their retinue. Never saw Israel so treacherous a deed, or good service so ill rewarded.

News of all this was sent by Ptolemy to the king, and in writing; his plea was, an army should be sent out in support of him, and the country, with all its cities and all the tribute that came from them, given into his charge. Others of his men he despatched to Gazara; John must be put to death, he wrote, and for the captains, they should have silver and gold and good recompense, would they but rally to his side; others again were to take possession of Jerusalem, and of the temple hill. But too late; a messenger had reached John at Gazara, telling him his father and brothers were dead, and himself too marked down for slaughter; whereupon he took alarm in good earnest; their murderous errand known, he seized his executioners and made an end of them.

What else John did, and how fought he, brave deeds done, and strong walls built, and all his history, you may read in the annals of his time, that were kept faithfully since the day when he succeeded his father as high priest.

¹ The name John is not mentioned in the original, either here or in verses 6 and 7 below. But it is plain that either John or Judas is meant, and 13. 54 seems to give the best grounds for a decision.

² v. 9. It is grammatically impossible to make Cendebaeus the subject of the verb 'he had fortified', as the sentence stands. It seems likely that there is some slight error or omission in the manuscripts.

³ 'Of a high priest'; Josephus understands this as referring to Simon himself. But it does not seem likely that the author should have suppressed his name in verse 12, only to mention it in verse 13; nor does he mention the circumstances of affinity as adding to the heinousness of the crime (cf. verse 17). Possibly some other name has dropped out, e.g. that of Alcimus.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MACHABEES

TO their brethren, the Jews of Egypt, those of Jerusalem and Judaea send brotherly greeting and good health.¹ God speed you well, the covenant he made with his true worshippers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, never forgetting; reverent hearts may he give to all of you, brave and generous to perform his will; with law and precept of his enlarge your thoughts, and send you happiness; may he listen to your prayer, and be gracious, and in the hour of peril never forsake you! Take courage, then; we in this land are praying for you. Time was, in the hundred and sixty-ninth year, when Demetrius was a-reigning, we ourselves were writing to you in the midst of suffering and alarms. Much had we to undergo, when Jason would betray his own country, his own people; here was the gateway burnt to the ground, here were innocent lives forfeited. Cried we upon the Lord, and all our prayers were answered; burnt-sacrifice and bloodless offering were made, lamps lighted, and leaves set forth in the temple as of old! Look to it, then, you make bowers and keep holiday in this month of Casleu.² Written in the hundred and eighty-eighth year.

The common folk of Jerusalem and Judaea,³ their council of elders, and I, Judas, to Aristobulus, of the anointed priestly race, that was master of king Ptolemy, and to the Jews of Egypt, greet-

ing and health. Great thanks we owe to God, that from the extreme of peril has delivered us; ay, though we had such a king for our adversary, as could bring in hordes of men from Persia, both us and our holy city to subdue.⁴

What became of him, think you, the general that marched away into Persia with a countless army at his heels?⁵ He met his end in the temple of Nanea, through guile of the priests that served it. Thither Antiochus had come with his friends, putting it about that he would wed the goddess, and laying claim to a great part of her treasures under the title of dowry. The priests, then, had the money laid out in readiness; into the precincts he came, with a meagre retinue, and they, now that Antiochus was within, shut the temple gates. Thereupon, letting themselves in by their secret door, they killed the general and his company with throwing of stones, cut them limb from limb, and threw them down headless to the populace without. Blessed, upon every account, be this God of ours, that denies protection to the sinner! We, then, on this twenty-fifth day of Casleu, mean to solemnize the purification of the temple, and hold ourselves bound to notify you of it, so that you too may keep holiday, with making of bowers. . . .

. . . And of the fire imparted to us, when Nehemias offered sacrifice at the rebuilding of temple and altar.⁶ Long ago, 19

¹ *vv.* 1-9. The first, it would seem, of a series of fragments prefixed to the book proper. If the date given at the end belongs to it, it must have been written about the year 125 before Christ, after the death of Simon. ² Here and in verse 18 the feast alluded to is not the feast of Tent-dwelling (*Lev.* 23. 34), but that of the Dedication (*I Mac.* 4. 59, *Jn.* 10. 22) at which it appears that the same ceremonies were used.

³ *vv.* 10-18. The date mentioned in verse 10 probably belongs to the earlier fragment, since the ancients usually dated their letters at the end, cf. *11.* 21, 33, 38 below. If so, this second fragment, undated, will have been written by Judas Machabaeus to Aristobulus, tutor of the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philometor, some forty years earlier than verses 1-9.

⁴ *vv.* 11, 12. The Latin here seems designed to make sense of a passage untranslatable, and probably corrupt, in the Greek text. ⁵ *vv.* 13-16. If Antiochus Epiphanes is meant, the description of him as 'the general' is highly suspicious. It seems possible that no name was mentioned in the original, and that the word 'Antiochus' was twice introduced by a copyist, mistakenly anxious to identify the unnamed figure. If so, the fate we are concerned with is that of some general in command of Antiochus's army; his own is described, quite differently, in 9. 5 below.

⁶ The Latin makes a single sentence of the whole verse, but by dint of concealing what is evidently a gap in the Greek text. The end of the second fragment seems to have been lost; and also the beginning of this third fragment, which occupies the rest of the chapter. The

when our fathers were being carried off into the Persian country, such priests of the true God as held office in those days took away the fire from the altar, and hid it down in the valley, in a pit both deep and dry, so well guarding their secret that none might know where it was to be found.

- 20 Years passed, and God's will was that Nehemias should come back, holding the Persian king's warrant. Nehemias it was that had search made for the fire, and by the grandsons of those very priests that hid it; but they made report, fire they could find none, only a puddle of water.¹
- 21 And what did Nehemias? He would have some of the water drawn and fetched to him; with this water, once the sacrifice was laid on the altar, both the wood and the offerings themselves must be sprinkled.
- 22 Sprinkled they were, and when the sun shone out, that till now was hidden by a cloud, all at once a great fire blazed up, astonishing the beholders.

- 23 To prayer fell the priests all around, while sacrifice was done, Jonathan to lead them,² and the rest answering; to prayer fell Nehemias, and this was the manner of his praying: Lord God, that all things madest, the terrible, the strong, the just, the merciful, King gracious as none else; none else so kindly, none else so just, as thou, the almighty, the eternal! Israel from all peril thou deliverest, thou didst make choice of our fathers, and set them apart for thyself. For the whole nation of Israel receive our sacrifice; all are thine; thy own domain keep inviolate. Bring home the exiles; captives of the heathen conquer or set free; to the despised, the outcast grant redress; let the world know what a God is ours! Crush the oppressor, the tyrant that somishandles us, and to thy own sanctuary, as Moses foretold, thy own people restore!

identity of Nehemias seems doubtful; the well-known governor of that name restored the walls of Jerusalem nearly a century after the rebuilding of the Temple. But a Nehemias is mentioned in I Esd. 2. 2, Neh. 7. 7, among the exiles who returned with Zerobabel. The description 'Nehemias the priest' in verse 21 is probably due to an error in our present Latin text.

¹ The 'fire' hidden in the pit was presumably a smouldering log, such as might be buried away at night to be re-lit in the morning. The 'puddle of water' (literally, 'thick water') found on the site was evidently something different, and there is no reason to think that its properties, natural or supernatural, belonged to the 'fire' originally deposited there. ² Jonathan was not the high priest, but the leader of a course of priests (Neh. 12. 14).

³ *vv.* 31, 32. The Greek text here is very doubtful, and perhaps indicates, not that the water was poured out on stones, but that stones were used to block up the hidden pool. ⁴ In the Greek text, no mention is made of the priests; the Persian king exchanged gifts with his favourites, by way of celebrating the event (cf. Apoc. 11. 10).

⁵ *vv.* 1-19. These verses seem to be a continuation of the third fragment preserved in the foregoing chapter. Nothing in the prophecy of Jeremiah, as we have it, relates the circumstances here mentioned, although verse 2 is possibly a reference to Bar. 6.

⁶ Some of the actions described by the Hebrew prophets may have taken place only in a vision, not in actual life, cf. e.g. Jer. 13. 1-7. The mountain is no doubt Phasga (Deut. 34).

Then, till the sacrifice was consumed, the priests went on with their singing of hymns; and when all was finished, Nehemias would have them drench great stones with the water that was left. Thereupon, a flame broke out from them, but died away when the altar fires blazed up again over yonder.³ The news travelled, till the Persian king himself was told how water appeared where exiled priests had hidden the fire, how, with this water, Nehemias and his company had bathed the sacrifice. Good heed he gave to the matter, and after due examination fenced the ground in with a shrine, in witness of what befell there. Largesse the priests had, and many were the gifts passed from hand to hand, when the truth of the matter was proved.⁴ As for the place, Nehemias himself called it Nephthar, which means Purification; but the vulgar call it Nephi.

2 You shall also find it set down in the dispositions made by the prophet Jeremias, that he bade the exiles rescue the sacred fire, in the manner aforesaid.⁵ Strict charge he gave them, the Lord's commandments they should keep ever in mind, nor let false gods, all gold and silver and fine array, steal away their hearts; with much else to confirm them in their regard for the law. And here, in this same document, the story was told, how a divine oracle came to Jeremias, and he must needs go out, with tabernacle and ark to bear him company, to the very mountain Moses climbed long ago, when he had sight of God's domain.⁶ A cave Jeremias found there, in which he set down tabernacle and ark and incense-altar, and stopped up the entrance behind him. There were some that followed; no time they lost in coming up to mark the spot, but find it they could

7 not. He, when they told him of it, rebuked their eagerness; Nay, said he, the place must remain ever unknown, till the day when God brings his people together once
8 more, and is reconciled; then, divinely, the secret shall be made manifest. Then once again the Lord's majesty shall be seen, and the cloud that enshrines it; the same vision that was granted to Moses, and to Solomon when he prayed that the great God would
9 have his temple on earth; Solomon, the master of wisdom, that in his wisdom offered sacrifice to hallow the temple he had made.
10 Prayed Moses, prayed Solomon, and fire came down from heaven to consume the burnt-sacrifice. . . .
11 . . . Uneaten, Moses said, the victim for fault, and so the fire must consume it. . . .
12 . . . No other mind had king Solomon, that for eight days would continue his dedication feast.¹
13 With all this, dispositions Nehemias made, records Nehemias kept, are in full agreement. He it was founded a library, and there collected histories of king and prophet, and of David himself; dispatches, too, the kings had sent, and inventories of gifts made. And now Judas in his turn has recovered all such records as were lost to us through the late wars, and they are here
14 in our keeping; would you be in possession of these, you have but to send and fetch them.
15 Meanwhile, we notify you by these presents of that cleansing ceremony we mean to perform; do us the courtesy to keep
16 holiday on your part. See what deliverance God has sent to his people, restoring to us our common domain, our sovereignty, our
17 priesthood, our temple's sanctity! Think you not he will fulfil, ere long, the promise made in his law; take pity on us, that are scattered wide as heaven, and on this hallowed soil reunite us? What meant they
18 else, those great perils overcome, that sanctuary purified at last? . . .
19 Speak we of Judas Machabaeus and his

brethren, and how the great temple was purified, and the altar hallowed anew;² of
20 the battles they fought against Antiochus, called the Illustrious, and Eupator, that was his son. Speak we of heavenly mani-
21 festations, sent to encourage the champions of Jewry, till at last, though so few, they won back their country, and put the
22 hordes of heathendom to flight. Speak we of that temple, the most famous in all the world, by their means recovered, of a city
23 set free, of forgotten laws re-established, and how the Lord, in his great complaisance, shewed them mercy. All this, the
24 argument of five books Jason of Cyrene wrote, we have been at pains to abridge within the compass of a single volume.

What would you? There be books a
25 many, and they are hard put to it that would trace the course of history, for the abundance of the matter therein comprised. And my aim was, if a man would
26 read, read he should and with relish; would a man study, without great ado he should be able to commit all to memory; and so I would serve every man's turn. But for me, that undertook the business of
27 abridgement, think you it was light labour? Nay, here was a task all watching and sweat; yet shoulder the burden I would;
28 host that prepares a banquet must work for other men's pleasure, and earn nothing but their thanks. Full information would you
29 have about this or that, I remit you to my author; for myself, I will be true to my own pattern of shortness. When a house is
30 first in building, the architect must needs bestow pains on every part of it; not such the painter's care, he will pick out the surfaces that are most apt for adornment. And so, methinks, it is here; to expatiate,
31 to digress, to indulge curiosity on every point, is for the arch-historian; your epitomist will ask leave to study brevity, and let long disquisitions be. And now, to our
32 matter! Here is preface enough; it were ill done to draw out the preamble, and leave our story cramped for room.

¹ *vv.* 10-12. It is difficult to make any continuous sense out of these verses as they have come down to us, and it seems possible that a considerable portion of the letter has here been lost. The missing part might have explained what was the relevance of this long excursion into past history, which has no immediate bearing on Judas and the re-dedication of the temple. ² *vv.* 20-33. The book proper begins with this preamble, in which the author is concerned, not to shift the responsibility for his statements on to Jason of Cyrene, but to justify himself in selecting certain incidents for recital, and omitting the rest. The exact sense of the Latin is hard to determine; it is here interpreted in conformity with the Greek text.

3 Time was, the holy city was a home of content; ever the laws of it were well kept; such a high priest they had, Onias, a devout man, and one that hated evil. In those days, king and chieftain held the place much in reverence, and with rich gifts endowed the temple; did not Seleucus, king of Asia, defray all the cost of maintaining its sacrifices? Yet one citizen there was, Simon the Benjamite, the temple governor, that had lawless schemes afoot, do the high priest what he would to gainsay him. And at last, when overcome Onias he might not, what did he? To Apollonius he betook himself, the son of Tharseas, that was then in charge of Coelesyria and Phoenice, and gave him great news indeed; here was the treasury at Jerusalem stocked with treasures innumerable, here was vast public wealth, unclaimed by the needs of the altar, and nothing prevented but it should fall into the king's hands.

7 No sooner did Apollonius find himself in the royal presence than he told the story of the rumoured treasure; and at that, the king sent for Heliodorus, that had charge of his affairs, and despatched him with orders to fetch the said money away. This Heliodorus set out on his journey without more ado, under colour of making a progress through the towns of Coelesyria and Phoenice, but with the king's business still in mind. And when he reached Jerusalem, and there received a gracious welcome from the high priest, he made no secret of the information he possessed, or of his errand, and he would know the truth about these moneys. A plain account the high priest gave him; some were moneys deposited on trust, for the maintenance of widows and orphans; there were some, too, belonging to Hyrcanus son of Tobias, a man of repute. The information was maliciously laid, nor did the whole sum amount to more than four hundred talents of silver, and two hundred of gold. Men had reposed their confidence in a city and a temple renowned throughout the world, for the high opinion they had of its sanctity; and should he play them false? It was not to be thought of. But Heliodorus stood upon the terms of his commission; delivered to the king the money must be, there was no other way of it.

So the appointed day came, when he would visit the temple and take order in the matter; what a stir there was then in the city! Priests, in their sacred vesture, cast themselves down before the altar, and cried out upon heaven; would not he, whose law enjoined safe-keeping, keep property safe for its rightful owners? And for the high priest himself, the very aspect of him was heart-rending; such a change of look and colour betrayed his inward feelings; grief and horror were stamped on his features, and to all that saw him he seemed a broken man. Folk streamed out of their houses in droves, to make public intercession over the affront that should be put on the holy place; sackcloth about their waists, the women thronged the streets, and maids that might not go abroad must yet run to the housetops, or peer out at windows, to see Onias pass. Heavenward they raised their hands, each one of them, in prayer; and pity it was to see how common folk about him were sharing the high priest's agony of suspense.

Here, then, was a whole city praying Almighty God, no loss might befall the men who had trusted them; and here was Heliodorus carrying out his design, already arrived at the treasury with his body-guard in attendance. All at once the spirit of God, the omnipotent, gave signal proof of its presence; daunted by the divine power they trembled and stood irresolute, these ministers of wrong. What saw they? A horse, royally caparisoned, that charged upon Heliodorus and struck him down with its fore-feet; terrible of aspect its rider was, and his armour seemed all of gold. Two other warriors they saw, how strong of limb, how dazzling of mien, how bravely clad! These stood about Heliodorus and fell to scourging him, this side and that, blow after blow, without respite. With the suddenness of his fall to the ground, darkness had closed about him; hastily they caught him up and carried him out in his litter; a helpless burden now, that entered yonder treasury with such a rabble of tipstaves and halberdiers! Here was proof of God's power most manifest. There he lay, by heaven's decree speechless and beyond hope of recovery; and all around men were praising the Lord, for thus vindicating the honour of his sanc-

tuary. In the temple, where all had been anxiety and turmoil until heaven showed its almighty power, all was rejoicing and contentment now.

131 It was not long before friends of Heliodorus were entreating Onias to call down mercy from the most High, on one that
132 was now at death's door. This was anxious news for the high priest; what if the king should suspect the Jews of foul play? Offer sacrifice he did for the man's recovery, and with good effect. He was yet at his prayers, when those two warriors, in the same brave attire, stood by Heliodorus again; Thanks thou owest, they said, to the high priest Onias; at his instance, the Lord
134 grants thee life; God's scourge thou hast felt, God's wondrous power be ever on thy lips. And with that, they were seen no more. Be sure this Heliodorus offered God sacrifice; ay, and made vows a many for his preservation, and thanked Onias besides; then he marched his army back to the king.
136 Everywhere he testified how great a God was this, what strange things his own eyes had witnessed; and when the king himself asked what manner of emissary he should next send to Jerusalem, Why, said he, some enemy of thine, some rebel that plots against the kingdom. Escape he with his life, I warrant he will come back to thee soundly beaten. Past doubt, there is some divine influence haunts yonder place;
139 watch and ward he keeps over it, that has his dwelling in heaven, to be the plague and the undoing of all who come that way upon an errand of mischief.
140 Such is the tale of Heliodorus, and of the treasury's preserving.

4 And now, what must Simon do, the same that had drawn men's eyes to his country with stories of treasure, but fall to slandering Onias? Onias it was, by his way of it, had egged Heliodorus on,¹ and been the author of the mischief. So true a patriot, that well loved his race, well guarded the divine law, and he must be branded
13 with the name of traitor! The feud grew

worse, till at last there were murders done, and Simon's faction answerable for it. Here was the public peace much endangered; here was Apollonius, the governor of Coelesyria and Phoenice, adding fuel to the flame of Simon's malice;² what marvel if Onias had recourse to the king? Little enough it liked him to bring an ill name on his fellow-citizens; yet common good of the Jewish folk he must needs have in mind; how should quiet times return, or Simon's madness be cooled, unless the king took order in the matter?

But king Seleucus was done with life now, and the throne passed to Antiochus, called the Illustrious. And here was a brother Onias had, called Jason, that coveted the office of high priest. This Jason went to the new king, and made him an offer of three hundred and sixty talents of silver out of its revenue, besides eighty from other incomings. Let leave be granted him to set up a game-place for the training of youth, and enrol the men of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch, he would give his bond for a hundred and fifty more. To this the king assented; high priest he became, and straightway set about perverting his fellow-countrymen to the Gentile way of living. Till now, the Jews had followed their own customs, by grace of a royal privilege; it was John that won it for them, father of that Eupolemus, who afterwards went in embassy to Rome, to make a treaty of alliance. But Jason would abrogate these customs; common right should be none, and great wrong should find acceptance instead. This game-place of his he did not scruple to set up in the very shadow of the Citadel, and debauch³ all that was noblest of Judaea's youth.

Mischief in the bud, think you, when such alien Gentile ways came in? Nay, here was flower and fruit of it; and all through the unexampled villainy of one man, this Jason, that high priest was none, but rather an arch-traitor. Why, the priests themselves had no more stomach for serving the altar; temple scorned, and

¹ 'Egged Heliodorus on'; some think the word used in the Greek has a quite different meaning from the usual, and that Onias was accused of having attacked Heliodorus with violence (cf. 3. 32).
² v. 4. 'Adding fuel to the flame of Simon's malice'; literally, 'raving to increase Simon's malice', but this curious phrase is probably due to a copyist's mistake.
³ 'Debauch'; the Latin says he exposed them in brothels, but the obscure phrase used in the Greek, 'he brought them under the hat' is usually interpreted as meaning that he encouraged them to wear the broad-brimmed Greek *petasus* as a symbol of devotion to Hermes, the patron deity of athletics.

sacrifice unheeded, off they went to the wrestling-ground, there to enter their names and win unhallowed prizes, soon as
 15 ever the first quoit was thrown! What glory their fathers had handed down to them! And fame such as the Greeks cover
 16 was all their ambition now. Alas, here was a perilous contest awaiting them; Greek fashions they would follow, and Greeks would be, that ere long should have Greeks for their enemies, ay, and conquerors.
 17 There is no breaking God's laws without paying the price; time will show that.
 18 When the quinquennial games were being held at Tyre, in the king's presence, this
 19 vile Jason it was sent some of his wretches¹ with a gift of three hundred silver pieces to do honour to Hercules. True it is, the bearers of them asked they should not be spent on sacrifice, but on some other need
 20 that was more befitting; yet Jason's meaning was, Hercules should have them, and if they went to the building of the fleet, it was thanks to Jason's envoys.
 21 Afterwards, Apollonius the son of Menestheus was despatched to Egypt, for the enthroning of king Ptolemy Philometor. Well Antiochus knew that he was disaffected towards the royal policy, and there was his own safety to be considered. . . He passed on to Joppe, and so to Jerusalem,²
 22 where Jason and the whole city welcomed him in state, with carrying of torches and great huzza'ing. And so he led his army back to Phoenice.
 23 Three years later, Jason would send to the king certain moneys, together with a report on affairs of moment; and for this errand he chose Menelaus, brother to that
 24 Simon we have before mentioned. Access thus gained to the king's person, Menelaus was careful to flatter his self-conceit; then, outbidding Jason by three hundred talents of silver, diverted the high-priestly succession to himself. Back he came to Jerusalem, with the royal warrant to maintain
 25 him, yet all unworthy, with a tyrant's cruel heart, more wild beast than high priest.

Thus was Jason supplanted, that had supplanted his own brother, and was driven to take refuge in the Ammonite country; as for Menelaus, he got the office he coveted, but never a penny paid the king of all he had promised, however urgent Sostratus might be, that was in command of the citadel. For all exaction of tribute this fellow was answerable; and so it fell out that both of them were summoned to court, Menelaus leaving his high priesthood to his own brother, Lysimachus, and for Sostratus. . . he became governor of Cyprus.³

It befell at this very time that the men of Tharsus and Mallus made an insurrection; so little it liked them that a gift should be made of their cities to Antiochus, the king's paramour. Post-haste the king went off to appease them, leaving one of his courtiers, Andronicus, to be viceroy. Here was Menelaus' opportunity; he had gold ornaments with him, that he had stolen out of the temple, and now, giving some of these as a present to Andronicus, he sold the rest at Tyre and other cities in the neighbourhood. Of these doings, one man had clear proof, and thereupon denounced him: Onias, that had now taken refuge in Daphne sanctuary, close by Antioch. What did Menelaus? He gained the ear of Andronicus and demanded that Onias should pay for it with his life. So the viceroy himself paid Onias a visit, swore friendship and overcame his suspicions; then, when he had left sanctuary, without scruple of conscience put him to death. Here was great matter of indignation, and not among the Jews only; the very heathen took it amiss, so great a man should meet so unworthy an end. No sooner was the king back from Cilicia than the citizens of Antioch, Jew and Gentile both, assailed him with complaints about the murder of an innocent man; whereat Antiochus himself was heartily grieved, ay, and moved to tears of pity, such memories he had of Onias' well-ordered,

¹ 'Wretches'; the word found in our Latin text is probably a copyist's error for 'suppliants', i.e. religious representatives.

² This sentence, in the original, is of unexampled obscurity. It runs, 'And when Apollonius son of Menestheus had been sent to Egypt for the enthroning of king Ptolemy Philometor, Antiochus, realizing that he (who?) was estranged from his (whose?) past deeds, felt anxious for his own safety. And for that reason (what reason?) Or perhaps, "from that place", but what place? he (who?) came to Joppe, and then rounded up at Jerusalem'. It seems possible that the text has been inaccurately transmitted.

³ According to the Greek text, Sostratus left his own office in charge of Crates, 'who was (afterwards?) over the Cyprians'. The island of Cyprus belonged at this time to Egypt, and only came into the Seleucid empire some years later.

38 honourable life. Anon he fell into a rage, stripped Andronicus of his purple, and would have him led away all through the streets, till he reached the very spot where he had lifted his impious hand against Onias. There the sacrilegious wretch perished, by the divine vengeance worthily required.

39 Meanwhile, word had gone abroad at Jerusalem, how Lysimachus was ever robbing the temple, by Menelaus' contrivance. Great store of gold was lost already; but now there was a rising of the common folk against Lysimachus, whose numbers and their rage increasing, he was fain to put some three thousand men under arms, with one Tyrannus at their head, that was far gone in years, and no less in folly. Lysimachus it was that first resorted
41 to violence; but the rabble, when they saw what he would be at, caught up stones or stout clubs for the attack, and some of
42 them pelted him with cinders. When they had wounded some of his retinue, and felled others to earth, the rest took to their heels; and there, close beside the treasury, this robber of the temple was done to death.

43 And next, they must implead Menelaus
44 himself on the same charge. Three envoys from the council of elders brought the whole matter before the king, when he visited Tyre, and Menelaus was as good as lost. What did he? With the promise of a great bribe he secured the good word of
46 Ptolemy, son of Dorymenes;¹ Ptolemy it was waylaid the king, as he rested from the heat in a covered walk of his, and put him
47 from his purpose. So now Menelaus, that was at the root of all the mischief, must go scot free, and his unhappy accusers, that might have cleared themselves easily enough before a court of bloodthirsty Scythians,² with their lives must pay for it. Here were men come to plead for their
48 own city, their own people, their own temple treasures, and must they be hurried off to undeserved punishment? Even the
49 Tyrians thought shame of it, and in
50 princely fashion gave them burial. So, through the avarice of the great, thro' Menelaus still, and his wickedness went

from bad to worse, to his countrymen's undoing.

5 At this time Antiochus was preparing once more for a campaign against Egypt. And all about the city of Jerusalem, by the space of forty days together, there were strange sights appearing. High up in air, horsemen were seen riding this way and that, in vesture of gold, and spears they carried as if they went to battle; now
3 riding in ordered ranks, now engaged in close combat. In long array they moved past, shields and helmeted heads and drawn swords; flew javelin and flashed golden harness, a whole armoury of shining mail. No wonder if the prayer was
4 on all men's lips, good not ill such high visions might portend.

And now a false rumour went abroad,
5 Antiochus had come by his death. Jason's ears it reached, and all at once, with full a thousand men at his back, he delivered an assault upon the city. Let the townfolk man the walls as they would, at last it fell, and Menelaus must take refuge within the citadel. As for Jason, he fell upon his own
6 fellow-countrymen, and that without mercy. His own flesh and blood to vanquish, what was this but shameful defeat? Ay, but to him friend was foe, were there
7 spoil for the winning! Yet high priesthood he got none; disappointed of his scheming, back he must go to the Ammonite country, and there, marked down for death by king
8 Aretas of the Arabians, fled from city to city. An outlaw, hated and shunned by his kind, of a whole land, of a whole race, the common foe, he was driven out into Egypt; and so making his way to Lacedaemon, as
9 if to find refuge there by right of kinship, died miserably. In exile he died, that had brought exile on so many; cast away without
10 dole or tomb, that left so many tombless; in a strange land unburied, that might have rested in his fathers' grave.

Here was news to make the king doubt
11 whether the Jews were loyal to him, and back he came from Egypt in a great taking of rage. He occupied the city, and that by force of arms; then he bade his troops go
12 about killing, with no quarter for any they

¹ v. 45. The words 'son of Dorymenes' appear in the Greek text, but not in the Latin; they are inserted here to distinguish this Ptolemy (cf. I Mac. 3. 38) from the king of Egypt mentioned in verse 21 above.

² 'Scythians', a barbarous race then inhabiting Russia.

met; let a man but shew his face on the house-top, he must be slaughtered with the rest. Fell young and old alike; children with their mothers must die, nor maidenhood was spared, nor helpless infancy. By the end of three days, eighty thousand had been massacred, forty thousand held as prisoners, and as many more sold into slavery.

Nor might all this content him; with Menelaus for his guide, that was traitor to faith and folk, what must he do but make his way into God's temple, holier in all the world is none? What, should those sacred ornaments, dedicated by kings and peoples for the more splendour and worthiness of it, be caught up in his impious hands, pawed and defiled by his touch? Surely he had taken leave of his wits, this Antiochus; how should he know that this sanctuary, for once, would lack the divine protection? And only because, for a little, God's anger was provoked by sins of the men that dwell there! Free had they been from the meshes of such guilt, Antiochus, too, should have been greeted with a drubbing, as Heliodorus was, the man king Seleucus sent to rob the treasury, and should have learned to leave his rash purpose. But what would you? People it was God chose, and city for people's sake; chastisement that fell on the people, city must rue, and anon share its good fortune. He, the omnipotent, the ruler of all, would leave Jerusalem forlorn in his anger, would raise her to heights of glory, his anger once appeased.

Antiochus, then, came away from the temple a thousand and eight hundred talents the richer; and back he went to Antioch, all at reckless speed; he had a mind to sail his fleet over the plain, march his troops across the sea, his heart so swelled with pride in his doings. As for the Jewish folk, he left viceroys of his own to harry them; in Jerusalem Philip, that was a Phrygian born, and outdid his own master in cruelty; at Garizim Andronicus and Menelaus, heaviest burden of all for the folk to bear. But he would do worse by the Jews yet; or why did he send out Apol-

lonius, the arch-enemy, and a force of twenty-two thousand, to cut off manhood in its flower, women and children to sell for slaves? This Apollonius, when he reached Jerusalem, was all professions of friendship, and nothing did until the sabbath came round, when the Jews kept holiday. Then he put his men under arms, and butchered all that went out to keep festival; to and fro he went about the streets, with armed fellows at his heels, and made a great massacre.

Meanwhile Judas Machabaeus, and nine others with him, went out into the desert, where they lived like wild beasts on the mountain-side; better lodge there with herbs for food, than be party to the general defilement.

Not long after, the king despatched one of the senators at Antioch, with orders he should compel the Jewish people, custom of their fathers and law of their God to forsake. The temple at Jerusalem must be profaned, and dedicated now to Jupiter Olympius; as for the temple on Garizim, the Samaritans were to call it, as well they might,¹ after Jupiter the god of strangers. What a storm of troubles broke then upon the commonwealth, most grievous to be borne! All riot and revelry the temple became, once the Gentiles had it; here was dallying with harlots, and women making their way into the sacred precincts, and bringing in of things abominable; with forbidden meats, to the law's injury, the very altar groaned. Sabbath none would observe, nor keep holiday his fathers kept; even the name of Jew was disclaimed. Instead, they went to sacrifice on the king's birthday, though it were ruefully and under duress; and when the feast of Liber came round, make procession they must in Liber's honour, garlanded with ivy each one. And now, among all the neighbouring cities, a decree went out, wherein the Ptolemies² were the prime-movers; all alike should constrain the Jews to do sacrifice, and those that would not fall in with Gentile ways, with their lives must pay for it.

¹ 'As well they might'; literally, 'according as they were'. The author seems to be taunting the Samaritans with their Gentile origin. But the Greek might mean 'according as they gained their request'. Josephus alleges that the Samaritans themselves asked leave of the king to re-dedicate their temple.

² 'The Ptolemies'; the Greek has 'Ptolemy', cf. note on 4. 45.

Here were sights to be seen most pitiable. Two mothers there were, denounced for the circumcision of their own sons; what, think you, befell them? Both must be driven through the streets, with the children hung about their breasts, and cast headlong from the battlements! At another time, Philip had information that certain Jews were meeting in caves near at hand, to keep the sabbath there without remark. Not one of these would lift a hand to help himself, so great care they had of the day's observance, and all were burned to death.

Reader, by these tales of ill fortune be not too much dismayed; bethink thee, all this came about for the punishment of our race, not for its undoing. A mark of signal favour it is, when the Lord is quick to chastise, nor lets the sinner sin on unreproved. See how he deals with other nations, waiting patiently to take full toll when the hour comes for judgement! Not so with us; for our guilt he will not delay reckoning, and claim strict vengeance at last. Towards us, his mercy is inalienable; chastise us he will with adversity, but forsake us never. So much, reader, for thy warning; and now go we back to our history.

Here was Eleazar, one of the chief scribes, a man of great age and of noble features, being required to eat swine's flesh; but though they held his mouth open they could not force him to eat. He would rather die gloriously than live defiled; on he went, of his own accord, to the place of torture, scanning every step of the path that lay before him. He must endure all in patience, rather than taste, for love of life, the forbidden meat. Old friends among the bystanders, out of misplaced kindness, took him aside and urged him to let meat of some other kind be brought, which he could taste without scruple; he could pretend to have obeyed the king's will by eating the sacrilegious food, and his life should no longer be forfeit. Such kind offices old friendship claimed; but he thought rather of the reverence that was due to his great age, of his venerable grey hairs, of a life blamelessly lived from childhood onwards. True to the precepts of God's holy law, he answered that they would do better to send him to his grave

and have done with it. It does not suit my time of life, said he, to play a part. What of many that stand here, younger than myself, who would think that Eleazar, at the age of ninety, had turned Gentle? To gain a brief hour of this perishable life, shall I play a trick on them, shall I disgrace this hoary head of mine and bring down a curse on it? Man's sentence here I may avoid if I will, but God's almighty hand, living or dead, escape I may not. Let me take leave of life with a good grace, as best suits my years, bequeathing to men younger than myself an example of courage; meeting, with ready resolve, an honourable death, for the sake of laws holy and august as ours are. And so without more ado he was led away to his torturing; his executioners were in a rage, that but now had been gentle with him; pride, they would have it, spoke here. And this was the last sigh he uttered, as he lay there dying under the lash, Lord, in thy holy wisdom this thou well knowest; I might have had life if I would, yet never a cruel pang my body endures, but my soul suffers it gladly for thy reverence. Thus he died, not only to those younger men he spoke of, but to our whole race, leaving the pattern of a brave and honourable death.

7 Seven brothers there were, that lay under arrest, and their mother with them; these too were tortured at the king's command, to see if whip and thong would not make them eat swine's flesh, for all their scruples. And thus spoke out one of them in the name of the rest: Why dost thou put us to the question? What secret wouldst thou learn? Of this be sure, we had rather die than break the divine law given to our fathers. The king, in a rage, would have fire-pan heated, and caldron of bronze; heated they were, and then he passed judgement upon this same spokesman. Tongue of him should be cut out, scalp torn off, hands and feet mutilated, while mother and brethren stood by to see it; then, so maimed, he was for the fire; they should roast him alive in a caldron. Long time he suffered, and there stood the rest with their mother, each heartening other to die bravely; God sees true, said they, and will not allow us to go uncomforted. Did not Moses prophesy as much,

even in his song of remonstrance, He will comfort his servants? ¹

- 7 So died the first, and now the second must make sport for them. When the hair was torn from his head and the skin with it, they asked, Would he eat, or must his
8 whole body pay for it, limb by limb? And he answered in good round Hebrew, ² eat he would not; whereupon he, in his turn,
9 suffered like the first. Ay, miscreant, he said with his last breath, of this present life it lies in thy power to rob us; but he, who is ruler of the whole world, he, for whose laws we perish, will raise us up again, and
10 to life everlasting. And now they had their will with the third, who was no sooner bidden than he put forth tongue and hands
11 very courageously; Heaven's gift these be, he said, and for God's law I make light account of them, well assured he will give
12 them back to me. Well might they marvel, king and courtiers both, at one so young
13 that recked so little of his sufferings. Such was the manner of his passing; the fourth, too, when with like tortures they assailed
14 him, died with these words on his lips: Man's sentence of death, what matters it, so there be hope in God, that shall raise up
15 the dead? For thee, resurrection to new life shall be none. And when the fifth was
16 put to the question, he looked Antiochus in the face, thus warning him: Mortal, at thy own whim free to govern thy fellow men,
17 think not God has abandoned this race of ours! Wait but a little, and good proof thou shalt have of his sovereign power,
18 such torment thee and thine awaits. So they came to the sixth, and this was his dying utterance: Never flatter thyself with vain hope; speed we amiss, it was our own doing, that sinned against our God.
19 Strange be his dealings with us, yet think not thou to defy God unpunished.
20 And here was the greatest marvel of all, by honest folk ever to be kept in mind, that the mother of seven children should be content to lose them all in one day, for the
21 hope she had in God's mercy. What generosity of mind was this, that could temper her womanly feelings with a man's thoughts! One by one, in the speech of her
22 own country, she put heart into them; Into this womb you came, she told them, who

knows how? Not I quickened, nor I the breath of life gave you, nor fashioned the bodies of you one by one! Man's birth, and the origin of all things, he devised who is the whole world's Maker; and shall he not mercifully give the breath of life back to you, that for his law's sake hold your lives so cheap?

What should Antiochus do? Here was defiance of his authority, here were tones of remonstrance that liked him little. The youngest son lived yet; for him, what encouragement, what royal assurances of wealth and happiness! Would he but leave the law of his fathers, he should be the king's friend, and have weighty matters entrusted to him. But yield the boy would not; till at last the king beckoned the mother apart; mother of son should be the saviour yet. Much ado he had to win her, but she agreed at last, counsel her son she would. And a fine trick she played on the bloodthirsty tyrant, leaning over her son and counselling him in her own native speech, to this effect: Nine months in the womb I bore thee, three years at the breast fed thee, reared thee to be what thou art; and now, my son, this boon grant me. Look round at heaven and earth and all they contain; bethink thee that all this, and mankind too, God made out of nothing. Of this butcher have thou no fear; claim rightful share among thy brethren in yonder inheritance of death; so shall the divine mercy give me back all my sons at once.

Before ever she had finished speaking, the boy cried out, What dallying is this? To the king's law I own no allegiance; rule I live by is the law we had through Moses. Arch-enemy of the Jewish race, thinkest thou to escape from God's hand? Grievously if we suffer, grievously we have sinned; chides he for a little, the Lord our God, he does but school, does but correct us; to us, his worshippers, he will be reconciled again. But thou, miserable wretch, viler on earth is none, wouldst thou vent thy rage on those worshippers of his, and flatter thyself with vain hopes none the less? Trust me, thou shalt yet abide his judgement, who is God almighty and all-seeing. Brief pains, that under his warrant have seized my brethren of eternal life!

¹ Deut. 32. 36.

² 'In good round Hebrew', that is, in the Aramaic dialect, as if to clinch his attitude of defiance by refusing to address his persecutors in Greek.

And shalt not thou, by his sentence, pay
 37 the deserved penalty of thy pride? As my
 brethren, so I for our country's laws both
 soul and body forfeit; my prayer is, God
 will early relent towards this nation, while
 thou dost learn, under the lash of his tor-
 38 ments, that he alone is God. And may the
 divine anger, that has justly fallen on our
 race, with me and these others be laid to
 rest!

39 No wonder if this last, that so baffled the
 king's rage, was more barbarously used
 4 than all the others; yet kept he ever his
 confidence in the Lord, and made a clean
 41 end of it. And at length, when all her sons
 were gone, it was the mother's turn to die.
 42 Enough! Of idolatrous sacrifice and
 inhuman cruelty you shall hear no more.

8 Now turn we to Judas Machabaeus
 and his company. Secretly they made
 entry into the villages, whence they sum-
 moned both kinsman and friend of theirs;
 ay, and rallied many more, that were yet
 true to the Jewish faith, till they had mus-
 2 tered an army of six thousand men. And
 ever they besought the Lord, he would
 look with favour on a race down-trodden,
 have pity on a temple defiled by the hea-
 3 then. Their city was like to be razed to the
 ground; would he watch the ruin of it
 unremoved? Would he be deaf, while blood-
 4 shed cried out for vengeance? Cruel mur-
 ders of innocent childhood, his own
 honour dragged in the dust, would he not
 mark all this, and be roused to indignation?

5 By this, the divine anger had given place
 to clemency; and to all the heathen round
 about Machabaeus and his company were
 6 an infliction past bearing. On village or
 town of theirs he would fall suddenly, and
 burn it to the ground; by seizing some
 point of vantage, once and again he put
 7 their forces to the rout; going about these
 forays at night-time for the most part, till
 the fame of his valour spread far and wide.
 8 What was to be done? Here was a man
 that grew ever in strength, and still his
 enterprises throve. At last Philip was fain
 to send dispatches, calling on Ptolemy, the
 governor of Coelesyria and Phoenice, to
 9 further the king's business. And he, with-
 out more ado, chose one of his best friends,

Nicanor son of Patroclus, and sent him out
 to exterminate the Jewish race altogether.
 For which purpose, he armed full twenty
 thousand men, a rabble of all nations; and
 Gorgias should be at Nicanor's side, a
 soldier that had much experience in the
 wars.

Nicanor's purpose it was, to sell the
 10 Jewish people for slaves, and thereby re-
 imburse the king for a tribute of two
 thousand talents he must needs pay to
 Rome. So, before aught else was done, he
 11 sent word to the towns on the sea-coast,
 crying a sale of Jewish captives, and offer-
 ing them at ninety for the talent; so little
 did he guess what divine vengeance was
 to overtake him. No sooner did Judas hear
 12 of Nicanor's coming, than he gave warning
 of it to the Jews who bore him company.
 Some of these, cowardly souls that put no
 13 trust in God's awarding, took refuge in
 flight; the rest made shift to sell all the
 14 goods they yet had, crying out upon the
 Lord to deliver them from such an impious
 wretch as would sell them first, and con-
 15 quer them after. Themselves if he nothing
 regarded, let him remember at least the
 covenant made with their fathers; the
 renown, too, of that holy name they bore!

As for Machabaeus, he called together
 16 the seven thousand¹ that followed him,
 and warned them they should make no
 terms with the enemy, nor be affrighted by
 a great rabble of men coming against them
 in so ill a cause. Courage! he said; bethink
 17 you of the sanctuary their insults have ou-
 raged, of a city wronged and mocked, of
 immemorial traditions overthrown! What
 18 gives them confidence? Weapons of war,
 and their own daring. Ours to trust in his
 omnipotence, who with a single nod both
 these our adversaries and the whole world
 besides can undo. He put them in mind,
 19 moreover, of God's signal mercy shewed to
 their forefathers; how Sennacherib's army
 perished, a hundred and eighty-five thou-
 sand strong; how they fought the Gala-
 20 tians at Babylon, with Macedonian allies
 whose heart failed them at the encounter,
 and six thousand Jews, alone but for hea-
 ven's aid, made havoc of a hundred and
 twenty thousand men, much to the com-
 21 mon advantage.² With such words as these

¹ This seems to be a slip in the Latin version; the Greek has 'six thousand' here, as in verse 1 above.

² No other record of this engagement has been preserved to us.

he put heart into them, till they were ready to die for law and country's sake.

- 22 And now he put the several commands of his army in charge of his brethren, Simon, Joseph and Jonathan, entrusting one thousand five hundred men to each;
- 23 Esdras¹ was bidden read aloud from the sacred writings, and the watchword was given, God's Aid. And with that, out went Judas at the head of his army, and engaged the enemy. Such help the Almighty gave them, they cut down more than nine thousand men; and the rest of Nicanor's disabled forces must needs take to their heels.
- 25 All the money that had been paid for their enslaving fell into Jewish hands, and they
- 26 gave the enemy chase far and wide, only time hindering them; the sabbath was coming on, and pursue further they might
- 27 not. Arms and spoils of the fallen they gathered in, and so fell to keeping the sabbath, blessing the Lord for the deliverance he had sent that day, the first refreshing dew of his mercy. The sabbath day over, they gave a share of the spoils to crippled folk, orphans and widows; they
- 28 and theirs should have the rest. And when this was done, they made public intercession, beseeching the Lord, that was so merciful, to be reconciled with his servants for good and all.
- 30 Other invaders they slew, twenty thousand of them and more, under Bacchides and Timotheus; and when they seized their high fortresses, and had spoil to divide in plenty, once more cripples and orphans and widows, and the aged folk too, must have a share to match their own.
- 31 Weapons of war they gathered with all care, and bestowed where they were most needed; it was the rest of the spoil they carried back to Jerusalem. At this time
- 32 they slew Philarches, that had been of Timotheus' company, a man stained with crime, and many ways a persecutor of the
- 33 Jewish people. There was Callisthenes, too, that had burnt down the gates of the sanctuary; when all Jerusalem was rejoicing over the victory, he took refuge within doors, and they burnt the place down about his ears; he too was served right for his godless doings. As for Nicanor, that was the arch-villain of all, and

would have sold the Jews to a thousand slave-dealers, the very men whose lives he held so cheap had now, by divine aid, humbled him to the dust. Robe of office he must lay by, and slink by country ways all unattended to Antioch. A fine home-coming, this, with the loss of a whole army! Where were the Jewish captives that should have paid off the tribute to Rome? He was fain to confess, now, that the Jews had God himself for their protector, and, would they but keep his laws, there was no conquering them!

9 Antiochus himself, at this time, had a sorry home-coming from Persia. He had made his way into the city they call Persepolis, thinking to plunder its temple and of itself have the mastery; but the common folk ran to arms and routed him. So he was a man defeated and disgraced when he reached Ecbatana, and there news came to him of how Nicanor had fared, and Timotheus. And now, in a great taking of rage, he would make the Jews suffer for the ignominy of his own defeat; on, on his chariot must be driven, and never a halt in the journey, with the divine vengeance ever at his heels. Had he not boasted, Jerusalem was his goal, and he would bury the Jewish race under the ruins of it?

The Lord, Israel's God, how should aught escape his scrutiny? The words were barely uttered, when he smote Antiochus with such a hurt, there was neither remedying nor discovering it. A deadly griping it was that took him, with cruel torment of the bowels; fitting reward for one that had often tortured his fellows, and to the marrow, in unexampled fashion. Even so, he would not leave his wicked purpose; with pride undiminished, still breathing out fiery threats against the Jewish folk, he pressed forward on his errand, till of a sudden, in full career, down fell he from his chariot, and never a limb but was racked grievously by the fall. What a living proof was this of God's power, when he was struck to earth, and must finish his journey by litter, one that boasted, till now, he could rise beyond man's measure, the sea's waves govern, and weigh mountains in the balance! Bred

¹ For 'Esdras' the Greek text has 'Eleazar', meaning presumably Judas' brother. If the Latin reading is right, Esdras must be some person not elsewhere mentioned.

worms at last in that sinful body, and he lived yet, though miserably enough, to see his own flesh rot away, till his own men could not bear the foul stench of him; it was but yesterday the very stars seemed within his reach, and never a man now would carry so foul a burden.

11 What marvel, if the swelling pride of him ebbed away, and heaven's judgements brought him to himself? With every moment his anguish grew, and the foul breath of his disease was past his own bearing. Alas, said he, to God all must bow; mortals we are, and god ourselves we may not. 13 Nay, he made suit to the Lord, vile wretch though he were, hoping all in vain to win mercy. Forgotten, his haste to lay Jerusalem in ruins, and make a cemetery of it; a free city it should be thenceforward. 15 Grudge the Jewish folk burial, give their carrion to bird and beast, make an end of them, children and all? Nay, such high privileges they should have as the town-folk of Athens itself. And for that sacred temple he had stripped bare, with choice gifts he would enrich it, furnishing it as never before, and defraying, from his own purse, all the cost of its sacrifices. Stay, he would become a Jew himself, would go the rounds of earth, proclaiming everywhere the divine power!

18 But all to no avail; the vengeance of God, well earned, had overtaken him, and find relief he might not. So now, despairing of that, he wrote to the Jews in very humble fashion, as here follows.¹ To his loyal Jewish subjects Antiochus, their king and general, sends greeting, health, and happiness! Thrive you and yours, and fare prosperously, I am well content. For myself, I am in ill case, yet think ever kindly of you. On my way home from Persia, so grievous a distemper has fallen upon me, needs must I should take order for the public safety. Despair I will not; there is good hope yet of my recovery. But this thought weighs with me; when he went a-campaigning in the high countries, my father gave out who was to succeed him; should aught go amiss, and ill tidings come, every governor in his own province must know his duty without fear of confusion. And here be princes all about, I

know it well, waiting upon events and ready to go with the times. Heir to the throne, then, I needs must designate. Again and again, when I set out for the high countries, I entrusted my son Antiochus to the general care. And now this written commission I have sent him. . . As you love me, then, bethink you of those benefits you have received, both publicly and in private; keep faith, each and all of you, with me and with my son. I doubt not he will shew himself his father's true heir, ever courteous, and kindly, and easy of approach.

So died he, wretchedly enough, the murderer, the blasphemer, out in the hill-country far away from home. Cruel the blow that struck him down, as he had ever been cruel in his dealings. His body was brought home again; Philip, his foster-brother, came back with it, and then took refuge in Egypt with Ptolemy Philometor, so little he trusted the young prince Antiochus.

10 Meanwhile, God aiding, Machabaeus and his followers had recovered both temple and city. Down came the altars Gentile folk had set up in the open streets, down came the shrines, and the temple was purged of its defilement. They made a fresh altar, struck fire from flint, and offered sacrifice again after two years' intermission; rose incense, burned lamp, loaves were set out on the sacred table once more. Then, bowing down to earth, they made petition to the Lord, never again such calamity might overtake them; sin if they did, himself in his great mercy should chastise them, not hand them over into the cruel power of blasphemous enemies. It so fell out, that the temple was purified on the twenty-fifth day of Casleu, the very time of its profanation by the Gentiles. Eight days of rejoicing they kept, with such ceremonies as belong to the feast of Tent-dwelling; it was a feast of tent-dwelling indeed they had kept a while back, when they lodged like beasts among the hill-side caverns! Now that God had made the way clear for his temple's cleansing, what wonder if they set up in his honour branches, and green boughs,

¹ *vv.* 18-27. It seems probable that this proclamation was sent to all Antiochus' subjects, the Jews receiving it among others. The document referred to at the end of verse 25 is no longer extant.

8 and arbours of palm? What wonder if a decree was passed, by common consent, all Jewry should keep the festival year by year?

9 Now the story is told, how Antiochus called the Illustrious came by his end, turn we to his son, Antiochus Eupator, that was born of a very ill father;¹ record we in brief the history of his reign, and the hazards of war that went with it. Upon his accession, this king entrusted all the business of the realm to one Lysias, commander of the forces in Phoenice and Coelesyria. With Ptolemy, that was called Macer, we are concerned no more; fain would he have made amends to the Jews for the wrong done them, and kept their friendship, but for that very reason he was denounced to Eupator by his courtiers. He was a traitor, they said, twice over, false to his trust, when Philometor left him in charge of Cyprus, and now weary of his new allegiance to Antiochus the Illustrious! Whereupon he put an end to his own life by poison. When Gorgias was given command of the district, he was for ever making war on the Jews, with mercenaries to aid him; and there were natives of the country besides,² well entrenched in their strongholds, that gave welcome to deserters from Jerusalem, and so fanned the flames of enmity.

16 And now the followers of Machabaeus, after prayer made for the divine assistance, delivered an attack upon the Edomite strongholds. These, by a very courageous assault, they occupied, and cut down all they met, putting not less than twenty thousand men to the sword; but there were two fortresses yet remaining, into which the survivors threw themselves, well provided with means of defence. Machabaeus himself went off to fight other battles of greater moment, leaving Simon, Joseph and Zacchaeus, with a strong force under their command, to carry on the siege. And here the avarice of Simon's men was their undoing; for a bribe of seventy thousand silver pieces, they allowed some of the defenders to escape. Machabaeus no sooner heard of it, than he summoned the leaders of the people, and

arraigned the guilty men in their presence; what, would they sell their brethren's lives, by letting the enemies of their race go free? So he put these traitors to death; and for the strongholds, he conquered both of them at a blow, so carrying all before him by force of arms, that more than twenty thousand of the defenders perished.

But Timotheus could not be content with one defeat at the hands of the Jews; he would bring in hordes of foreign soldiery, and cavalry from Asia, threatening Judaea with slavery. At his coming, the party of Machabaeus fell to prayer; earth on their heads, sackcloth about their loins, they lay prostrate at the altar's foot, entreating the Lord he would espouse their quarrel, and their foes should be his; the law had promised it. Then, this supplication made, they took up arms and marched out, leaving the city far away in their rear, nor ever halted till they were close to the enemy's lines. Soon as the dawn broke, they engaged; on the one side, all trust in the Lord, valour's best pledge of victory and fairer times; on the other, naught but human eagerness to inspire courage. Hard went the day, and, so it seemed to the enemy, heaven itself took part. Five horsemen came riding, with splendid trappings of gold, to lead the Jews onward; and two of these served Machabaeus for escort, covering him with their shields to keep all hurt away from him. With shaft of theirs, lightning of theirs, dazzled and dismayed, the enemy fell to earth; twenty thousand and five hundred of them perished that day, besides six hundred of the cavalry.

As for Timotheus, he took refuge in Gazara, a strong fortress that was under the command of Chaereas. Four days together, Machabaeus and his men eagerly pressed on the siege of it; but the defenders were confident in its strength; loud their defiance was, and very blasphemous the words they uttered. Stung by these taunts, twenty warriors of Machabaeus' company made a bold attack on the wall as the fifth day was dawning, and, by the fierceness of their onslaught, made shift to climb it; others, following at their heels, fell to

¹ The Greek word 'Eupator' means 'born of a noble father'.

² 'Natives of the country'; literally, in the Latin version, 'Jews', but this is probably a copyist's mistake for 'Edomites', the reading found in the Greek text.

burning tower and gateway alike, and
 37 made a bonfire of the blasphemers. For
 two whole days they ransacked the fort,
 and at last came upon Timotheus' in his
 hiding-place; so they made an end of him,
 his brother Chaereas and Apollophanes
 38 perishing with him. When all was over,
 they sang hymns of praise and gave thanks
 to the Lord, that had done marvellous
 things for Israel, and granted them victory.

11 It was but a short respite they had;
 Lysias, a kinsman of Antiochus that
 was regent and managed his affairs for
 him, was not a little concerned over these
 2 happenings, and he marched on Judaea at
 the head of eighty thousand men, with all
 the cavalry he could muster. Here was a
 city worth the capture, for Gentile folk to
 3 dwell in; here was a temple that would
 yield a fine spoil, as temples did every-
 where; a priesthood, too, that might be
 4 put up for sale year after year. Of all this
 he bethought him, never of God's avenging
 power; blindly he trusted in his foot-
 soldiers by the ten thousand, his horsemen
 by the thousand, in his elephants that
 5 numbered four score. Upon marching
 into Judaea he first reached Bethsura, that
 stood in a narrow pass five furlongs away
 from Jerusalem,¹ and laid siege to the
 citadel of it.

6 What did Machabaeus and his fellows,
 when they learned that the siege of the
 fortress was already begun? Most pi-
 teously they besought the Lord, amid the
 tears of a whole populace, a gracious angel
 he would send out for Israel's deliverance.
 7 Then they armed for battle, Machabaeus
 himself the first of all, as he summoned the
 rest to share with him the hour of danger,
 8 for the relief of their brethren. So, in good
 heart, they set out together, and before
 they left Jerusalem a vision came to them;
 of a rider that went before them in white
 array, with armour of gold, brandishing
 9 his spear. How they blessed God's mercy,
 all of them, at the sight! How their courage
 rose, a match for all it should encounter,
 10 men or wild beast or walls of iron! They
 marched on, ready for battle, sure now of
 a heavenly champion, and of the Lord's

favour; and when they charged the enemy, 11
 they were very lions for valour. At their
 onslaught, fell eleven thousand of the foot,
 fell a thousand and six hundred of the
 horse; and the whole army took to its 12
 heels, for the most part wounded and
 disarmed; Lysias himself, ingloriously
 enough, turned and fled.

Yet good sense he lacked not; great loss 13
 he had sustained, and, let the Hebrews
 continue to rely for aid upon divine Omni-
 potence, he saw there was no conquering
 them. So he wrote, offering to conclude 14
 honourable terms with them, and secure
 them the king's friendship. As for Macha- 15
 baeus, he consented to what Lysias asked,
 having no thought but for the common
 good; and the written terms he proposed
 to Lysias in the Jewish people's name
 received the royal assent.

The letter sent to the Jews by Lysias was 16
 after this manner: Lysias, to the people of
 the Jews, all health! Your envoys, John 17
 and Abesalom, handed me a written peti-
 tion, and desired that I would give effect
 to the terms of it. All that needed to be 18
 known, I have made clear to the king's
 grace, and he has granted what grant he
 could. Doubt not I will be a good suitor 19
 in your cause hereafter, so you abide loyal
 to the king's interest. Meanwhile I have
 given a verbal message to your envoys and
 mine, which they will impart to you. Fare- 21
 well. Given on this twenty-fourth day of
 Dioscorus, in the hundred and forty-
 eighth year.

And of the king's own letter, the tenour 22
 was this: King Antiochus, to his good
 cousin Lysias, all health! Now that our 23
 father has found his place among the gods,
 it is for us to see that our subjects live at
 peace, and go quietly about their business.
 But of one nation, the Jews, we hear that 24
 they resisted our father's will, who would
 have had them conform to the Greek way
 of living; to their own tradition they hold
 fast, and their plea is, we should grant
 them the enjoyment of their rights in the
 matter. And whereas we would have this 25
 nation live peaceably like the rest, we
 enact and decree that their temple should
 be restored to them, and that they should

¹ If the text here is sound, the Timotheus mentioned in 12. 2 is a different person. ² A more probable reading in the Greek makes the distance not five furlongs, but about twenty miles, which would be a just estimate.

26 follow the custom of their forefathers. Do us the kindness, then, to send word and give them assurance of this; our will made known, let them take heart, and order their own affairs contentedly.

27 To the Jews themselves the king wrote as follows: King Antiochus, to the elders and people of the Jews, all health! Thrive you as well as ourselves, we are well content. Menelaus has brought us word, you would fain have free intercourse with the men of your race who dwell in these parts;¹ 30 and we hereby grant safe conduct to all of you that would travel here, up to the thirtieth day of Xanthicus. . . . That the Jewish folk may eat what food they will, use what laws they will, according to their ancient custom; and if aught has been done amiss through inadvertence, none of them, for 32 that cause, shall be molested. We are sending Menelaus besides, to give a charge 33 to you. Farewell. Given on the fifteenth day of Xanthicus, in the hundred and forty-eighth year.

34 The Romans, too, wrote to them after the manner following; Quintus Memmius and Titus Manlius, envoys of Rome, to the 35 Jewish people, all health! The privileges Lysias has granted you in the name of his royal cousin, we hereby ratify. Other matters he has remitted to the king's decision; take counsel among yourselves, and let us know at once what your mind is, if you would have us order all to your liking. Even now we are on the road to Antioch; 37 write speedily, to let us know how you are minded. Farewell. Given on the twenty-fifth day of Xanthicus, in the hundred and forty-eighth year.

12 So all was agreed upon; Lysias was for the court again, and the Jewish folk went back to their farms. But neither rest nor respite might they have while Timotheus² and Apollonius, son of Genæus, were left at their posts; Hieronymus, too, and Demophon, and Nicanor that ruled in Cyprus.

3 This was a very foul deed done by the men of Joppe; they fitted out certain ves-

sels of theirs, and would have the neighbouring Jews go aboard, with their wives and children, for all the world as if there were no grudge between them. It was the common wish of their fellow-citizens; how should the Jews gainsay it? They were lovers of peace, and cause for suspicion had none. Yet once they were on the high seas, they were cast overboard and drowned, a full two hundred of them. Such tidings of cruel murder done upon men of his own race, Judas could not hear unmoved; mustering his followers, and calling upon God, that judges aright, to speed him, he marched out against the slayers of his brethren; at dead of night he burned down their wharves, and set all the ships ablaze, nor any man that escaped the fire but was put to the sword. This done, he left them, but threatening he would return, and leave none alive in Joppe. He had word, too, that the men of Jamnia meant to do the same by the Jews in their part; so he fell on Jamnia, too, by night, and burnt both wharves and ships there; the light of that blaze was seen at Jerusalem, thirty miles off. . . .

Nine furlongs they had marched, on their way to meet Timotheus, when an Arab force engaged them, of five thousand foot and five hundred horse.³ Stern was the encounter, but with God's help they won the day; and the defeated remnant of the Arabs asked Judas for quarter, promising a grant of pasture-lands, with other advantages. And, beyond doubt, they could be many ways serviceable to him; so he made terms with them. They swore friendship, and the Arabs went back to their tents.

A city there was called Casphin, moated and walled about for its defence, and held by a rabble of many races; this, too, Judas attacked. Such trust the defenders had in the strength of their ramparts, and their plentiful supplies of food, they carried themselves recklessly, hurling taunts at Judas, with blasphemies and other talk little fit to be uttered. But Machabæus to that King made appeal, who needed

¹ *vv.* 29-31. The situation is not made fully clear, either in the Greek text or in the Latin. There seems to be a gap between verses 30 and 31, perhaps due to a mistake in the manuscripts. The allusion to faults committed 'through inadvertence' is perhaps only a diplomatic formula for granting a general amnesty. ² For Timotheus, see note on 10. 37. ³ The mention of Timotheus and of the Arabs would suggest that this incident took place beyond Jordan, rather than in the Jamnia neighbourhood. It seems possible there is a gap in the text.

neither engine nor battering-ram, in Josue's day, to bring Jericho down in ruins; a fierce attack he delivered upon the walls, and, so God willed, became master of the city. The slaughter in it was past reckoning; there was a pool hard by, of two furlongs' breadth, that seemed as if it ran in full tide with the blood of slain men.

It needed a march of ninety-five miles to bring them to Charax, where the Jews were whom they call Tubianaean. Yet could they not come up with Timotheus; he had retired, with nothing achieved, leaving a strong garrison in one of the forts there; which garrison of his, ten thousand strong, was destroyed by two of Machabaeus' captains, Dositheus and Sosipater. Machabaeus himself, with six thousand men at his heels, divided into companies, pressed on against Timotheus, that had a hundred and twenty thousand foot, and two thousand five hundred horse, under his command. At the news of Judas' coming, Timotheus was fain to send on women, children, and stores, to Carnion, an impregnable fortress and one difficult of approach, so narrow the pass was. And now the first of Judas' companies came in sight, and with it the presence of the all-seeing God.¹ What fear fell upon the enemy, how they scattered in flight, stumbling over their own fellows, wounded by the point of their own swords! And all the while Judas pressed them hard, the scourge of ill-doers; thirty thousand of them that day he slaughtered. As for Timotheus, he fell into the hands of another force, under Dositheus and Sosipater; of these he begged earnestly for his life, telling them of Jewish hostages in his keeping, their own fathers and brothers, that would get no quarter if he came by his death. Many were the pledges he gave, covenanting for the restoration of these hostages, and at last, for love of their brethren, they let him go free.

Judas went on to Carnion, where the enemy lost twenty-five thousand men, routed and slain; thence to Ephron, a fortified city, where stout warriors of many different breeds manned the walls most

valiantly, well provided with engines and weapons. Yet strength is none can hold its own against the Omnipotent; to him the Jews made appeal, and so took the city, killing twenty-five thousand of the defenders. And thence to Scythopolis, at seventy-five miles' distance from Jerusalem; but here the Jews themselves bore witness, how kindly their neighbours used them, and how honourably they carried themselves even in troublous times. Thanking all such, and desiring them they would continue their good offices towards the Jewish folk, the army returned to Jerusalem, to keep the festival of the Weeks.

Then, after Pentecost, they marched away to meet Gorgias, that was in command of Idumaea;² it was but a muster of three thousand foot and four hundred horse.³ Battle was joined, and some few Jews fell. As for Gorgias, one Dositheus, a great warrior that was in Bacenor's company of horse, kept close on his heels and would have taken him alive; but one of the Thracian horsemen fell upon him and cut off his arm at the shoulder, so Gorgias escaped safe to Maresa. A long fight Esdrin's company had of it, and were full weary, when Judas called upon the Lord to succour them and lead them onwards, battle-hymn and battle-cry raising in his own language; and so he put Gorgias' army to the rout.

And now, recalling his men from the pursuit, he made his way to the city of Adollam; the week had gone round, and here, duly cleansed from defilement, they kept the sabbath. Next day, with Judas at their head, they went back to recover the bodies of the slain, for burial among their own folk in their fathers' graves; and what found they? Each of the fallen was wearing, under his shirt, some token carried away from the false gods of Jamnia. Here was defiance of the Jewish law, and none doubted it was the cause of their undoing; none but praised the Lord for his just retribution, that had brought hidden things to light; and so they fell to prayer, pleading that the sin might go unremembered. Judas himself, their gallant commander,

¹ The Greek implies that the divine presence was in some way visibly manifested. ² 'Idumaea' is probably a copyist's error for 'Jamnia'; the context seems to indicate that this engagement was fought in the Philistine country. ³ 'It was but a muster of'; literally, 'And he marched out with', but who? Grammatically, it should be Gorgias, but most commentators think Judas is referred to.

gave public warning to his men, of fault they should evermore keep clear, with the fate of these transgressors under their eyes. Then he would have contribution made; a sum of twelve thousand silver pieces he levied, and sent it to Jerusalem, to have sacrifice made there for the guilt of their dead companions. Was not this well done and piously? Here was a man kept the resurrection ever in mind; he had done fondly and foolishly indeed, to pray for the dead, if these might rise no more, that once were fallen! And these had made a godly end; could he doubt, a rich recompense awaited them? A holy and wholesome thought it is to pray for the dead, for their guilt's undoing.

13 It was in the hundred and forty-ninth year news came to Judas that Antiochus Eupator was marching on Judaea in great force. Lysias was at his side, that was lord protector and managed the affairs of the realm, and with him were a hundred and ten thousand foot, five thousand horse, twenty-two elephants, and three hundred scythed chariots. Menelaus, too, must be of their company, and ever it was treacherous advice he gave to Antiochus; not that he cared for his country's safety, but he had designs upon the high priesthood still. And hereupon the King of all kings brought this guilty wretch into ill favour with his master Antiochus, who (upon Lysias' averring, here was the true source of all their misadventures) would have him apprehended and put to death according to the custom of the place where they were quartered. There is here a tower fifty cubits in height, rising sheer above a heap of ashes that surrounds it; from its walls the author of sacrilege is thrust forward to his death by the common impulse of the bystanders. This, then, was the doom of Menelaus; by this law the law-breaker met his end, and lay there unburied. A fitting reward, this, for one that had done so many outrages upon God's altar; fire of it and ashes of it are sacred, and it was by ashes Menelaus went to his death.

Yet still the king pressed forward on his mad career, as if he would prove himself a worse enemy of Jewry than his father; and Judas, when the news came to him,

bade the people entreat God night and day he would come to their rescue, as ever he was wont hitherto. Here was great peril, they should be deprived at one blow of law, of country, and of sanctuary; would he allow blaspheming Gentiles to lord it again over his people, that had but now won a little breathing-space? Entreat the Lord they did, and with one accord, for his mercy; wept they and fasted, and kept on their knees for three days together. Then Judas gave them the word to arm, himself called the elders to a council; his plan was, he told them, to march out and engage the king before he could reach Judaea and overpower the city, and the issue of it he would leave to the Lord's good pleasure. So, committing all to God, the world's creator, and bidding his men fight bravely, even to the death, for law, temple, city, country and kinsmen, he pitched his camp at Modin. The watchword he gave them was, Victory lies with God; and now, choosing out the best of his fighting men, he made a night attack upon the royal quarters. Four thousand men they slew in the camp, and the greatest of all the elephants, with the crew that rode him, and so went back in triumph, leaving the camp all confusion and dismay.

After this daybreak victory, won under God's protection, the king had taste enough of Jewish valour, and set about to reduce the strongholds by policy. And first he would deliver an attack upon Bethsura, a fortress of the Jews, but ever he was thrown back and repulsed with great loss, so well did Judas supply the garrison with all they needed. There was one Rhodocus in the Jewish army that betrayed secrets to the enemy, but, upon enquiry made, he was apprehended and put under arrest; so the king was fain to parley with the defenders of Bethsura, and, upon agreed terms, the siege of it was raised. Thus did he try conclusions with Judas, and had the worst of it; news came to him besides that Philip, whom he had left in charge at Antioch, was levying revolt against him. So, in great consternation of mind, he must needs throw himself on the mercy of the Jews, submitting under oath to the just terms they imposed on him. In token of this reconciliation, he offered sacrifice, paying the temple much reverence and

24 offering gifts there; as for Machabaeus, the king made a friend of him, and appointed him both governor and commander of all the territory from Ptolemais to the Gerrenes.¹ When he reached Ptolemais, he found the citizens much incensed over this treaty made, and angrily averring the terms of it would never be kept; until at last Lysias must go up to an open stage, and give his reasons; whereby he calmed the indignation of the people, and so returned to Antioch. Such was the king's march upon Judaea, and such his homecoming.

14 Three years later, came tidings to Judas and his company that Demetrius, son of Seleucus, was on the throne. This Demetrius, with a body of resolute followers and with ships to support him, had landed at Tripolis, in a part of the country well suited to his purpose, and had wrested the whole kingdom from Antiochus, and from Lysias his general.

3 Now turn we to one Alcimus, that had been high priest formerly, but had wilfully incurred defilement in the days when folk began consorting with the Gentiles.² Little hope was left him, he should live to present himself at the altar again; and now he had recourse to king Demetrius, in the hundred and fiftieth year. He came with gifts, a gold crown and a palm branch, and wreaths that had been better employed in the service of the temple.³ No word said he on the first day of his arriving; but ere long opportunity was given him of carrying out his impious design. He was called into counsel by Demetrius himself, and asked what resources the Jews had, or what purposes in view, that gave them such confidence. And this was his answer: It is the faction of the Assideans, with Judas Machabaeus at their head, that will ever be fanning the flames of war, and moving revolt, and destroying the peace of the realm. Thou seest here a man robbed of the high priesthood, his rightful inheritance.

And the cause of my coming is, first, the loyalty I have to the king's own interest, but not less, the love of my own fellow-countrymen; by the false aims of a faction the whole of our race is brought into utter misery. Do but satisfy thyself, my lord king, that all is as I have said, and then, with that kindliness the world knows so well, take order concerning the country and its inhabitants. No peace the commonwealth may have, while Judas lives.

Such was the opinion he gave, and the courtiers, that had little love for Judas, fell to egging Demetrius on; he, with all haste, despatched one of his generals to Judaea, Nicanor, that was in command of the elephants. His orders were, to take Judas alive, to disperse his company, and of our glorious temple to make Alcimus high priest. The Gentiles whom Judas had chased out of the country flocked, now, to Nicanor's side, confident that the miserable ruin of the Jews would be the foundation of their own prosperity. As for the Jews, when they heard Nicanor was on the march, with all this rabble of alien folk, they cast earth on their heads and betook themselves to prayer. Was it not God's appointment, his people he should evermore preserve? Was he not wont to protect them with signal marks of his favour? And now orders came to them from their leader; they must be on the march. Their mustering-place was a fortress called Dessau, to which Simon, Judas' brother, had withdrawn after a brush with the enemy, who daunted him by the suddenness of their advance.⁴

But Nicanor had heard much about the valour of Judas' men, and how nobly they fought in their country's quarrel; no wonder if he shrank from the arbitrament of the sword, and sent envoys to meet them, Posidonius, Theodotus and Matthias, with an offer of terms. After a deal of negotiation, Judas referred the matter to the general voice, and all were agreed upon accepting the offer of friendship. So the

¹ The Greek text here seems to include a proper name, so that the sense would be 'and appointed Hegemonides commander of all the territory from Ptolemais to the Gerrenes'. Nothing is known about Hegemonides.

² 'Began consorting'; the Greek text has, 'refused to consort'.

³ 'That had been better employed in the service of the temple'; literally, 'that seemed to belong to the temple'. The sense of the Greek text is probably 'such as were customarily used in the service of the temple'.

⁴ *ib.* 16, 17. There is perhaps some fault here in the manuscripts; the Greek text reads literally, 'And, the leader having commanded it, he (who?) immediately moved his camp from there (from where?), and made contact with them (with whom?) at the village of Dessau. But Simon, the brother of Judas, had engaged Nicanor, but slowly, having come to grief through the sudden silence of the enemy.'

day was fixed for a secret conference to be held between them; thrones of honour
 22 were brought out and set ready, and you may be sure Judas had armed men posted in waiting, to forestall any sudden treachery on the enemy's part; but their parleys ended happily enough. Nicanor was now lodged in Jerusalem, and did there no manner of hurt; all the rabble he had brought with him were dispersed to their homes. Towards Judas he shewed unaffected friendship, such a liking he had taken for the man; ay, and encouraged him to take a wife and beget children; so Judas married, and took his ease, and ever he lived on close terms with Nicanor.

26 And what of Alcimus? Little it liked him to see all this good-will between the two of them, and their treaty-making; to Demetrius he betook him, and charged Nicanor with disaffection; was he not purposing to hand over his command to Judas, a traitor against the realm? Vile accusations, that threw Demetrius into a great taking of fury; he wrote to Nicanor, he was very ill content with the peace made, and would have Machabaeus sent to Antioch in chains without more ado. Here was Nicanor left in great confusion of mind; it went against the grain with him to cancel the treaty with Judas, that had nothing
 28 wronged him, yet run counter to the king's will he might not. So he began looking for an opportunity of carrying out his orders; and Machabaeus, remarking that a coolness had sprung up, and their meetings were less courteous than hitherto, made sure this behaviour of his boded no good. Whereupon he gathered some of his company, and went into concealment.

31 So Nicanor found himself quite outwitted; and he must needs make his way into the high and holy precincts of the temple, where even then the priests were offering their accustomed sacrifice. Judas, he said, must be handed over to him; and when they, upon oath, denied all knowledge of his hiding-place, what did Nicanor? He pointed to the temple, and swore that if Judas were not handed over to him in chains he would raze yonder

sanctuary to the ground, demolish the altar, and consecrate its precincts anew to Bacchus. With that, he left them; and the priests, lifting up their hands to heaven, called upon the God that was ever the champion of their race, with such prayer as this: Lord of all, that need of thy creatures hast none, thy will it was to have thy dwelling-place among us! Holy thou art, and of all holy things the master; this house, that was so lately cleansed of its defilement, keep thou for ever undefiled.

It was this Nicanor that received information against one of the elders at Jerusalem, named Razias, a true patriot and a man of good repute; for the love he bore it, men called him the father of the Jewish people. Long time this man had held to his resolve of keeping aloof from the Gentiles, ready to put life and limb in jeopardy, so he might persevere. And now, as if to give public proof of hatred towards the Jews, Nicanor sent five hundred men to take him alive; shrewder blow was none he could deal them, than to beguile such a man as this. And when this great company set about to force an entry into his dwelling, breaking down the door and calling out for firebrands, cut off from all escape, what did Razias? He thrust a sword into his own body, counting it better to die honourably than to fall into the hands of sinners, and suffer outrage unworthy of a free-born man.¹ The hasty blow missed its aim; and now, with a rabble of men pouring in through the doors he made gallantly for the outer wall, and never hesitated to cast himself down, there in the heart of the crowd. You may be sure they made room for his coming, and he fell on the very joints of his neck;² yet, breathing still, he rose to his feet undaunted; blood streaming from his mortal wounds, he made his way through the press of men, till he stood on a sheer rock above them. And there, for now he had no blood left in him, he laid hold of his own entrails, and with both hands cast them into the crowd beneath, calling upon the Lord, giver of life and breath, to restore these same to his body; and so died.

¹ Some have attributed this action of Razias to a special inspiration; but we are at liberty to suppose he was not conscious of a divine law against self-destruction, and to admire his courage accordingly.

² 'He fell on the very joints of his neck'; the Greek text may also be interpreted as meaning 'he fell in the midst of the empty space'.

15 When Nicanor was told, Judas was
 in the Samaritan country, he would
 have pressed home the attack against him,
 there and then, on the sabbath day. But
 the Jews gainsaid him; for there were Jews
 that fought, unwillingly enough, under his
 orders. What, said they, wouldst thou fight
 beast-fashion, without mercy? This holy
 day respect thou needs must, in his honour
 that is God all-seeing. Why, where is he
 then, said the impious wretch, this God
 who would have sabbath kept? In the
 heavens? In heaven he is, sure enough,
 they answered, the living Lord our master,
 that gave orders the seventh day should be
 observed. So be it, said he, and I am your
 master on earth, and my orders are, To
 arms, and despatch the king's business!
 Yet carry out his design they would not.

6 Such an empty braggart was this Ni-
 canor, he thought to make a single victory
 of it, over all the Jews at once; Machabaeus
 on his side kept ever his confidence, yet
 with the sure hope, God would bring him
 aid. And for his men he had the same
 encouragement; let them never be daunted
 by the onslaught of the heathen, but rather
 bethink them of heaven's mercies in time
 past, and look to God Omnipotent for vic-
 tory. Of the law and the prophets he spoke
 to them, and reminded them of their old
 battles, till all were eager for the fight; nor
 was it enough to arouse their ardour; he
 shewed them, too, how treacherous the
 heathen had proved, and how forsworn.
 Thus it was his care to arm them, not with
 shield or spear for their defence, but with
 excellent words of good cheer.

A dream of his he told them, most
 worthy of credence, that brought comfort
 to one and all. And what saw he? Onias,
 that had once been high priest, appeared
 to him; an excellent good man this, modest
 of mien, courteous, well-spoken, and from
 his boyhood schooled in all the virtues.
 With hands outstretched, he stood there
 praying for the Jewish folk. Then he was
 aware of another, a man of great age and
 reverence, nothing about him but was most
 worshipful; who this might be, Onias told
 him forthwith: Here is one that loves our
 brethren, the people of Israel, well; one
 that for Israel and for every stone of the
 holy city prays much; God's prophet Jeremias.
 And with that, Jeremias reached

forward to Judas, and gave him a golden
 sword; This holy sword take thou, he said,
 God's gift; this wielding, all the enemies
 of my people Israel thou shalt lay low.

A most noble harangue, and one very
 apt to rouse the emulation of his followers,
 and to stiffen their courage. No wonder if
 they resolved they would put it to the
 touch, and manfully engage the enemy;
 valour should decide all. Was not the holy
 city, was not the temple itself in jeopardy?
 For wives and children, for brethren and
 kindred, their concern was less; of the
 perils they dreaded, profanation of the
 temple was first and foremost. And what
 of those who were left in the city? No
 common anxiety they felt for these others
 that were going into battle. Now was the
 hour of decision; the enemy was at the
 gates, drawn up in full array; here were the
 elephants, here was the cavalry, posted at
 points of vantage. Judas, when he saw the
 number of his assailants, how manifold
 were their appointments, how fierce the
 temper of the beasts, was fain to lift hands
 heavenward, and to the Lord make his
 appeal; the Lord, that is wondrous in his
 doings, and at his own pleasure crowns
 right, not might, with victory. And this
 was the manner of his praying: Lord, in
 the days of Ezechias thou didst send thy
 angel, and take toll of a hundred and
 eighty-five thousand in the camp of Sen-
 nacherib! Ruler of heaven, some friendly
 angel of thine this day escort us; dread and
 dismay let thy outstretched hand inspire,
 to the confusion of yonder blasphemers
 that levy war on thy holy people! And so
 he brought his prayer to an end.

By this, Nicanor's army was coming
 forward to the attack, with blowing of
 trumpets and with songs of battle. But
 Judas and his company went to meet them
 calling still upon God for his succour; and
 ever while hand fought, heart prayed.
 Such joy had they of God's present assist-
 ance, they cut down a full thirty-five
 thousand of the enemy; when they let be,
 and returned in triumph from the pursuit,
 news greeted them Nicanor himself had
 armed for the fight, and lay there dead.
 What a cry was then raised, what a stir,
 what hymns they sang, in the speech of
 their own country, to God Omnipotent!

And Judas? Not for nothing had he

devoted body and soul, this long while, to the service of his fellow countrymen! Nicanor's head, and one of his arms cut off from the shoulder downwards, he bade
 31 them carry to Jerusalem; and there he called the tribesmen together, ranged the priests about the altar, and sent his summons to the heathen that garrisoned the
 32 citadel. Head and hand he shewed them of the godless Nicanor, the hand that was stretched out so boastfully against the holy
 33 temple of the Almighty, bidding them cut the blaspheming tongue in pieces and cast it to the birds, nail the rash hand to the
 34 temple's face. None but praised the Lord of heaven at the sight; Blessed be the Lord, they cried, that has kept his house
 35 undefiled still! As for Nicanor's head, Judas hung it at the top of the citadel, to be

a clear and evident token, how God gives aid. And all with one consent made a decree, never should that day pass unobserved; they would keep holiday on the thirteenth of the Syrian month Adar, which is the eve of Mardocheaus' feast.¹

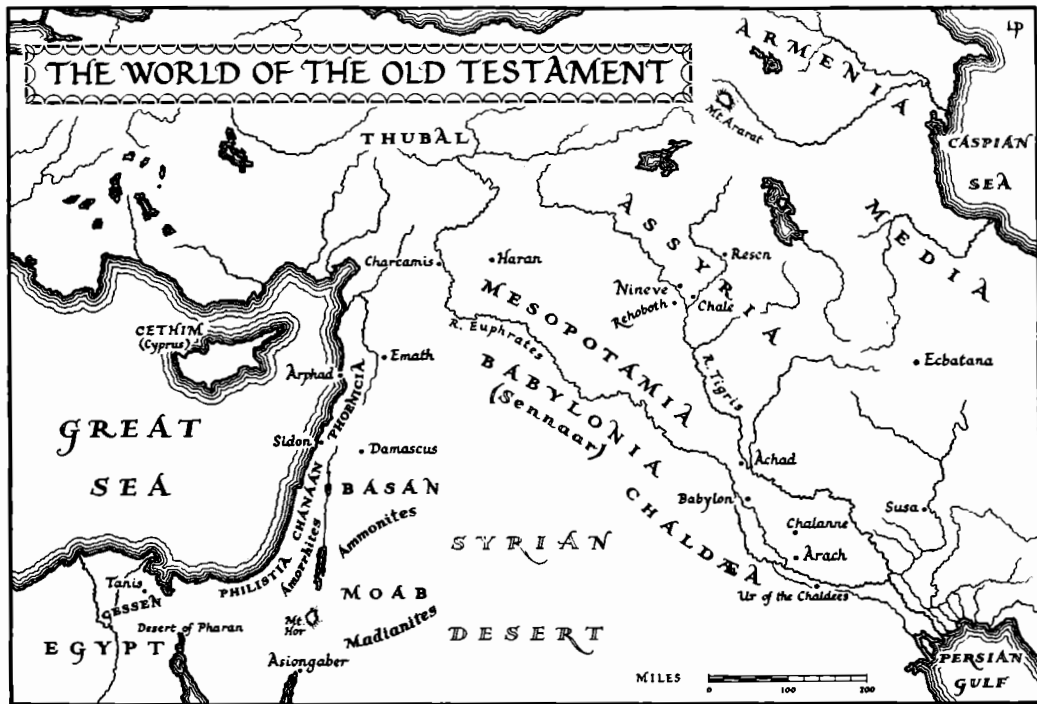
Such was the history of Nicanor; and since that time the city has been in Jewish possession. Here, then, I will make an end of writing; if it has been done workmanly, and in historian's fashion, none better pleased than I; if it is of little merit, I must be humoured none the less.² Nothing but wine to take, nothing but water, thy health forbids; vary thy drinking;³ and thou shalt find content. So it is with reading; if the book be too nicely polished at every point, it grows wearisome. So here we will have done with it.

¹ See Est. 9, 17 and 18.

² 'I must be humoured none the less'; according to the Greek text, 'I have done as well as I could'. Divine inspiration is something superadded to, not a substitute for, human labour and human self-criticism.

³ For 'vary thy drinking' the Greek text has 'mix both together'; and the rest of the sentence is a (somewhat obscure) recommendation of style.

MAPS ILLUSTRATING THE
OLD TESTAMENT



PALESTINE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT



THE NEW TESTAMENT
OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

A RECORD of the ancestry from which Jesus Christ, the son of David, son of Abraham, was born. Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, Jacob of Juda and his brethren; Phares of Phares and Zara, by Thamar; Esron of Esron, Esron of Aram, Aram of Aminadab, Aminadab of Naasson, Naasson of Salmon; Salmon of Booz, by Rahab; Booz of Obed, by Ruth; Obed of Jesse; and Jesse was the father of king David. And king David was the father of Solomon, by her that had been the wife of Urias. Solomon was the father of Roboam, Roboam of Abias, Abias of Asa, Asa of Josaphat, Josaphat of Joram, Joram of Ozias, Ozias of Joatham, Joatham of Achaz, Achaz of Ezechias, Ezechias of Manasses, Manasses of Amon, Amon of Josias; and Josias was the father of Jechonias and his brethren, at the time of the removal to Babylon. And after the removal to Babylon, Jechonias was the father of Salathiel, Salathiel of Zorobabel, Zorobabel of Abiud, Abiud of Eliacim, Eliacim of Azor, Azor of Sadoc, Sadoc of Achim, Achim of Eliud, Eliud of Eleazar, Eleazar of Mathan, Mathan of Jacob, and Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary; it was of her that Jesus was born, who is called Christ.¹ Thus there are fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the captivity in Babylon, and fourteen from the captivity in Babylon to Christ.

And this was the manner of Christ's birth. His mother Mary was espoused to

Joseph, but they had not yet come together, when she was found to be with child, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Whereupon her husband Joseph (for he was a right-minded man, and would not have her put to open shame) was for sending her away in secret. But hardly had this thought come to his mind, when an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take thy wife Mary to thyself, for it is by the power of the Holy Ghost that she has conceived this child; and she will bear a son, whom thou shalt call Jesus, for he is to save his people from their sins. All this was so ordained to fulfil the word which the Lord spoke by his prophet: Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel (which means, God with us).² And Joseph awoke from sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, taking his wife to himself; and he had not known her when she bore a son, her first-born, to whom he gave the name Jesus.³

2 Jesus was born at Bethlehem, in Juda, in the days of king Herod. And thereupon certain wise men came out of the east to Jerusalem, who asked, Where is he that has been born, the king of the Jews? We have seen his star out in the east, and we have come to worship him. King Herod was troubled when he heard it, and all Jerusalem with him; so that he assembled all the chief priests and learned men among the people, and enquired of them where it

¹ If this genealogy is compared with that given by St Luke (3. 23 and following), it is clear that one at least of the two Evangelists must have reckoned descent by adoption as sufficient to make our Lord the legal inheritor of Abraham's blessing and of David's Kingdom. It is therefore not surprising that both have traced his ancestry through his foster-father. It is a common opinion, derived from the Fathers, that St Joseph and the Blessed Virgin were closely related.

² Is. 7. 14. 'The virgin' is a literal translation of the Hebrew; 'a virgin' would equally express the sense of the original prophecy.

³ The text here is more literally rendered 'he knew her not till she bore a son'; but the Hebrew word represented by 'till' does not imply that the event which might have been expected *did* take place afterwards. (Cf. Gen. 8. 7, Ps. 109. 2, Dan. 6. 24, 1 Mac. 5. 54.) So that this phrase does not impugn the perpetual virginity of our Lady. Nor is any such inference to be drawn when our Lord is called her 'first-born' Son, which refers to his position as redeemable under the old law (Lk. 2. 23).

5 was that Christ would be born. And they told him, At Bethlehem in Juda; so it has
 6 been written by the prophet: And thou, Bethlehem, of the land of Juda, art far from the least among the princes of Juda, for out of thee will arise a leader who is to be the
 7 shepherd of my people Israel.¹ Then, summoning the wise men in secret, Herod questioned them closely upon the time of
 8 the star's appearing. And he sent them on their way to Bethlehem, saying to them, Go and enquire carefully for the child, and when you have found him, bring me back word, so that I too may come and worship
 9 him. They obeyed the king, and went on their journey; and all at once the star which they had seen in the east was there going before them, till at last it stood still over
 10 the place where the child was. They, when they saw the star, were glad beyond measure; and so, going into the dwelling, they found the child there, with his mother
 11 Mary, and fell down to worship him; and, opening their store of treasures, they offered him gifts, of gold and frankincense
 12 and myrrh. Afterwards, because they had received a warning in a dream forbidding them to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by a different way.
 13 As soon as they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and said, Rise up, take with thee the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt; there remain, until I give thee word. For Herod will soon be making search for the child,
 14 to destroy him. He rose up, therefore, while it was still night, and took the child and his mother with him, and withdrew
 15 into Egypt, where he remained until the death of Herod, in fulfilment of the word which the Lord spoke by his prophet,
 16 I called my son out of Egypt.² Meanwhile, when he found that the wise men had played him false, Herod was angry beyond measure; he sent and made away with all the male children in Bethlehem and in all its neighbourhood, of two years old and less, reckoning the time by the careful enquiry which he had made of the wise
 17 men. It was then that the word spoken by
 18 the prophet Jeremy was fulfilled: A voice

was heard in Rama, lamentation and great mourning; it was Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be comforted, because none is left.³ But as soon as Herod was dead, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream, and said: Rise up, take with thee the child and his mother, and return to the land of Israel; for those who sought the child's life are dead. So he arose, and took the child and his mother with him, and came into the land of Israel. But, when he heard that Archelaus was king in Judaea in the place of his father Herod, he was afraid to return there; and so, receiving a warning in a dream, he withdrew into the region of Galilee; where he came to live in a town called Nazareth, in fulfilment of what was said by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.⁴

3 In those days John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea; Repent, he said, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It was of him that the prophet Isaias spoke, when he said, There is a voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, straighten out his paths.⁵ And he, John, wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle about his loins, and locusts and wild honey were his food. Thereupon Jerusalem and all Judaea, and all those who dwell round Jordan, went out to see him, and he baptized them in the Jordan, while they confessed their sins. Many of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees came to his baptizing; and when he saw these, he asked them, Who was it that taught you, brood of vipers, to flee from the vengeance that draws near? Come, then, yield the acceptable fruit of repentance; do not presume to say in your hearts, We have Abraham for our father; I tell you, God has power to raise up children to Abraham out of these very stones. Already the axe has been put to the root of the trees, so that every tree which does not shew good fruit will be hewn down and cast into the fire. As for me, I am baptizing you with water, for your repentance; but one is to come

¹ Mic. 5. 2.² Os. 11. 1.³ Jer. 31. 15.⁴ No such prophecy has survived to us. But an obscure village is often regarded by its more important neighbours as typical of an unfashionable or provincial outlook; cf. Jn. 1. 46. The prophecy (Is. 53. 3) that our Lord would be despised by men was fulfilled when his contemporaries spoke of him scornfully as 'a prophet from Nazareth' (like our 'wise men of Gotham'). Some think the word should be, not Nazarene, but Nazirite; cf. Gen. 49. 26.⁵ Is. 40. 3.

after me who is mightier than I, so that I am not worthy even to carry his shoes for him; he will baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.¹ He holds his winnowing-fan ready, to sweep his threshing-floor clean; he will gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will consume with fire that can never be quenched.

Then Jesus came from Galilee and stood before John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have restrained him; It is I, he said, that ought to be baptized by thee, and dost thou come to me instead? But Jesus answered, Let it be so for the present; it is well that we should thus fulfil all due observance. Then John gave way to him. So Jesus was baptized, and as he came straight up out of the water, suddenly heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting upon him. And with that, a voice came from heaven, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.²

4 And now Jesus was led by the Spirit away into the wilderness, to be tempted there by the devil. Forty days and forty nights he spent fasting, and at the end of them was hungry. Then the tempter approached, and said to him, If thou art the Son of God, bid these stones turn into loaves of bread. He answered, It is written, Man cannot live by bread only; there is life for him in all the words which proceed from the mouth of God.³ Next, the devil took him into the holy city, and there set him down on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down to earth; for it is written, He has given charge to his angels concerning thee, and they will hold thee up with their hands, lest thou shouldst chance to trip on a stone.⁴ Jesus said to him, But it is further written, Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the proof.⁵ Once more, the devil took him to the top of an exceedingly high mountain, from which he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said, I will give thee all these if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said to him, Away

with thee, Satan; it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and serve none but him.⁶ Then the devil left him alone; and thereupon angels came and ministered to him.⁷

After this, hearing of John's imprisonment, he withdrew into Galilee. And now, forsaking the city of Nazareth, he came and settled down in Capharnaum, which is by the sea-shore, in the country of Zabulon and Nephthaim, in fulfilment of what was said by the prophet Isaiahs: The land of Zabulon and Nephthaim, on the sea road, beyond Jordan, the Galilee of the Gentiles!⁸ The people that abode in darkness has seen a great light; for men abiding in a land where death overshadowed them, light has dawned. From that time onwards, Jesus began to preach; Repent, he said, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And as he walked by the sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brethren, Simon, who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen); and he said to them, Come and follow me; I will make you into fishers of men. And they dropped their nets immediately, and followed him. Then he went further on, and saw two others that were brethren, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in the boat with their father Zebedee, repairing their nets, and he called them to him; whereupon they dropped the nets and left their father immediately, and followed him.⁹

So Jesus went about the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every kind of disease and infirmity among the people; so that his fame spread throughout the whole of Syria, and they brought to him all those who were in affliction, distressed with pain and sickness of every sort, the possessed, the lunatics, the palsied; and he healed them. And a great multitude followed him, from Galilee and Decapolis, Jerusalem and Judaea, and the country beyond Jordan.

5 Jesus, when he saw how great was their number, went up on to the mountain-

¹ The baptism of John did not confer sanctifying grace; cf. Ac. 19. 1-6. ² vv. 1-17: Mk. 1. 2; Lk. 3. 1. ³ Deut. 8. 3. ⁴ Ps. 90. 11, 12. ⁵ Deut. 6. 16. If our Lord had consented to cast himself down, he would have been testing God's loving care of him ('tempting Providence', as we say) by putting himself deliberately in danger. ⁶ Deut. 6. 13. ⁷ vv. 1-11: Lk. 4. 1. ⁸ Is. 9. 1, 2. ⁹ vv. 17-22: Mk. 1. 14.

side; there he sat down, and his disciples
 2 came about him. And he began speaking
 to them; this was the teaching he gave.
 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom
 4 of heaven is theirs.¹ Blessed are the patient;
 5 they shall inherit the land. Blessed
 are those who mourn; they shall be comforted.
 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for holiness;
 7 they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful;
 8 they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean
 9 of heart; they shall see God. Blessed are the
 10 peace-makers; they shall be counted the children
 11 of God. Blessed are those who suffer persecution
 12 in the cause of right; the kingdom of heaven
 is theirs. Blessed are you, when men revile you,
 and persecute you, and speak all manner of
 13 evil against you falsely, because of me. Be glad
 and light-hearted, for a rich reward awaits
 you in heaven; so it was they persecuted
 14 the prophets who went before you. You are
 the salt of the earth; if salt loses its taste,
 what is there left to give taste to it? There
 is no more to be done with it, but throw it
 out of doors for men to tread it under foot.
 15 You are the light of the world; a city cannot
 be hidden if it is built on a mountain-top.
 16 A lamp is not lighted to be put away under
 a bushel measure; it is put on the lamp-
 stand, to give light to all the people of the
 17 house; and your light must shine so brightly
 before men that they can see your good works,
 and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
 18 Do not think that I have come to set
 aside the law and the prophets; I have not
 come to set them aside, but to bring them
 to perfection. Believe me, heaven and earth
 must disappear sooner than one jot, one
 flourish disappear from the law; it must
 19 all be accomplished. Whoever, then, sets
 aside one of these commandments, though
 it were the least, and teaches men to do
 the like, will be of least account in the
 kingdom of heaven; but the man who keeps
 them and teaches others to keep them will
 be accounted in the kingdom of heaven as
 the greatest.

¹ Verses 3 and following. Many of the sayings recorded in these three chapters are also to be found in St Luke, especially in chapters 6 and 12. ² Ex. 20. 13. ³ *vs.* 31, 32; Deut. 24. 1. By the law of Moses, a husband might not turn his wife out of doors without giving her a certificate of freedom, which shewed that he had no further claim on her. Even so, our Lord teaches, the husband's behaviour is selfish, since the dismissed wife would be tempted to remarry, and thus become, in God's sight, an adulteress. The Greek word here translated 'setting aside' has commonly been taken as meaning 'unless she is unfaithful', but it can also be interpreted as meaning 'whether she is unfaithful or not'. See further Mt. 19. 7-9, and p. 20, note 1.

And I tell you that if your justice does not give fuller measure than the justice of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was said to the men of old, Thou shalt do no murder; if a man commits murder, he must answer for it before the court of justice.² But I tell you that any man who is angry with his brother must answer for it before the court of justice, and any man who says Raca to his brother must answer for it before the Council; and any man who says to his brother, Thou fool, must answer for it in hell fire. If thou art bringing thy gift, then, before the altar, and rememberest there that thy brother has some ground of complaint against thee, leave thy gift lying there before the altar, and go home; be reconciled with thy brother first, and then come back to offer thy gift. If any man has a claim against thee, come to terms there and then, while thou art walking in the road with him; or else it may be that the claimant will hand thee over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and so thou wilt be cast into prison. Believe me, thou shalt not be set at liberty until thou hast paid the last farthing.

You have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I tell you that he who casts his eyes on a woman so as to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If thy right eye is the occasion of thy falling into sin, pluck it out and cast it away from thee; better to lose one part of thy body than to have the whole cast into hell. And if thy right hand is an occasion of falling, cut it off and cast it away from thee; better to lose one of thy limbs than to have thy whole body cast into hell. It was said, too, Whoever will put away his wife must first give her a writ of separation. But I tell you that the man who puts away his wife (setting aside the matter of unfaithfulness) makes an adulteress of her, and whoever marries her after she has been put away, commits adultery.³

33 Again, you have heard that it was said to the men of old, Thou shalt not perjure thyself; thou shalt perform what thou hast sworn in the sight of the Lord.¹ But I tell you that you should not bind yourselves by any oath at all: not by heaven, for heaven is God's throne; nor by earth, for earth is the footstool under his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. 36 And thou shalt not swear by thy own head, for thou hast no power to turn a single hair of it white or black. Let your word be Yes for Yes, and No for No; whatever goes beyond this, comes of evil. You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.² But I tell you that you should not offer resistance to injury; if a man strikes thee on thy right cheek, turn the other cheek also towards him; if he is ready to go to law with thee over thy coat, let him have it and thy cloak with it; if he compels thee to attend him on a mile's journey, go two miles with him of thy own accord. Give to him who asks, and if a man would borrow from thee, do not turn away.

43 You have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy.³ But I tell you, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute and insult you, that so you may be true sons of your Father in heaven, who makes his sun rise on the evil and equally on the good, his rain fall on the just and equally on the unjust. If you love those who love you, what title have you to a reward? Will not the publicans do as much? If you greet none but your brethren, what are you doing more than others? Will not the very heathen do as much? But you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6 Be sure you do not perform your acts of piety before men, for them to watch; if you do that, you have no title to a reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when thou givest alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the

hypocrites do in synagogues and in streets, to win the esteem of men. Believe me, they have their reward already. But when thou givest alms, thou shalt not so much as let thy left hand know what thy right hand is doing, so secret is thy almsgiving to be; and then thy Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward thee. And when you pray, you are not to be like hypocrites, who love to stand praying in synagogues or at street-corners, to be a mark for men's eyes; believe me, they have their reward already. But when thou art praying, go into thy inner room and shut the door upon thyself, and so pray to thy Father in secret; and then thy Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward thee.

Moreover, when you are at prayer, do not use many phrases, like the heathens, who think to make themselves heard by their eloquence.⁴ You are not to be like them; your heavenly Father knows well what your needs are before you ask him. This, then, is to be your prayer, Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread;⁵ and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. Your heavenly Father will forgive you your transgressions, if you forgive your fellow men theirs; if you do not forgive them, your heavenly Father will not forgive your transgressions either.

Again, when you fast, do not shew it by gloomy looks, as the hypocrites do. They make their faces unsightly, so that men can see they are fasting; believe me, they have their reward already. But do thou, at thy times of fasting, anoint thy head and wash thy face, so that thy fast may not be known to men, but to thy Father who dwells in secret; and then thy Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward thee.

Do not lay up treasure for yourselves on earth, where there is moth and rust to

¹ Our Lord here condemns those Pharisaical evasions, which might make it lawful to perjure oneself as long as the oath was not taken directly in the name of God. Cf. Mt. 23. 16-22. ² Ex. 21. 24; Lev. 24. 20; Deut. 19. 21. ³ Lev. 19. 18; where, however, nothing is said about hating enemies. This must have been a gloss put upon the text of the commandment. ⁴ The very rare verb which our Lord uses here probably means to 'stammer', to 'hesitate'. The heathens used to address their gods by a series of titles, with the superstitious idea that the prayer would not be heard unless the right title was hit upon. ⁵ 'Daily': the Latin here (but not in Lk. 11. 3) coins the word *supersubstantialis*, which has sometimes been understood as a direct reference to the Holy Eucharist.

consume it, where there are thieves to
 20 break in and steal it; lay up treasure for
 yourselves in heaven, where there is no
 moth or rust to consume it, no thieves to
 21 break in and steal. Where your treasure-
 22 house is, there your heart is too. The eye is
 the light of the whole body, so that if thy
 eye is clear, the whole of thy body will be
 23 lit up; whereas if thy eye is diseased, the
 whole of thy body will be in darkness. And
 if the light which thou hast in thee is itself
 darkness, what of thy darkness? How deep
 24 will that be! A man cannot be the slave of
 two masters at once; either he will hate
 the one and love the other, or he will
 devote himself to the one and despise the
 other. You must serve God or money;
 you cannot serve both.

25 I say to you, then, do not fret over your
 life, how to support it with food and drink;
 over your body, how to keep it clothed. Is
 not life itself a greater gift than food, the
 26 body than clothing? See how the birds of
 the air never sow, or reap, or gather grain
 into barns, and yet your heavenly Father
 feeds them; have you not an excellence
 27 beyond theirs? Can any one of you, for all
 his anxiety, add a cubit's growth to his
 28 height?¹ And why should you be anxious
 over clothing? See how the wild lilies
 29 grow; they do not toil or spin; and yet I
 tell you that even Solomon in all his glory
 30 was not arrayed like one of these. If God,
 then, so clothes the grasses of the field,
 which to-day live and will feed the oven
 to-morrow, will he not be much more
 31 ready to clothe you, men of little faith? Do
 not fret, then, asking, What are we to eat?
 or What are we to drink? or How shall we
 32 find clothing? It is for the heathen to busy
 themselves over such things; you have a
 Father in heaven who knows that you need
 33 them all. Make it your first care to find the
 kingdom of God, and his approval, and all
 these things shall be yours without the
 34 asking. Do not fret, then, over to-
 morrow; leave to-morrow to fret over its
 own needs; for to-day, to-day's troubles
 are enough.

7 Do not judge others, or you yourselves
 2 will be judged. As you have judged,
 so you will be judged, by the same rule;

award shall be made you as you have made
 award, in the same measure. How is it that
 thou canst see the speck of dust which is
 in thy brother's eye, and art not aware of
 the beam which is in thy own? By what
 right wilt thou say to thy brother, Wait, let
 me rid thy eye of that speck, when there is
 a beam all the while in thy own? Thou
 hypocrite, take the beam out of thy own
 eye first, and so thou shalt have clear sight
 to rid thy brother's of the speck.

You must not give that which is holy to
 dogs. Do not cast your pearls before
 swine, or the swine may trample them
 under foot, and then turn on you and tear
 you to pieces.

Ask, and the gift will come; seek, and you
 shall find; knock, and the door shall be
 opened to you. Everyone that asks, will
 receive; that seeks, will find; that knocks,
 will have the door opened to him. If any
 one of yourselves is asked by his son for
 bread, will he give him a stone? If he is
 asked for a fish, will he give him a serpent
 instead? Why then, if you, evil as you are,
 know well enough how to give your children
 what is good for them, is not your
 Father in heaven much more ready to give
 wholesome gifts to those who ask him?

Do to other men all that you would have
 them do to you; that is the law and the
 prophets.

Make your way in by the narrow gate. It
 is a broad gate and a wide road that leads
 on to perdition, and those who go in that
 way are many indeed; but how small is the
 gate, how narrow the road that leads on to
 life, and how few there are that find it!

Be on your guard against false prophets,
 men who come to you in sheep's clothing,
 but are ravenous wolves within. You will
 know them by the fruit they yield. Can
 grapes be plucked from briers, or figs from
 thistles? So, indeed, any sound tree will
 bear good fruit, while any tree that is
 withered will bear fruit that is worthless;
 that worthless fruit should come from a
 sound tree, or good fruit from a withered
 tree, is impossible. Any tree which does
 not bear good fruit is cut down, and thrown
 into the fire. I say therefore, it is by their
 fruit that you will know them. The king-
 dom of heaven will not give entrance to

¹ 'Height'; the Greek word here used can also mean 'length of life'; and some have thought that 'cubit' is used, by a metaphor, for a short space of time.

every man who calls me Master, Master; only to the man that does the will of my Father who is in heaven. There are many who will say to me, when that day comes, Master, Master, was it not in thy name we prophesied? Was it not in thy name that we performed many miracles? Whereupon I will tell them openly, You were never friends of mine; depart from me, you that traffic in wrong-doing.

Whoever, then, hears these commandments of mine and carries them out, is like a wise man who built his house upon rock; and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall; it was founded upon rock. But whoever hears these commandments of mine and does not carry them out is like a fool, who built his house upon sand; and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

Afterwards, when Jesus had finished these sayings, the multitudes found themselves amazed at his teaching. For he taught them, not like their scribes and Pharisees, but like one who had authority.

8 A great multitude followed him when he had come down from the mountain; and now, a leper came and knelt before him, and said, Lord, if it be thy will, thou hast power to make me clean. Jesus held out his hand and touched him, and said, It is my will; be thou made clean. Whereupon his leprosy was immediately cleansed. Then Jesus said, Be sure thou dost not tell any man of it; rather go and shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift which Moses ordained, to make the truth known to them.¹

As he entered Capharnaum, a centurion came to him, asking for his aid; Lord, he said, I have a servant lying sick at my house, cruelly tormented with the palsy. Jesus said to him, I will come and heal him. But the centurion answered, Lord, I am not worthy to receive thee under my roof; my servant will be healed if thou wilt only speak a word of command. I too

know what it is to obey authority; I have soldiers under me, and I say, Go, to one man, and he goes, or, Come, to another, and he comes, or, Do this, to my servant, and he does it. When he heard that, Jesus said to his followers in amazement, Believe me, I have not found faith like this, even in Israel. And this I tell you, that there are many who will come from the east and from the west, and will take their places in the kingdom of God with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, while that kingdom's own sons are cast into the darkness without, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And to the centurion Jesus said, Go then; let it be done to thee as thy faith foretold. And at that hour his servant was healed.²

And Jesus went into Peter's house, and found his wife's mother lying sick there with a fever. He touched her hand, and the fever left her, so that she rose up and ministered to them. And when evening came, they brought to him many persons who were possessed; and he cast out the evil spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick, in fulfilment of the word spoken by Isaiah the prophet, He took our infirmities upon himself, and bore our sicknesses.³

And now, seeing how great were the multitudes about him, he gave the word for crossing to the other side. Whereupon one of the scribes came to him, and said, Master, I will follow thee wherever thou art going. But Jesus told him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their resting-places; the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. And another of his disciples said to him, Lord, give me leave to go home and bury my father before I come. But to him Jesus said, Do thou follow me, and leave the dead to bury their dead.⁴ So he took ship, and his disciples followed him. And suddenly a great storm arose on the sea, so that the waves rose high over the ship; but he lay asleep. And his disciples came and roused him, crying, Lord, save us, we are sinking. But Jesus said to them, Why are you faint-hearted, men of little faith? Then he rose up, and checked the winds,

¹ vv. 2-4: Mk. 1. 40; Lk. 5. 12. v. 4: Lev. 14. 2. 1. 30; 1 k. 4. 38. v. 17: Is. 53. 4.

² vv. 5-13: Lk. 7. 1. ³ vv. 14-17: Mk. 9. 57. v. 22: Some think that the father was still alive, and the son wanted to defer his following of Christ until his father's death. Our Lord's answer is perhaps simply meant to imply that true life can only be found in following him.

27 and the sea, and there was deep calm. So that all asked in amazement, What kind of man is this, who is obeyed even by the winds and the sea?

28 So he reached the other shore, in the country of the Gerasenes; and here he was met by two possessed creatures who came out of the rock tombs, so exceedingly fierce
29 that none could pass along that road. And at once they cried aloud, Why dost thou meddle with us, Jesus, Son of God? Hast thou come here to torment us before the appointed time? Some distance away, a
30 great herd of swine was feeding; and the devils asked a favour of him; If thou hast a mind to cast us out, they said, send us
31 into the herd of swine. He said to them, Away with you; and they came out and went into the herd of swine; and with that, all the herd rushed down the cliff into the
32 sea, and perished in its waters. The swine-herds fled to the city, and there told all that had happened and the story of those who
33 had been possessed. And thereupon all the townspeople went out to meet Jesus; and when they found him, they entreated him to leave their country.¹

9 So he took ship across the sea, and came to his own city. And now they brought before him a man who was palsied and bed-ridden; whereupon Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the palsied man, Son, take courage, thy sins are forgiven. And at this, some of the scribes said to themselves,
4 He is talking blasphemously. Jesus read their minds, and said, Why do you cherish
5 wicked thoughts in your hearts? Tell me, which command is more lightly given, to say to a man, Thy sins are forgiven, or to
6 say, Rise up, and walk?² And now, to convince you that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins while he is on earth (here he spoke to the palsied man),
7 Rise up, take thy bed with thee, and go home. And he rose up, and went back to
8 his house, so that the multitudes were filled with awe at seeing it, and praised God for giving such powers to men.³
9 As he passed further on his way, Jesus

saw a man called Matthew sitting at work in the customs-house, and said to him, Follow me; and Matthew rose from his place and followed him. And afterwards, when he was taking a meal in the house, many publicans and sinners were to be found at table with him and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this, and asked his disciples, How comes it that your master eats with publicans and sinners? Jesus heard it, and said, It is not those who are in health that have need of the physician, it is those who are sick. Go home and find out what the words mean, It is mercy that wins favour with me, not sacrifice. I have come to call sinners, not the just.⁴

Then John's disciples came to him, and asked, How is it that thy disciples do not fast, when we and the Pharisees fast so often? To them Jesus said, Can you expect the men of the bridegroom's company to go mourning, while the bridegroom is still with them? No, the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them; then they will fast. Nobody uses a piece of new cloth to patch an old cloak; that would take away from the cloak all its pattern, and make the rent in it worse than before.⁵ Nor is new wine put into old wine-skins; if that is done, the skins burst, and there is the wine spilt and the skins spoiled. If the wine is new, it is put into fresh wine-skins, and so both are kept safe.⁶

While he thus spoke to them, it chanced that one of the rulers came and knelt before him, and said, Lord, my daughter is this moment dead; come now and lay thy hand on her, and she will live. So Jesus rose up and went after him, and so did his disciples. And now a woman who for twelve years had been troubled with an issue of blood, came up behind him and touched the hem of his cloak; she said to herself, If I can even touch the hem of his cloak, I shall be healed. Jesus turned and caught sight of her; and he said, Have no fear, my daughter, thy faith has brought thee healing. And the woman recovered her health from that hour. So Jesus came into the ruler's house, where he found mourners

¹ *vv.* 23-34; *Mk.* 4. 35; *Lk.* 8. 22. Only St Matthew mentions the second demoniac, who may have been a woman. ² 'Is more lightly given', in the sense that one who falsely claims to cure disease will (unlike the pretender to spiritual powers) be exposed by failure. ³ *vv.* 1-8; *Mk.* 2. 1.

⁴ *vv.* 9-13; *Mk.* 2. 13; *Lk.* 5. 27. *v.* 13; *Os.* 6. 6. ⁵ 'All its pattern', this is probably the sense of the Latin; the Greek has, 'the new piece draws away threads from the old'. ⁶ *vv.* 14-17; *Mk.* 2. 18; *Lk.* 5. 33.

playing the flute, and the multitude thronging noisily; and he said, Make room there; the child is not dead, she is asleep; and they laughed aloud at him. But when the multitude had been turned away, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she rose up. And the story of these doings spread abroad through all the country round.¹

As Jesus was passing further on his way, he was followed by two blind men, who cried aloud, Son of David, have pity on us. These blind men came to him when he had gone into his lodging, and Jesus said to them, Have you the faith to believe that I can do this? And they said to him, Yes, Lord. Thereupon, he touched their eyes, and said, Your faith shall not be disappointed. Then their eyes were opened; and Jesus laid a strict charge on them, telling them, Be sure nobody hears of this. But they had no sooner gone out than they talked of him in all the country round. And it chanced that, as they were going, a dumb man was brought to him, possessed with a devil. The devil was cast out, and the dumb man found speech; at which the multitudes were filled with amazement; Nothing like this, they said, was ever seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, It is the prince of the devils that enables him to cast the devils out.

So Jesus went about all their cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every kind of disease and infirmity. Yet still, when he looked at the multitudes, he was moved with pity for them, seeing them harried and abject, like sheep that have no shepherd. Thereupon he said to his disciples, The harvest is plentiful enough, but the labourers are few; you must ask the Lord to whom the harvest belongs to send labourers out for the harvesting.

10 So he called his twelve disciples to him, and gave them authority to cast out unclean spirits, and to heal every kind of disease and infirmity. These are the names of the twelve apostles; first, Simon, also called Peter, then his brother Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and his brother

John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the publican, James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot, the traitor.²

These twelve Jesus sent out; but first gave them their instructions; Do not go, he said, into the walks of the Gentiles, or enter any city of Samaria; go rather to the lost sheep that belong to the house of Israel. And preach as you go, telling them, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils: give as you have received the gift, without payment. Do not provide gold or silver or copper to fill your purses, nor a wallet for the journey, no second coat, no spare shoes or staff; the labourer has a right to his maintenance. Whenever you enter a city or a village, find out who is worthy to be your host, and make your lodging there until you go away. When you enter this house, you are to wish it well; and so, if the house is worthy, your good wishes shall come down upon it; if unworthy, let them come back to you the way they went. And wherever they will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that city or that house; I promise you, it shall go less hard with the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah at the day of judgement, than with that city.

Remember, I am sending you out to be like sheep among wolves; you must be wary, then, as serpents, and yet innocent as doves. Do not put your trust in men; they will hand you over to courts of judgement, and scourge you in their synagogues; yes, and you will be brought before governors and kings on my account, so that you can bear witness before them, and before the Gentiles. Only, when they hand you over thus, do not consider anxiously what you are to say or how you are to say it; words will be given you when the time comes; it is not you who speak, it is the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you. Brothers will be given up to execution by their brothers, and children by their fathers; children will rise up against their parents and will compass their deaths, and you will be hated by all men because you bear my name; that man will

¹ *vv.* 18-26; *Mk.* 5. 22; *Lk.* 8. 41. It seems likely that St Matthew has here combined two separate appeals made by the ruler of the synagogue.

² *vv.* 1-4; *Mk.* 3. 13; *Lk.* 6. 13.

23 be saved, who endures to the last. Only, if they persecute you in one city, take refuge in another; I promise you, the Son of Man will come, before your task with the cities of Israel is ended.

24 A disciple is no better than his master, 25 a servant than his lord; enough that the disciple should fare like his master, the servant like his lord. If they have cried Beelzebub at the master of the house, they will do it much more readily to the men of 26 his household. Do not, then, be afraid of them. What is veiled will all be revealed, 27 what is hidden will all be known; what I have said to you under cover of darkness, you are to utter in the light of day; what has been whispered in your ears, you are 28 to proclaim on the house-tops. And there is no need to fear those who kill the body, but have no means of killing the soul; fear him more, who has the power to ruin body 29 and soul in hell. Are not sparrows sold two for a penny? And yet it is impossible for one of them to fall to the ground without 30 your heavenly Father's will. And as for you, he takes every hair of your head into his reckoning. Do not be afraid, then; you 31 count for more than a host of sparrows. 32 And now, whoever acknowledges me before men, I too will acknowledge him before my Father who is in heaven; and whoever disowns me before men, before my Father in heaven I too will disown him.

34 Do not imagine that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have come to 35 bring a sword, not peace. I have come to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter with her mother, and the daughter-in-law with her mother-in-law; 36 a man's enemies will be the people of his own house. He is not worthy of me, that 37 loves father or mother more; he is not worthy of me, that loves son or daughter 38 more; he is not worthy of me, that does not take up his cross and follow me. He who 39 secures¹ his own life will lose it; it is the man who loses his life for my sake that will 40 secure it. He who gives you welcome,

gives me welcome too; and he who gives me welcome gives welcome to him that sent me. He who gives a prophet the welcome due to a prophet shall receive the reward given to prophets; and he who gives a just man the welcome due to a just man shall receive the reward given to just men. And if a man gives so much as a draught of cold water to one of the least of these here, because he is a disciple of mine, I promise you, he shall not miss his reward.²

11 When Jesus had done giving instructions to his twelve disciples, he left the place where he was, to teach and preach in their cities. Now John had heard in his prison of Christ's doings, and he sent two of his disciples to him; Is it thy coming that was foretold, he asked, or are we yet waiting for some other? Jesus answered them, Go and tell John what your own ears and eyes have witnessed; how the blind see, and the lame walk, how the lepers are made clean, and the deaf hear, how the dead are raised to life, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.³ Blessed is the man who does not lose confidence in me.

As they went out, Jesus took occasion to speak of John to the multitudes; What was it, he asked, that you expected to see when you went out into the wilderness? Was it a reed trembling in the wind? No, not that; what was it you went out to see? Was it a man clad in silk? You must look in kings' palaces for men that go clad in silk. What was it, then, that you went out to see? A prophet? Yes, and something more, I tell you, than a prophet. This is the man of whom it was written, Behold, I am sending before thee that angel of mine, who is to prepare the way for thy coming.⁴ Believe me, God has raised up no greater son of woman than John the Baptist; and yet to be least in the kingdom of heaven is to be greater than he.⁵ Ever since John the Baptist's time, the kingdom of heaven has opened to force; and the forceful are even

¹ 'Secures his life', by denying his faith under persecution, or otherwise making terms with the world at the expense of his own conscience.

² *Ev.* 5-42; *Lk.* 9. 1-6 and 10. 2-16.

³ *Is.* 35. 5. ⁴ *Mal.* 3. 1; where, however, our text reads, 'I am sending my messenger (or angel), who is to prepare the way before me'.

⁵ St John the Baptist, as the final product of the old Dispensation, is less than the least of those who enjoy the blessings of the new. Like the Patriarchs, he only looked forward to the world's redemption as something that lay in the future (verse 13) by the light of hope (*Heb.* 11. 13), and died before its accomplishment (*Mt.* 13. 17), instead of being able to press into the Kingdom of heaven like the common sort of Christians (verse 12).

3 now making it their prize; whereas all the prophets and the law, before John's time, could only speak of things that were to come. And this I tell you, if you will make room for it in your minds, that he is that Elias whose coming was prophesied.¹

5 Listen, you that have ears to hear with.
6 As for this generation, to what shall I compare it? It reminds me of those children who call out to their companions as they sit in the market-place, and say, You would not dance when we piped to you, or beat the breast when we wept to you. When John came, he would neither eat nor drink, and they say of him that he is possessed.
7 When the Son of Man came, he ate and drank with them, and of him they say, Here is a glutton; he loves wine; he is a friend of publicans and sinners. It is by her own children that wisdom is vindicated.²

Thereupon he took occasion to reproach for their impenitence the cities in which he had done most of his miracles: Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida: Tyre and Sidon would have repented in sackcloth and ashes long ago, if the miracles done in you had been done there instead. And I say this, that it shall go less hard with Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgement than with you. And thou, Capernaum, dost thou hope to be lifted up high as heaven? Thou shalt fall low as hell. Sodom itself, if the miracles done in thee had been done there, might have stood to this day. And I say this, that it shall go less hard with the country of Sodom at the day of judgement than with thee.

At that time Jesus said openly, Father, who art Lord of heaven and earth, I give thee praise that thou hast hidden all this from the wise and the prudent, and revealed it to little children. Be it so, Father, since this finds favour in thy sight. My Father has entrusted everything into my hands; none knows the Son truly except the Father, and none knows the Father truly except the Son, and those to whom it is the Son's good pleasure to reveal him.

¹ In Jn. 1. 21, St John the Baptist says that he is not the prophet Elias; but evidently he is speaking of his personal identity, whereas our Lord here is speaking of the office which he fulfilled. ² vv. 2-19; Lk. 7. 18. v. 19: 'Her children'; that is, those who are enlightened by the Divine wisdom. The meaning may be, that both our Lord and St John proved themselves, in different ways, 'children of wisdom', or that the common people were wiser, in this matter, than the scribes and Pharisees. ³ 1 Kg. 21. 6. ⁴ Os. 6. 6. ⁵ vv. 1-14; Mk. 2. 23; Lk. 6. 1.

Come to me, all you that labour and are burdened; I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon yourselves, and learn from me; I am gentle and humble of heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

12 At this time, Jesus was walking through the corn-fields on the sabbath day. And his disciples, who were hungry, fell to plucking the ears of corn and eating them. The Pharisees saw this, and said to him, Look, thy disciples are doing a thing which it is not lawful to do on the sabbath. Whereupon he said to them, Have you never read of what David did, when he and his followers were hungry? How he went into the tabernacle, and ate the loaves set out there before God, although neither he nor his followers, nor anyone else except the priests had a right to eat them? Or again, have you not read in the law that the priests violate the sabbath rest in the temple, and none blames them? And I tell you there is one standing here who is greater than the temple. If you had found out what the words mean, it is mercy, not sacrifice, that wins favour with me, you would not have passed judgement on the guiltless.⁴ The Son of Man has even the sabbath at his disposal. So he went on his way, and afterwards came into their synagogue. And here there was a man who had one of his hands withered; and they asked Jesus whether it was lawful to do a work of healing on the sabbath, so that they might have a charge to bring against him. But he answered, Is there a man among you that has a sheep, who would not take hold of it and pull it out, if it should fall into a pit on the sabbath? And of what value is a sheep compared to a man? There is nothing unlawful, then, in doing a work of mercy on the sabbath day. And with that he said to the man, Stretch out thy hand; and when he stretched it out, it was restored to him as sound as the other.

Thereupon the Pharisees left the synagogue, and plotted together to make away with him.⁵ Jesus was aware of this, and

withdrew from the place; great multitudes followed him, and he healed all their diseases; but he laid a strict charge on them that they should not make him known.

17 This he did to fulfil the word spoken by the prophet Isaiahs, Behold, my servant, whom I have chosen, my elect, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will lay my spirit upon him, and he shall proclaim judgement among the Gentiles. He will not protest and cry out; none shall hear his voice in the streets. He will not snap the staff that is already crushed, or put out the wick that still smoulders, until the time comes when he crowns his judgement with victory. And the Gentiles will put their trust in his name.¹

22 Then they brought to him a man possessed, who was both blind and dumb; whom he cured, giving him both speech and sight. The multitudes were filled with amazement; Can this, they asked, be no other than the Son of David? But the Pharisees said, when they heard of it, It is only through the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, that he casts the devils out. Whereupon Jesus, who knew what was in their thoughts, said to them, No kingdom can be at war with itself without being laid waste; no city or household that is at war with itself can stand firm. If it is Satan who casts Satan out, then Satan is at war with himself, and how is his kingdom to stand firm? Again, if it is through Beelzebub that I cast out devils, by what means do your own sons cast them out? It is for these, then, to pronounce judgement on you. But if, when I cast out devils, I do it through the Spirit of God, then it must be that the kingdom of God has already appeared among you. How is anyone to gain entrance into the house of a strong man and plunder his goods without first making the strong man his prisoner? Then he can plunder his house at will. He who is not with me, is against me; he who does not gather his store with me, scatters it abroad.

31 And now I tell you this; there is pardon for all the other sins and blasphemies of men, but not for blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. There is no one who blas-

phemes against the Son of Man but may find forgiveness; but for him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit there is no forgiveness, either in this world or in the world to come.² Either tell us that the tree is sound and its fruit sound, or that the tree is withered and its fruit withered; the test of the tree is in its fruit. Brood of vipers, how could you speak to good effect, wicked as you are? It is from the heart's overflow that the mouth speaks; a good man utters good words from his store of goodness, the wicked man, from his store of wickedness, can utter nothing but what is evil. And I say this, that in the day of judgement men will be brought to account for every thoughtless word they have spoken. Thy words will be matter to acquit, or matter to condemn thee.

Hereupon some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, Master, may we see a sign from thee? He answered them, The generation that asks for a sign is a wicked and unfaithful generation; the only sign that will be given it is the sign of the prophet Jonas. Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-beast, and the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineve will rise up with this generation at the day of judgement, and will leave it without excuse; for they did penance when Jonas preached to them, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south will rise up with this generation at the day of judgement, and will leave it without excuse; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

The unclean spirit, which has possessed a man and then goes out of him, walks about the desert looking for a resting-place, and finds none; and it says, I will go back to my own dwelling, from which I came out. And it comes back, to find that dwelling empty, and swept out, and neatly set in order. Thereupon, it goes away, and brings in seven other spirits more wicked than itself to bear it company, and together they enter in and settle down there; so that the last state of that man is worse than the

¹ Is. 42. 1. Our Lord went into retirement, lest it should seem that he was deliberately provoking the Pharisees to a conflict. ² *ev.* 22-32; *Mk.* 3. 22; *Lk.* 11. 14. *v.* 32. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is most commonly understood as resisting the known truth.

first. So it shall fare with this wicked generation.¹

6 While he was still speaking to the multitude, it chanced that his mother and his brethren were standing without, desiring
7 speech with him. And someone told him, Here are thy mother and thy brethren
8 standing without, looking for thee. But he made answer to the man that brought him the news, Who is a mother, who are brethren, to me? Then he stretched out his hand towards his disciples, and said, Here
9 are my mother and my brethren! If anyone does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.²

13 That day, leaving the house, Jesus had sat down by the sea-shore, and great multitudes gathered about him, so that he went on board a ship and sat there instead, while the whole multitude remained standing on the beach. And he spoke to them long, in parables; Here, he began, is the sower gone out to sow. And as he sowed, there were grains that fell beside the path, so that all the birds came and ate them up. And others fell on rocky land, where the soil was shallow; they sprang up all at once, because they had not sunk deep in the ground; but as soon as the sun rose they were parched; they had taken no root, and so they withered away. Some fell among briars, so that the briars grew up, and smothered them. But others fell where the soil was good, and these yielded a harvest, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Listen, you that have ears to hear with.

And his disciples came to him, and said, Why dost thou speak to them in parables? Because, he answered, it is granted to you to understand the secrets of God's kingdom, but not to these others. If a man is rich, gifts will be made to him, and his riches will abound; if he is poor, even the

little he has will be taken from him. And if I talk to them in parables, it is because, though they have eyes, they cannot see, and though they have ears, they cannot hear or understand. Indeed, in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, You will listen and listen, but for you there is no understanding; you will watch and watch, but for you there is no perceiving. The heart of this people has become dull, their ears are slow to listen, and they keep their eyes shut, so that they may never see with those eyes, or hear with those ears, or understand with that heart, and turn back to me, and win healing from me.³

But blessed are your eyes, for they have sight; blessed are your ears, for they have hearing. And, believe me, there have been many prophets and just men who have longed to see what you see, and never saw it, to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

The parable of the sower, then, is for your hearing. Wherever a man hears the word by which the kingdom is preached, but does not grasp it, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart; his was the wayside sowing. The man who took in the seed in rocky ground is the man who hears the word and at once entertains it gladly; but there is no root in him, and he does not last long; no sooner does tribulation or persecution arise over the word, than his faith is shaken. And the man who took in the seed in the midst of briars is the man who hears the word, but allows the cares of this world and the false charms of riches to stifle it, so that it remains fruitless. Whereas the man who took in the seed in good soil is the man who both hears and grasps it; such men are fruitful, one grain yielding a hundredfold, one sixtyfold, one thirtyfold.⁴

And he put before them another parable; Here is an image, he said, of the kingdom

¹ *vv.* 43-45; *Lk.* 11. 24. Our Lord perhaps means that the Jews, who had received the law and yet resisted the gospel, were in an even more unhappy state than the Gentiles, who had hitherto found no remedy against sin. He seems to warn us, that the soul which has received great graces and does not correspond with them will make the worst shipwreck of its fortunes.

² *vv.* 46-50; *Mk.* 3. 31; *Lk.* 8. 19. Since it is impossible for anyone who holds the Catholic tradition to suppose that our Lord had brothers by blood, the most common opinion is that these "brethren" were his cousins; a relationship for which the Jews had no separate name (cf. *Gen.* 29. 12; *Lev.* 10. 4). Our Lord here warns his fellow countrymen that they will not be reckoned as his "brothers" unless they obey the will of their Father and his (cf. *Mt.* 21. 28).

³ *vv.* 14, 15; *Is.* 6. 9. Our Lord seems to tone down the language of this prophecy, perhaps for fear it might seem that the failure of the Jews to grasp his message was due to some arbitrary decree of heaven, not to their own fault.

⁴ *vv.* 1-23; *Mk.* 4. 1; *Lk.* 8. 4.

of heaven. There was a man who sowed his
 25 field with clean seed; but while all the
 world was asleep, an enemy of his came
 and scattered tares among the wheat, and
 26 was gone. So, when the blade had sprung
 up and come into ear, the tares, too, came
 27 to light; and the farmer's men went to him
 and said, Sir, was it not clean seed thou
 didst sow in thy field? How comes it, then,
 28 that there are tares in it? He said, An
 enemy has done it. And his men asked
 him, Wouldst thou then have us go and
 29 gather them up? But he said, No; or per-
 haps while you are gathering the tares you
 will root up the wheat with them. Leave
 them to grow side by side till harvest, and
 when harvest-time comes I will give the
 word to the reapers, Gather up the tares
 first, and tie them in bundles to be burned,
 and store the wheat in my barn.
 31 Then he put before them another
 parable. The kingdom of heaven, he said, is
 like a grain of mustard seed, that a man has
 32 taken and sowed in his ground; of all seeds,
 none is so little, but when it grows up it is
 greater than any garden herb; it grows into
 a tree, so that all the birds come and settle
 33 in its branches.¹ And he told them still
 another parable, The kingdom of heaven is
 like leaven, that a woman has taken and
 buried away in three measures of meal,
 34 enough to leaven the whole batch. All this
 Jesus said to the multitude in parables, and
 would say it in parables only, so fulfilling
 35 the words which were spoken by the pro-
 phet, I will speak my mind in parables, I
 will give utterance to things which have
 been kept secret from the beginning of the
 world.²
 36 Then he sent the multitude away, and
 went back into the house. There his dis-
 ciples came to him, and said, Explain to us
 37 the parable of the tares in the field. He
 answered, It is the Son of Man that sows
 the good seed. The field is the world, and
 38 the sons of the kingdom are the good seed;
 the sons of the wicked one are the tares.
 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil,
 and the end of the world is the harvest; it
 40 is reaped by the angels. The tares were
 gathered together and burned in the fire,
 and so it will be when the world is brought

to an end; the Son of Man will give charge
 to his angels, and they will gather up all
 that gives offence in his kingdom, all those
 who do wickedly in it, and will cast them
 into the furnace of fire, where there will be
 weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Then, at
 last, the just will shine out, clear as the sun,
 in their Father's kingdom.³ Listen, you
 that have ears to hear with.

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure
 hidden in a field; a man has found it and
 hidden it again, and now, for the joy it
 gives him, is going home to sell all that he
 has and buy that field. Again, the kingdom
 of heaven is as if a trader were looking for
 rare pearls: and now he has found one
 pearl of great cost, and has sold all that he
 had and bought it. Again, the kingdom of
 heaven is like a net that was cast into the
 sea, and enclosed fish of every kind at once:
 when it was full, the fishermen drew it up,
 and sat down on the beach, where they
 stored all that was worth keeping in their
 buckets, and threw the useless kind away.
 So it will be when the world is brought to
 an end; the angels will go out and separate
 the wicked from the just, and will cast
 them into the furnace of fire, where there
 will be weeping, and gnashing of teeth.
 Have you grasped all this? Yes, Lord,
 they said to him. And he said to them,
 Every scholar, then, whose learning is
 of the kingdom of heaven must be like
 a rich man, who knows how to bring both
 new and old things out of his treasure-
 house.⁴

Afterwards, when he had finished these
 parables, Jesus journeyed on, and came to
 his own country-side, where he taught
 them in their synagogue; so that they said
 in astonishment, How did he come by this
 wisdom, and these strange powers? Is not
 this the carpenter's son, whose mother is
 called Mary, and his brethren James and
 Joseph and Simon and Judas? And do not
 his sisters, all of them, live near us? How
 is it that all this has come to him? And
 they had no confidence in him. But Jesus
 told them, It is only in his own country,
 in his own home, that a prophet goes un-
 honoured. Nor did he do many miracles
 there, because of their unbelief.⁵

¹ Cf. Mk. 4. 30; Lk. 13. 18.

² Ps. 77. 2.
 he must learn, on the principles laid down in the
 Church of the Jews and the new Church of Christ.

³ Wis. 3. 7.

⁴ Perhaps in the sense that
 foregoing parables, the difference between the old
⁵ vv. 54-58: Mk. 6. 1; Lk. 4. 16; Jn. 6. 42.

14 At this time Herod, who ruled in that quarter, heard what was told of Jesus. And he said to his men, This is no other than John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead, and that is why these powers are active in him. For Herod himself had arrested John and put him in chains and thrown him into prison, for love of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because John told him, It is wrong for thee to take her. And he would willingly have put him to death, but was prevented by fear of the multitude, who looked upon John as a prophet. Then, at the celebration of Herod's birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced before them all, and Herod was so well pleased with her that he promised, on oath, to grant her whatever request she made. She had been prompted beforehand by her mother; Give me, she said, the head of John the Baptist; give it me here on a dish. And the king was stricken with remorse; but, out of respect for his oath and for those who sat with him at table, he granted her request, and so had John beheaded in his prison. His head was brought in on a dish, and given to the girl, and she carried it off to her mother. But his disciples gained access to the body, which they took away and buried, and came to tell the news to Jesus.¹

13 Jesus, when he had heard it, took ship from the place where he was, and withdrew into desert country, to be alone; but the multitudes from the towns heard of it, and followed him there by land. So, when he disembarked, he found a great multitude there, and he took pity on them, and healed those who were sick. And now it was evening, and his disciples came to him and said, This is a lonely place, and it is past the accustomed hour; give the multitudes leave to go into the villages and buy themselves food there. But Jesus told them, There is no need for them to go away; it is for you to give them food to eat. They answered, We have nothing with us, except five loaves and two fishes. Bring them to me here, he said; then he told the multitudes to sit down on the grass, and when the five loaves and the two fishes were brought to him he looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave

them to his disciples; and the disciples gave them to the multitude. All ate and had enough, and when they picked up what was left of the broken pieces they filled twelve baskets with them; about five thousand men had eaten, not reckoning women and children.²

As soon as this was done, he prevailed upon his disciples to take ship and cross to the other side before him, leaving him to send the multitudes home. When he had finished sending them home, he went up by himself on to the hill-side, to pray there; twilight had come, and he remained there alone. Meanwhile the ship was already half-way across the sea, hard put to it by the waves, for the wind was against them. And then, when the night had reached its fourth quarter, Jesus came to them, walking on the sea. When they saw him walking on the sea, the disciples were terrified; they said, It is an apparition, and cried out for fear. But all at once Jesus spoke to them; Take courage, he said, it is myself; do not be afraid.³ And Peter answered him, Lord, if it is thyself, bid me come to thee over the water. He said, Come; and Peter let himself down out of the ship and walked over the water to reach Jesus. Then, seeing how strong the wind was, he lost courage and began to sink; whereupon he cried aloud, Lord, save me. And Jesus at once stretched out his hand and caught hold of him, saying to him, Why didst thou hesitate, man of little faith? So they went on board the ship, and thereupon the wind dropped. And the ship's crew came and said, falling at his feet, Thou art indeed the Son of God.

When they had crossed, they reached the country of Genesar; and the inhabitants of that place, recognizing him, sent into all the country round, and brought to him all those who were in affliction; and they entreated him that they might be allowed to touch even the hem of his garments. And everyone who touched him was restored to health.⁴

15 After this, Jesus was approached by the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem, who asked: Why is it that thy disciples violate the traditions of our

¹ vv. 1-12: Mk. 6. 14; Lk. 9. 7.
Mk. 6. 45.

² vv. 13-21: Mk. 6. 31; Lk. 9. 10; Jn. 6. 3.

³ vv. 22-27:

ancestors? They do not wash their hands when they eat. He answered them, Why is it that you yourselves violate the commandment of God with your traditions? God has said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and again, He who curses his father or mother dies without hope of re-
 5
 6
 7
 8
 9
 10
 11
 12
 13
 14
 15
 16
 17
 18
 19
 20
 21
 22

naanite by birth, who came from that country, cried aloud, Have pity on me, Lord, thou son of David. My daughter is cruelly troubled by an evil spirit. He gave her no word in answer; but his disciples came to him and pleaded with him; and of her, they said, she is following us with her cries. And he answered, My errand is only to the lost sheep that are of the house of Israel. Then the woman came up and said, falling at his feet, Lord, help me. He answered, It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs. Ah yes, Lord, she said; the dogs feed on the crumbs that fall from their masters' table. And at that Jesus answered her, Woman, for this great faith of thine, let thy will be granted. And from that hour her daughter was cured.¹

Then Jesus left that country, and passed along the sea of Galilee, and went up into the mountain and sat down there. Great multitudes came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the deaf, the crippled, and many besides, whom they laid at his feet; and he healed them: so that the multitudes were amazed to find the dumb speaking, the lame walking, and the blind recovering their sight; and they praised the God of Israel for it.

But now Jesus called his disciples, and said, I am moved with pity for the multitude; it is three days now since they have been in attendance on me, and they have nothing to eat. I must not send them away fasting, or perhaps they will grow faint on their journey. His disciples said to him, Where could we find loaves enough in a desert to feed such a multitude? And Jesus asked them, How many loaves have you? Seven, they said, and a few small fishes. Thereupon he bade the multitude sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves and the fishes with them, and when he had blessed and broken he gave these to his disciples, and his disciples to the multitude. And they all ate and had enough, and they took up what was left of the broken pieces, seven hampers full. Four thousand men had eaten, not reckoning women and children. And so, taking leave

¹ Ex. 20. 12; Deut. 5. 16. Ex. 21. 17; Lev. 20. 9; Prov. 20. 20.

² There is much uncertainty about the text and the meaning here. But, since the Hebrews used the word 'honour' to imply a gift of money (cf. Eccles. 38. 1; 1 Tim. 5. 3) it is clear that our Lord refers to some shift by which sons were allowed to neglect the support of their parents. This was done, it appears, by a real or pretended consecration of themselves to God.

³ Is. 29. 13.

⁴ *vv.* 1-28: Mk. 7. 1.

of the multitude, he went on board the ship, and crossed to the region of Magadan.¹

16 And the Pharisees and Sadducees came and put him to the test, asking him to shew them a sign from heaven. But he answered them, When evening comes, you say, It is fair weather, the sky is red;² or at sunrise, There will be a storm to-day, the sky is red and lowering. You know, then, how to read the face of heaven; can you not read the signs of appointed times? It is a wicked and unfaithful generation that asks for a sign; the only sign that will be given to it is the sign of the prophet Jonas. And so he went on his way and left them.

And they crossed the sea, and his disciples found that they had forgotten to take bread with them. So, when Jesus said to them, See that you have nothing to do with the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, they were anxious in their minds; We have brought no bread, they said. Jesus knew it, and said to them, Men of little faith, what is this anxiety in your minds, that you have brought no bread with you? Have you no wits even now, or have you forgotten the five thousand and their five loaves, and the number of baskets you filled? Or the four thousand and their seven loaves, and the number of hampers you filled then? How could you suppose that I was thinking of bread, when I said, Have nothing to do with the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? Then they understood that his warning was against the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, not against leavened bread.

Then Jesus came into the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi; and there he asked his disciples, What do men say of the Son of Man? Who do they think he is? Some say John the Baptist, they told him, others Elias, others again, Jeremy or one of the prophets. Jesus said to them, And what of you? Who do you say that I am? Then Simon Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.³ And Jesus answered him, Blessed art thou, Simon son of Jona; it is not flesh and blood, it is my Father in heaven that has revealed

this to thee. And I tell thee this in my turn, that thou art Peter, and it is upon this rock that I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then he strictly forbade them to tell any man that he, Jesus, was the Christ.

From that time onwards Jesus began to make it known to his disciples that he must go up to Jerusalem, and there, with much ill usage from the chief priests and elders and scribes, must be put to death, and rise again on the third day. Whereupon Peter, drawing him to his side, began remonstrating with him; Never, Lord, he said; no such thing shall befall thee. At which he turned round and said to Peter, Back, Satan; thou art a stone in my path; for these thoughts of thine are man's, not God's. Jesus also said to his disciples, If any man has a mind to come my way, let him renounce self, and take up his cross, and follow me. The man who tries to save his life shall lose it; it is the man who loses his life for my sake that will secure it. How is a man the better for it, if he gains the whole world at the cost of losing his own soul? For a man's soul, what price can be high enough? The Son of Man will come hereafter in his Father's glory with his angels about him; and he will recompense everyone, then, according to his works. Believe me, there are those standing here who will not taste of death before they have seen the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.⁴

17 Six days afterwards Jesus took Peter and James and his brother John with him, and led them up on to a high mountain where they were alone. And he was transfigured in their presence, his face shining like the sun, and his garments becoming white as snow; and all at once they had sight of Moses and Elias conversing with him. Then Peter said aloud to Jesus, Lord, it is well that we should be here; if it pleases thee, let us make three abourns in this place, one for

¹ *vv.* 32-39; *Mk.* 8. 1. ² *vv.* 1-2; *Mk.* 8. 11. *Mk.* 8. 30; *Lk.* 9. 21.

³ *vv.* 13-16; *Mk.* 8. 27; *Lk.* 9. 18. ⁴ *vv.* 20-28;

thee, one for Moses and one for Elias.
 5 Even before he had finished speaking, a shining cloud overshadowed them. And now, there was a voice which said to them out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; to him, then,
 6 listen. The disciples, when they heard it, fell on their faces, overcome with fear; but
 7 Jesus came near and roused them with his touch; Arise, he said, do not be afraid.
 8 And they lifted up their eyes, and saw no man there but Jesus only.

9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus warned them, Do not tell anybody of what you have seen, until the
 10 Son of Man has risen from the dead. And his disciples asked him, Tell us, why is it that the scribes say Elias must come before
 11 Christ? He answered, Elias must needs come and restore all things as they were; but I tell you this, that Elias has come already, and they did not recognize him, but misused him at their pleasure, just as the Son of Man is to suffer at their hands.¹
 12 Then the disciples understood that he had been speaking to them of John the Baptist.

13 When they reached the multitude, a man came up and knelt before him: Lord, he said, have pity on my son, who is a lunatic, and in great affliction; he will often throw himself into the fire, and often into water.
 14 I brought him here to thy disciples, but they have not been able to cure him. Jesus answered, Ah, faithless and misguided generation, how long must I be with you, how long must I bear with you? Bring
 15 him here before me. And Jesus checked him with a word, and the devil came out of him; and from that hour the boy was cured.
 16 Afterwards, when they were alone, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, Why was it that we could not cast it out? Jesus said to them, Because you had no faith. I promise you, if you have faith, though it be but like a grain of mustard seed, you have only to say to this mountain, Remove from this place to that, and it will remove; nothing will be impossible to you. But there is no way of casting out such spirits as this except by prayer and fasting.

17 While they were still together in Galilee, Jesus told them, The Son of Man is to be given up into the hands of men. They will

put him to death, and he will rise again on the third day. And they were overcome with sorrow.²

And when they reached Capharnaum, the collectors of the Temple pence approached Peter, and asked, Does not your master pay the Temple pence? Yes, he said. Soon afterwards he came into the house, and Jesus forestalled him; Simon, he said, tell us what thou thinkest; on whom do earthly kings impose customs and taxes, on their own sons, or on strangers? On strangers, Peter told him; and Jesus said to him, Why then, the children go free. But we will not hurt their consciences; go down to the sea, and cast thy hook; take out the first fish thou drawest up, and when thou hast opened its mouth thou wilt find a silver coin there; with this make payment to them for me and for thyself.

18 The disciples came to Jesus at this time and said, Tell us, who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Whereupon Jesus called to his side a little child, to whom he gave a place in the midst of them, and said, Believe me, unless you become like little children again, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. He is greatest in the kingdom of heaven who will abase himself like this little child. He who gives welcome to such a child as this in my name, gives welcome to me.³ And if anyone hurts the conscience of one of these little ones, that believe in me, he had better have been drowned in the depths of the sea, with a mill-stone hung about his neck. Woe to the world, for the hurt done to consciences! It must needs be that such hurt should come, but woe to the man through whom it comes! If thy hand or thy foot is an occasion of falling to thee, cut it off and cast it away from thee; better for thee to enter into life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet when thou art cast into eternal fire. And if thy eye is an occasion of falling to thee, pluck it out and cast it away from thee; better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than to have two eyes when thou art cast into the fires of hell. See to it that you do not treat one of these little ones with contempt: I tell you, they have angels of their own in

¹ See p. 11, note 1.² *vv.* 1-22: Mk. 9. 1; Lk. 9. 28.³ *vv.* 1-5: Mk. 9. 32; Lk. 9. 46

heaven, that behold the face of my heavenly Father continually. The Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. Tell me this, if a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave those ninety-nine others on the mountain-side, and go out to look for the one that is straying? And if, by good fortune, he finds it, he rejoices more, believe me, over that one, than over the ninety-nine which never strayed from him. So too it is not your heavenly Father's pleasure that one of these little ones should be lost.

If thy brother does thee wrong,¹ go at once and tax him with it, as a private matter between thee and him; and so, if he will listen to thee, thou hast won thy brother. If he will not listen to thee, take with thee one or two more, that the whole matter may be certified by the voice of two or three witnesses. If he will not listen to them, then speak of it to the church; and if he will not even listen to the church, then count him all one with the heathen and the publican. I promise you, all that you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and all that you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. And moreover I tell you, that if two of you agree over any request that you make on earth, it will be granted them by my Father who is in heaven. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them.

Then Peter came to him and asked, Lord, how often must I see my brother do me wrong, and still forgive him; as much as seven times? Jesus said to him, I tell thee to forgive, not seven wrongs, but seventy times seven. Here is an image of the kingdom of heaven; there was a king who resolved to enter into a reckoning with his servants, and had scarcely begun the reckoning, when one was brought before him who was ten thousand talents in his debt. He had no means of making payment; whereupon his master gave orders that he should be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and so the debt should be paid. With that the servant fell at his feet and said, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee in full. And his master, moved with pity for him, let the

servant go and discharged him of his debt. So the servant went out, and met with a fellow servant of his, who owed him a hundred pieces of silver; whereupon he caught hold of him and took him by the throat, and said, Pay me all thou owest me. His fellow servant went down on his knees in entreaty; Have patience with me, he said, and I will pay thee in full. But the other refused; he went away and committed him to prison for such time as the debt was unpaid. The rest of the servants were full of indignation when they saw this done, and went in to tell their master what had happened. And so he was summoned by his master, who said to him, I remitted all that debt of thine, thou wicked servant, at thy entreaty; was it not thy duty to have mercy on thy fellow servant, as I had mercy on thee? And his master, in anger, gave him over to be tortured until the debt was paid. It is thus that my heavenly Father will deal with you, if brother does not forgive brother with all his heart.

19 Afterwards, when he had finished saying all this, Jesus removed from Galilee and came into that part of Judaea which lies beyond the Jordan. Great multitudes went with him, and he healed them there. Then the Pharisees came to him, and put him to the test by asking, Is it right for a man to put away his wife, for whatever cause? He answered, Have you never read, how he who created them, when they first came to be, created them male and female; and how he said, A man, therefore, will leave his father and mother and will cling to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?² And so they are no longer two, they are one flesh; what God, then, has joined, let not man put asunder. Why then, they said, did Moses enjoin that a man might give his wife a writ of separation, and then he might put her away?³ He told them, It was to suit your hard hearts that Moses allowed you to put your wives away; it was not so at the beginning of things. And I tell you that he who puts away his wife, not for any unfaithfulness of hers, and so marries another, commits adultery; and he too commits adultery, who marries her after she has been put

¹ 'Does thee wrong', some of the best Greek manuscripts omit the word 'thee'.
² Deut. 24. 1.

³ Gen. 2. 24.

10 away.¹ At this, his disciples said to him, If the case stands so between man and
 11 wife, it is better not to marry at all. That conclusion, he said, cannot be taken in by everybody, but only by those who have the gift.
 12 There are some eunuchs, who were so born from the mother's womb, some were made so by men, and some have made themselves so for love of the kingdom of heaven; take this in, you whose hearts are large enough for it.²

13 Then they brought children to him, so that he might lay his hands on them in prayer; and his disciples rebuked them for
 14 it. But Jesus said, Let the children be, do not keep them back from me; the kingdom
 15 of heaven belongs to such as these. And so he laid his hands on them, and went on his way.

16 And now a man came to him, and said, Master, who art so good, what good must
 17 I do to win eternal life? He said to him, Why dost thou come to me to ask of goodness? God is good, and he only. If thou hast a mind to enter into life, keep the
 18 commandments. Which commandments? he asked. Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear
 19 false witness,³ Honour thy father and thy mother, and Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. I have kept all these, the young man told him, ever since I grew up; where
 20 is it that I am still wanting? Jesus said to him, If thou hast a mind to be perfect, go home and sell all that belongs to thee; give it to the poor, and so the treasure thou hast shall be in heaven; then come back and
 21 follow me.⁴ When he heard this, the young man went away sad at heart, for he had
 22 great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, Believe me, a rich man will not enter God's kingdom easily. And once
 23 again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a man to enter the kingdom of heaven when he is
 24 rich. At hearing this, the disciples were

thrown into great bewilderment; Why then, they asked, who can be saved? Jesus
 20 fastened his eyes on them, and said to them, Such a thing is impossible to man's powers, but to God all things are possible.

Hereupon Peter took occasion to say,
 21 And what of us who have forsaken all, and followed thee; what is left for us? Jesus
 22 said to them, I promise you, in the new birth, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory, you also shall sit there on twelve thrones, you who have followed me, and shall be judges over the twelve tribes of Israel. And every man that has
 23 forsaken home, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive his reward a hundredfold, and obtain everlasting life. But many will be first that
 24 were last, and last that were first.⁵

20 Here is an image of the kingdom of heaven; a rich man went out at day-break to hire labourers for work in his vineyard; and when he sent them out into his vineyard he agreed with the labourers on a silver piece for the day's wages. About the third hour he came out again, and found others standing idle in the market-place; and to these also he said, Away with you to the vineyard like the others; you shall have whatever payment is fair. Away they went; and at noon, and once more at the ninth hour, he came out and did the like. Yet he found others standing there when he came out at the eleventh hour; How is it, he said to them, that you are standing here, and have done nothing all the day? They told him, It is because nobody has hired us; and he said, Away with you to the vineyard like the rest.

And now it was evening, and the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, Send for the workmen and pay them their wages, beginning with the last comers and going

¹ *vs.* 1-9: Mk. 10. 1; cf. Mt. 5. 32; Lk. 16. 18; 1 Cor. 7. 10. *v.* 9: The apparent exception made here in connexion with unfaithfulness, not recognized in Mark or Luke, or by St Paul, has been variously explained. It is to be observed in any case that our Lord is speaking of the man who puts away his innocent wife in order to marry another (this is often the force of the Hebrew 'and'). He considers the case of the guilty husband with the innocent wife, and that of the innocent husband with the guilty wife; not that of the man who has a guilty wife and himself wants a change of partners. Thus it would be unsafe to infer that the husband has a right to re-marry.

² This verse evidently refers to those who have a vocation to celibacy. ³ Ex. 20. 13. ⁴ Our Lord may simply have been testing the young man's resolution, or he may have been calling him to the special vocation of poverty. He does not make this demand of all, as we see in his treatment of Zacchaeus (Lk. 19. 8). ⁵ *vs.* 13-30: Mk. 10. 13; Lk. 18. 15.

9 back to the first. And so the men who were
 10 hired about the eleventh hour came for-
 ward, and each was paid a silver piece. So
 that when the others came, who were hired
 first, they hoped to receive more. But they
 were paid a silver piece each, like their
 11 fellows. And they were indignant with the
 12 rich man over their pay. Here are these
 late-comers, they said, who have worked
 but one hour, and thou hast made no dif-
 ference between them and us, who have
 13 borne the day's burden and the heat. But
 he answered one of them thus; My friend,
 I am not doing thee a wrong; did we not
 14 agree on a silver piece for thy wages? Take
 what is thy due, and away with thee; it is
 my pleasure to give as much to this late-
 15 comer as thee. Am I not free to use my
 money as I will? Must thou give me sour
 16 looks, because I am generous? So it is that
 they shall be first who were last, and they
 shall be last who were first. Many are
 called, but few are chosen.

17 And now Jesus was going up to Jeru-
 salem, and he took his twelve disciples
 18 aside on the way, and warned them, Now
 we are going up to Jerusalem; and there
 the Son of Man will be given up into the
 hands of the chief priests and scribes, who
 19 will condemn him to death. And these
 will give him up into the hands of the Gen-
 tiles, to be mocked and scourged and cru-
 cified; but on the third day he will rise
 20 again.¹ Thereupon the mother of the sons
 of Zebedee brought them to him, falling
 21 on her knees to make a request of him. And
 when he asked her, What is thy will? she
 said to him, Here are my two sons; grant
 that in thy kingdom one may take his place
 22 on thy right and the other on thy left. But
 Jesus answered, You do not know what it
 is you ask. Have you strength to drink of
 the cup I am to drink of? They said, We
 23 have. And he told them, You shall indeed
 drink of my cup; but a place on my right
 hand or my left is not mine to give; it is for
 those for whom my Father has destined it.
 24 The ten others were angry with the two
 25 brethren when they heard it; but Jesus
 called them to him, and said, You know
 that, among the Gentiles, those who bear
 rule lord it over them, and great men vaunt

their power over them; with you it must be 26
 otherwise; whoever would be a great man
 among you, must be your servant, and 27
 whoever has a mind to be first among you,
 must be your slave. So it is that the Son 28
 of Man did not come to have service
 done him; he came to serve others, and
 to give his life as a ransom for the lives of
 many.²

When they were leaving Jericho, there 29
 was a great multitude that followed him.
 And there, by the road-side, sat two blind 30
 folk, who heard of Jesus' passing by, and
 cried aloud, Lord, son of David, have pity
 on us. The multitude rebuked them, bid- 31
 ding them be silent; but they cried out all
 the more, Son of David, Lord, have pity
 on us. Then Jesus stopped, and called them 32
 to him; What would you have me do
 for you? he asked. Lord, they said to him, 33
 we would have our eyes opened. And 34
 Jesus, moved with compassion, touched
 their eyes, and immediately they recovered
 their sight, and followed after him.³

21 When they were near Jerusalem,
 and had reached Bethphage, which
 is close to mount Olivet, Jesus sent two of
 his disciples on an errand; Go into the 2
 village that faces you, he told them, and the
 first thing you will find there will be a she-
 ass tethered, and a foal at her side; untie 3
 them and bring them to me. And if anyone
 speaks to you about it, tell him, The Lord 4
 has need of them, and he will let you have
 them without more ado. All this was so
 ordained, to fulfil the word spoken by the 5
 prophet: Tell the daughter of Sion, Be-
 hold, thy king is coming to thee, humbly,
 riding on an ass, on a colt whose mother 6
 has borne the yoke.⁴ The disciples went
 and did as Jesus told them; they brought 7
 the she-ass and its colt, and saddled them
 with their garments, and bade Jesus 8
 mount. Most of the multitude spread
 their garments along the way, while others 9
 strewed the way with branches cut down
 from the trees. And the multitudes that
 went before him and that followed after
 him cried aloud, Hosanna for the son of
 David, blessed is he who comes in the
 name of the Lord, Hosanna in heaven

¹ vv. 17-19: Mk. 10. 32; Lk. 18. 31. ² vv. 20-28: Mk. 10. 35. ³ vv. 29-34: Mk. 10. 46; Lk. 18. 35. Only one blind man is mentioned in these other accounts, perhaps because only one (Bartimaeus) was well known by name at the time when the gospels were written. ⁴ Zach. 9. 9.

10 above.¹ When he reached Jerusalem, the whole city was in a stir; Who is this? they asked. And the multitude answered, This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth, in Galilee.

12 Then Jesus went into the temple of God, and drove out from it all those who sold and bought there, and overthrew the tables of the bankers, and the chairs of the pigeon-sellers; It is written, he told them, My house shall be known for a house of prayer, and you have made it into a den of 14 thieves.² And there were blind and lame men who came up to him in the temple, and he healed them there. The chief priests and scribes saw the miracles which he did, and the boys that cried aloud in the temple, Hosanna for the son of David, and they were greatly angered at it. Dost thou hear what these are saying? they asked. Yes, Jesus said to them, but have you never read the words, Thou hast made the lips of children, of infants at the breast, vocal 17 with praise?³ So he left them, and went out of the city to Bethany, where he made his lodging.

18 As he was returning to the city at day-break, he was hungry: and, seeing a fig-tree by the road-side, he went up to it, and 19 found nothing but leaves on it. And he said to it, Let no fruit ever grow on thee hereafter; whereupon the fig-tree withered 20 away. His disciples were amazed when they saw it; How suddenly it has withered 21 away! they said. Jesus answered them, I promise you, if you have faith, and do not hesitate, you will be able to do more than I have done over the fig-tree; if you say to this mountain, Remove, and be cast into 22 the sea, it will come about. If you will only believe, every gift you ask for in your prayer will be granted.⁴

23 Afterwards he came into the temple; and while he was teaching there, the chief priests and elders approached him, asking, What is the authority by which thou doest these things, and who gave thee this authority? Jesus answered them, I too have 24 a question to ask; if you can tell me the

answer, I will tell you in return what is the authority by which I do these things. Whence did John's baptism come, from 25 heaven or from men? Whereupon they cast about in their minds; If we tell him it 26 was from heaven, they said, he will ask us, Then why did you not believe him? And if we say it was from men, we have reason to be afraid of the people; they all look upon John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, We cannot tell. He, in his 27 turn, said, And you will not learn from me what is the authority by which I do these things.⁵ But tell me what you think; there 28 was a man who had two sons, and when he went up to the first, and said, Away with thee, my son, and work in my vineyard to-day, he answered; Not I, but he 29 relented afterwards and went. Then he went 30 up to the other, and said the like to him: and his answer was, I will, sir; but he did not go. Which of the two carried out his 31 father's will? The first, they said. And Jesus said to them, Believe me, the publicans and the harlots are further on the road to God's kingdom than you. John 32 came among you following all due observance, but could win no belief from you; the publicans believed him, and the harlots, but even when you saw that, you would not relent, and believe him.

Listen to another parable. There was a 33 rich man who planted a vineyard; he walled it in, and dug a wine-press and built a tower in it, and then let it out to some vine-dressers, while he went on his travels. When vintage-time drew near, he sent his 34 own servants on an errand to the vine-dressers, to claim its revenues. Whereupon 35 the vine-dressers laid hands upon his servants; one they beat, one they killed outright, one they stoned. And he sent other 36 servants on a second errand, more than he had sent at first, but they were used no better. After that, he sent his own son to 37 them; They will have reverence, he said, for my son. But when the vine-dressers 38 found his son coming to them, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come,

¹ *vv.* 1-9; *Mk.* 11. 1; *Lk.* 19. 29; *Jn.* 12. 12. It appears from these other accounts that our Lord rode on the colt, the dam being brought so as to make the colt follow more easily. The reading of the manuscripts is uncertain in verse 7. *v.* 9; *Ps.* 117. 26. ² *vv.* 12-13; *Mk.* 11. 15; *Lk.* 19. 45; *cf.* *Jn.* 2. 14. *v.* 13; *Is.* 56. 7 and *Jer.* 7. 11. ³ *Ps.* 8. 3. ⁴ *vv.* 18-22; *Mk.* 11. 12 and 20. *St. Mark* tells us that it was not yet the season for figs; our Lord, then, did not expect to satisfy his hunger. He knew that the tree was barren, even of unripe fruit, and used it as a parable of the unfaithfulness which he found in the Jewish people. ⁵ *vv.* 23-27; *Mk.* 11. 27; *Lk.* 20. 1.

let us kill him, and seize upon the inheritance. And they laid hands on him, thrust him out from the vineyard, and killed him. And now, what will the owner of the vineyard do to those vine-dressers when he returns? They said, He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will let out the vineyard to other vine-dressers, who will pay him his due when the season comes. And Jesus said to them, Have you never read those words in the scriptures, The very stone which the builders rejected has become the chief stone at the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?¹ I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and given to a people which yields the revenues that belong to it. As for the stone, when a man falls against it, he will break his bones; when it falls upon him, it will scatter him like chaff.² The chief priests and the Pharisees saw clearly, when they heard his parables, that it was of themselves he was speaking, and would gladly have laid hands on him, but they were afraid of the people, who looked upon him as a prophet.³

22 And Jesus once more spoke to them in parables; Here is an image, he said, of the kingdom of heaven; there was once a king, who held a marriage-feast for his son, and sent out his servants with a summons to all those whom he had invited to the wedding; but they would not come. Then he sent other servants with a fresh summons, bidding them tell those who had been invited, By this, I have prepared my feast, the oxen have been killed, and the fatlings, all is ready now; come to the wedding. But still they paid no heed, and went off on other errands, one to his farm in the country, and another to his trading; and the rest laid hands upon his servants, and insulted and killed them. The king fell into a rage when he heard of it, and sent out his troops to put those murderers to death, and burn their city. After this, he said to his servants,

Here is the marriage-feast all ready, and those who had been invited have proved unworthy of it. You must go out to the street-corners, and invite all whom you find there to the wedding. And his servants went out into the streets, where they mustered all they could find, rogues and honest men together; and so the wedding had its full tale of guests. But when the king came in to look at the company, he saw a man there who had no wedding-garment on;⁴ My friend, he said, how didst thou come to be here without a wedding-garment? And he made no reply. Whereupon the king said to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him out into the darkness, where there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Many are called, but few are chosen.⁵

After this the Pharisees withdrew, and plotted together, to make him betray himself in his talk. And they sent their own disciples to him, with those who were of Herod's party, and said, Master, we know well that thou art sincere, and teachest in all sincerity the way of God; that thou holdest no one in awe, making no distinction between man and man; tell us, then, is it right to pay tribute to Caesar, or not? Jesus saw their malice; Hypocrites, he said, why do you thus put me to the test? Shew me the coinage in which the tribute is paid. So they brought him a silver piece, and he asked them, Whose is this likeness? Whose name is inscribed on it? Caesar's, they said; whereupon he answered, Why then, give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. And they went away and left him in peace, full of admiration at his words.

On that day, too, he was approached with a question by the Sadducees, men who say that there is no resurrection; Master, they said, Moses told us, If a man leaves no children when he dies, his brother shall marry the widow by right of kinship, and beget children in the dead brother's name.⁶ We had seven brothers once in our country, of whom the first

¹ Ps. 117. 22; cf. Rom. 9. 33; I Pet. 2. 7.

² A stumbling-block in Christ fall upon the stone; the stone falls upon them when he pronounces judgement. ³ *vv.* 33-46; Mk. 41. 1; Lk. 20. 9; cf. Is. 5. 1.

⁴ Some have suggested that wedding garments were provided at the King's expense, but it is not certain that any such custom obtained. Like the foolish virgins (cf. 25. 3), the man had neglected to make what preparations were in his power. It is the common opinion that the wedding garment represents charity.

⁵ *vv.* 1-14: A similar parable is found in Lk. 14. 16.

⁶ Deut. 25. 5.

² St Augustine explains that those who find a

⁴ Some have suggested that wedding garments were provided at the King's expense, but it is not certain that any such custom obtained. Like the foolish virgins (cf. 25. 3), the man had neglected to make what preparations were in his power. It is the common opinion that the wedding garment represents charity.

⁵ *vv.* 1-14: A similar parable is found

died, a married man without issue, be-
 26 queathing his wife to the second. And the
 same befell the second brother, and then
 the third, and in the end all seven, the
 27 woman dying last of all. And now, when
 the dead rise again, which of the seven will
 be her husband, since she was wife to them
 29 all? Jesus answered them, You are wrong;
 you do not understand the scriptures, or
 30 what is the power of God. When the dead
 rise again, there is no marrying and giving
 in marriage; they are as the angels in
 31 heaven are. But now, in the matter of the
 resurrection, did you never read what God
 32 himself said: I am the God of Abraham,
 and the God of Isaac, and the God of Ja-
 cob?¹ Yet it is of living men, not of dead
 33 men, that he is God. This the multitude
 heard, and were amazed by his teaching.
 34 And now the Pharisees, hearing how he
 had put the Sadducees to silence, met to-
 35 gether; and one of them, a lawyer, put a
 36 question to try him: Master, which com-
 37 mandment in the law is the greatest? Jesus
 said to him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy
 God with thy whole heart and thy whole
 38 soul and thy whole mind.² This is the
 greatest of the commandments, and the
 39 first. And the second, its like, is this, Thou
 shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.³ On
 40 these two commandments, all the law and
 41 the prophets depend. Then, while the
 Pharisees were still gathered about him,
 42 Jesus asked them: What is your opinion
 concerning Christ? Whose son is he to be?
 43 They told him, David's. How is it then,
 said he, that David is moved by the Spirit
 44 to call him Master, when he says: The
 Lord said to my Master, Sit on my right
 hand while I make thy enemies a footstool
 45 under thy feet?⁴ David calls Christ his
 46 Master; how can he be also his son? None
 could find a word to say in answer to him,
 nor did anyone dare, after that day, to try
 him with further questions.⁵

23 After this, Jesus addressed himself
 to the multitudes, and to his disci-
 2 ples; The scribes and Pharisees, he said,
 have established themselves in the place
 3 from which Moses used to teach; do what
 they tell you, then, continue to observe
 what they tell you, but do not imitate their

actions, for they tell you one thing and do
 another. They fasten up packs too heavy
 to be borne, and lay them on men's shoul-
 ders; they themselves will not stir a finger
 to lift them. They act, always, so as to be
 a mark for men's eyes. Boldly written are
 the texts they carry, and deep is the hem
 of their garments; their heart is set on
 taking the chief places at table and the first
 seats in the synagogue, and having their
 hands kissed in the market-place, and
 being called Rabbi among their fellow
 men. You are not to claim the title of
 Rabbi; you have but one Master, and you
 are all brethren alike. Nor are you to call
 any man on earth your father; you have
 but one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor
 are you to be called teachers; you have one
 teacher, Christ. Among you, the greatest
 of all is to be the servant of all; the man
 who exalts himself will be humbled, and
 the man who humbles himself will be
 exalted.

Woe upon you, scribes and Pharisees,
 you hypocrites that shut the door of the
 kingdom of heaven in men's faces; you
 will neither enter yourselves, nor let others
 enter when they would. Woe upon you,
 scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites that
 swallow up the property of widows, under
 cover of your long prayers; your sentence
 will be all the heavier for that. Woe upon
 you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites
 that encompass sea and land to gain a
 single proselyte, and then make the pros-
 lyte twice as worthy of damnation as your-
 selves. Woe upon you, blind leaders, who
 say, If a man swears by the temple, it goes
 for nothing; if he swears by the gold in the
 temple, his oath stands. Blind fools, which
 is greater, the gold, or the temple that con-
 secrates the gold? And again, if a man
 swears by the altar it goes for nothing; if he
 swears by the gift on the altar, his oath
 stands. Blind fools, which is greater, the
 gift, or the altar that consecrates the gift?
 The man who swears by the altar swears at
 the same time by all that is on it. The man
 who swears by the temple swears at the
 same time by him who has made it his
 dwelling-place. And the man who swears
 by heaven swears not only by God's
 throne, but by him who sits upon it.

¹ Ex. 3. 6.
 Lk. 20. 19.

² Deut. 6. 5.

³ Lev. 19. 18.

⁴ Ps. 109. 1.

⁵ vv. 15-46; Mk. 12. 13;

23 Woe upon you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites that will award to God his tithe, though it be of mint or dill or cummin, and have forgotten the weightier commandments of the law, justice, mercy, and honour; you did ill to forget one duty while you performed the other; you blind leaders, that have a strainer for the gnat, and then swallow the camel! Woe upon you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites that scour the outward part of cup and dish, while all within is running with avarice and incontinence. Scour the inside of cup and dish first, thou blind Pharisee, that so the outside, too, may become clean.

27 Woe upon you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites that are like whitened sepulchres, fair in outward show, when they are full of dead men's bones and all manner of corruption within; you too seem exact over your duties, outwardly, to men's eyes, while there is nothing within but hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe upon you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites that build up the tombs of the prophets and engrave the monuments of the just; If we had lived in our fathers' times, you say, we would not have taken part in murdering the prophets.

31 Why then, you bear witness of your own ancestry; it was your fathers who slaughtered the prophets; it is for you to complete your fathers' reckoning.¹ Serpents that you are, brood of vipers, how should you escape from the award of hell? And now, behold, I am sending prophets and wise men and men of learning to preach to you; some of them you will put to death and crucify, some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; so that you will make yourselves answerable for all the blood of just men that is shed on the earth, from the blood of the just Abel to the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar.² Believe me, this generation shall be held answerable for all of it.³ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, still murdering the prophets, and stoning the messengers that are sent to thee, how often

have I been ready to gather thy children together, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings; and thou didst refuse it! Behold, your house is left to you, a house uninhabited. Believe me, you shall see nothing of me henceforward, until the time when you will be saying, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.⁴

24 Then Jesus left the temple, and was going on his way, when his disciples came up to shew him the view of the temple building. Do you see all this? he said to them. Believe me, there will not be a stone left on another in this place, it will all be thrown down. Afterwards, while he was sitting down on mount Olivet, the disciples came to him privately, and said, Tell us, when will this be? And what sign will be given of thy coming, and of the world being brought to an end?⁵ Jesus answered them, Take care that you do not allow anyone to deceive you. Many will come making use of my name; they will say, I am Christ, and many will be deceived by it. And you will hear tell of wars, and rumours of war; see to it that you are not disturbed in mind; such things must happen, but the end will not come yet. Nation will rise in arms against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and there will be plagues and famines and earthquakes in this region or that; but all this is but the beginning of travail. In those days, men will give you up to persecution, and will put you to death; all the world will be hating you because you bear my name; whereupon many will lose heart, will betray and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise, and many will be deceived by them; and the charity of most men will grow cold, as they see wickedness abound everywhere; but that man will be saved who endures to the last. This gospel of the kingdom must first be preached all over the world, so that all nations may hear the truth; only after that will the end come.

And now, when you see that which the prophet Daniel called the abomination of

¹ 'To complete your fathers' reckoning', by killing the Son of God, as their fathers had killed his prophets: cf. 21. 38. ² See Gen. 4. 10, and II Par. 24. 20. Barachias will have been the name of some ancestor of Zacharias, son of Joiada; there can be no reference to the persons mentioned in Is. 8. 2, Zach. 1. 1. ³ *vv.* 1-36: Much of this is also to be found in ch. 11 of St Luke. ⁴ *vv.* 37-39: Lk. 13. 34. ⁵ The question, When the Temple would be destroyed, is answered in the greater part, at least, of verses 4-35. The question, When should the world be brought to an end, is chiefly answered in verse 36.

desolation, set up in the holy place (let him who reads this, recognize what it means),¹ then those who are in Judaea must take refuge in the mountains; not going down to carry away anything from the house, if they are on the house-top; not going back to pick up a cloak, if they are in the fields.

It will go hard with women who are with child, or have children at the breast, in those days; and you must pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on the sabbath day, for there will be distress then such as has not been since the beginning of the world, and can never be again. There would have been no hope left for any human creature, if the number of those days had not been cut short; but those days will be cut short, for the sake of the elect. At such a time, if a man tells you, See, here is Christ, or, See, he is there, do not believe him. There will be false Christs and false prophets, who will rise up and shew great signs and wonders, so that if it were possible, even the elect would be deceived. Mark well, I have given you warning of it. If they tell you, then, See, he is here, in the desert, do not stir abroad; if they tell you, See, he is there, in hidden places, do not believe them; when the Son of Man comes, it will be like the lightning that springs up from the east and flashes across to the west. It is where the body lies that the eagles will gather.²

Immediately after the distress of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will refuse her light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will rock;³ and then the sign of the Son of Man will be seen in heaven; then it is that all the tribes of the land will mourn,⁴ and they will see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven, with great power and glory; and he will send out his angels with a loud blast of the trumpet, to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.⁵

The fig-tree will teach you a parable; when its branch grows supple, and begins

to put out leaves, you know that summer is near; so you, when you see all this come about, are to know that it is near, at your very doors. Believe me, this generation will not have passed, before all this is accomplished. Though heaven and earth should pass away, my words will stand.

But as for that day and that hour you speak of, they are known to none, not even to the angels in heaven; only the Father knows them.⁶ When the Son of Man comes, all will be as it was in the days of Noe; in those days before the flood, they went on eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the time when Noe entered the ark, and they were taken unawares, when the flood came and drowned them all; so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. One man taken, one left, as they work together in the fields; one woman taken, one left, as they grind together at the mill. You must be on the watch, then, since you do not know the hour of your Lord's coming. Be sure of this; if the master of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch, and not allowed his house to be broken open. And you too must stand ready; the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him.

Which of you, then, is a faithful and wise servant, one whom his master will entrust with the care of the household, to give them their food at the appointed time? Blessed is that servant who is found doing this when his lord comes; I promise you, he will give him charge of all his goods. But if that servant plays him false, and says in his heart, My lord is long in coming, and so falls to beating his fellow servants, to eating and drinking with the drunkards, then on some day when he expects nothing, at an hour when he is all unaware, his lord will come, and will cut him off, and assign him his portion with the hypocrites; where there will be weeping, and gnashing of teeth.⁷

¹ Dan. 9. 27. The Evangelist here gives a hint to the reader, probably indicating that the sign mentioned by Daniel had been recognizably fulfilled when he wrote. But there is no certainty now what event he alludes to.

² Our Lord says that at the time when the false prophets arise, it will be easy to answer the question where the danger is coming from, just as it is easy for a man who sees dead carrion to prophesy where the birds will gather. 'Eagles' may be an allusion to the standards carried by the Roman armies.

³ Such words as these were often used, by a metaphor, of the fall of kingdoms or dynasties; Is. 13. 10; Ez. 32. 7; Jl. 2. 10; 3. 15.

⁴ 'The land,' or possibly 'the earth,' but cf. Zach. 12. 12.

⁵ 'Angels'; the Greek word used here might also mean 'messengers'.

⁶ Mt. 13. 35; Lk. 21. 36.

⁷ Mt. 24. 51; Lk. 12. 39.

25 When that day comes, the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins, who went to bring the bridegroom and his bride home, taking their lamps with them. Five of these were foolish, and five were wise; of the five foolish, when they took their lamps, did not provide themselves with oil, but those who were wise took oil in the vessels they carried, as well as the lamps. The bridegroom was long in coming, so that they all grew drowsy, and fell asleep. And at midnight the cry was raised, Behold, the bridegroom is on his way; go out to meet him. Thereupon all these virgins awoke, and fell to trimming their lamps; and now the foolish ones said to the wise, Share your oil with us, our lamps are burning low. But the wise ones answered, How if there is not enough for us and for you? Better that you should find your way to the merchants, and buy for yourselves. And so, while they were away buying it, the bridegroom came; those who stood ready escorted him to the wedding, and the door was shut. Afterwards those other virgins came, with the cry, Lord, Lord, open to us. And he answered, Believe me, I do not recognize you. Be on the watch, then; the day of it and the hour of it are unknown to you.

So it was with a man who went on his travels; he called his trusted servants to him and committed his money to their charge. He gave five talents to one, two to another, and one to another, according to their several abilities, and with that he set out on his journey. The man who had received five talents went and traded with them, until he had made a profit of five talents more; and in the same way he who had received two made a profit of two. Whereas he who had received but one went off and made a hole in the ground, and there hid his master's money. Long afterwards, the master of those servants came back, and entered into a reckoning with them. And so the man who had received five talents came forward and brought him five talents more; Lord, he said, it was five talents thou gavest me, see how I have made a profit of five talents besides. And his master said to him, Well done, my good and faithful servant; since thou hast been faithful over little things,

I have great things to commit to thy charge; come and share the joy of thy Lord. Then came the man who had received two talents; Lord, he said, it was two talents thou gavest me; see how I have made a profit of two talents besides. And his master said to him, Well done, my good and faithful servant; since thou hast been faithful over little things, I have great things to commit to thy charge; come and share the joy of thy Lord. But when he who had received but one talent came forward in his turn, he said, Lord, knowing thee for a hard man, that reaps where he did not sow, and gathers in from fields he never planted, I took fright, and so went off and hid thy talent in the earth; see now, thou hast received what is thine. And his lord answered him, Base and slothful servant, thou knewest well that I reap where I did not sow, and gather in from fields I never planted; all the more was it thy part to lodge my money with the bankers, so that I might have recovered it with interest when I came. Take the talent away from him, and give it to him who has ten talents already. Whenever a man is rich, gifts will be made to him, and his riches will abound; if he is poor, even what he accounts his own will be taken from him. And now, cast the unprofitable servant into the darkness without; where there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth.¹

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit down upon the throne of his glory, and all nations will be gathered in his presence, where he will divide men one from the other, as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats; he will set the sheep on his right, and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those who are on his right hand, Come, you that have received a blessing from my Father, take possession of the kingdom which has been prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food, thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you brought me home, naked, and you clothed me, sick, and you cared for me, a prisoner, and you came to me. Whereupon the just will answer, Lord, when was it that we saw thee hungry, and fed thee, or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

¹ vv. 14-30: A parable similar to this is found in Lk. 19. 12.

38 When was it that we saw thee a stranger,
 and brought thee home, or naked, and
 39 clothed thee? When was it that we saw thee
 40 sick or in prison and came to thee? And
 the King will answer them, Believe me,
 when you did it to one of the least of my
 41 brethren here, you did it to me. Then he
 will say to those who are on his left hand,
 in their turn, Go far from me, you that are
 accursed, into that eternal fire which has
 been prepared for the devil and his angels.
 42 For I was hungry, and you never gave me
 food, I was thirsty, and you never gave me
 43 drink; I was a stranger, and you did not
 bring me home, I was naked, and you did
 not clothe me, I was sick and in prison, and
 44 you did not care for me. Whereupon they,
 in their turn, will answer, Lord, when was
 it that we saw thee hungry, or thirsty, or a
 stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and
 45 did not minister to thee? And he will an-
 swer them, Believe me, when you refused it
 to one of the least of my brethren here, you
 46 refused it to me. And these shall pass on
 to eternal punishment, and the just to
 eternal life.

26 Afterwards, when he had made an
 end of saying all this, Jesus told his
 2 disciples: You know that after two days the
 paschal feast is coming; it is then that the
 Son of Man must be given up to be cruci-
 3 fied. At this very time, the chief priests
 and the elders of the people gathered in the
 court of the high priest, whose name was
 4 Caiphas; and there they plotted to bring
 Jesus into their power by cunning, and put
 5 him to death. Yet they still said, Not on the
 day of the feast, or perhaps there will be an
 6 uproar among the people.¹ But then, while
 Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper,
 7 at Bethany, a woman came to him, with a
 pot of very precious ointment, and poured
 8 it over his head as he sat at table. The dis-
 ciples were indignant when they saw it:
 What is the meaning of this waste? they
 9 asked. It would have been possible to sell

this at a great price, and give alms to the
 poor. This Jesus knew, and said to them,
 Why do you vex the woman? She did well
 to treat me so. You have the poor among
 you always; I am not always among you.
 When she poured this ointment over my
 body, she did it to prepare me for my
 burial; and I promise you, in whatever
 part of the world this gospel is preached,
 the story of what she has done shall be told
 in its place, to preserve her memory.² And
 at that, one of the twelve, Judas who was
 called Iscariot, went to the chief priests and
 asked them, What will you pay me for
 handing him over to you? Whereupon
 they laid down thirty pieces of silver. And
 he, from that time onwards, looked about
 for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first of the days of unleavened
 bread the disciples came to Jesus and
 asked, Where wilt thou have us make
 ready for thee to eat the paschal meal?³
 And Jesus said, Go into the city, find such
 a man, and tell him, The Master says, My
 time is near; I and my disciples must keep
 the paschal feast at thy house. The dis-
 ciples did as Jesus bade them, and made all
 ready for the paschal meal there. When
 evening came, he sat down with his twelve
 disciples, and, while they were at table, he
 said, Believe me, one of you is to betray
 me. They were full of sorrow, and began
 to say, one after another, Lord, is it I? He
 answered, The man who has put his hand
 into the dish with me will betray me. The
 Son of Man goes on his way, as the scrip-
 ture foretells of him; but woe upon that
 man by whom the Son of Man is to be
 betrayed; better for that man if he had
 never been born. Then Judas, he who was
 betraying him, said openly, Master, is it I?
 Jesus answered, Thy own lips have said it.⁴

And while they were still at table, Jesus
 took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and
 gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat,
 this is my body. Then he took a cup, and
 offered thanks, and gave it to them, saying,

¹ *vv.* 1-5; *Mk.* 14. 1; *Lk.* 22. 1.

² *vv.* 6-13; *Mk.* 14. 3; *Jn.* 12. 1. According to St John, this

incident took place six days before the paschal feast.

³ We know from St John (e.g. 18. 28) that the

'first day of unleavened bread', that is the paschal feast on the 14th day of the month Nisan, was kept by

the Jews on the Friday that year. Possibly the Galileans had a different date, since it seems that the month

was dated from the first night when the paschal moon was observed, and one cloudy night might falsify

the reckoning. But the Greek Fathers understand St Matthew here as calling Thursday 'the day before

the days of unleavened bread'. This would avoid any appearance of discrepancy. On such a view, it

seems that our Lord deliberately anticipated the paschal meal by twenty-four hours; or we may suppose

that the meal described in verses 20 and following was not the meal mentioned in verse 19, but that of

the night before it. ⁴ *vv.* 14-25; *Mk.* 14. 12; *Lk.* 22. 3.

128 Drink, all of you, of this; for this is my
 129 blood, of the new testament, shed for
 many, to the remission of sins. And I tell
 you this, I shall not drink of this fruit
 of the vine again, until I drink it with you,
 new wine, in the kingdom of my Father.
 130 And so they sang a hymn, and went out to
 131 mount Olivet. After this, Jesus said to
 them, To-night you will all lose courage
 over me; for so it has been written, I will
 smite the shepherd, and the sheep of his
 132 flock will be scattered.¹ But I will go on
 before you into Galilee, when I have risen
 133 from the dead. Peter answered him,
 Though all else should lose courage over
 thee, I will never lose mine. Jesus said to
 134 him, Believe me, this night, before the cock
 crows, thou wilt thrice disown me. Peter
 135 said to him, I will never disown thee,
 though I must lay down my life with thee.
 And all the rest of his disciples said the
 like.²

136 So Jesus came, and they with him, to a
 plot of land called Gethsemani; and he said
 to his disciples, Sit down here, while I go
 137 in there and pray. But he took Peter and
 the sons of Zebedee with him. And now
 138 he grew sorrowful and dismayed; My soul,
 he said, is ready to die with sorrow; do you
 abide here, and watch with me. When he
 had gone a little further, he fell upon his
 face in prayer, and said, My Father, if it is
 possible, let this chalice pass me by; only
 140 as thy will is, not as mine is. Then he went
 back to his disciples, to find them asleep;
 and he said to Peter, Had you no strength,
 then, to watch with me even for an hour?
 141 Watch and pray, that you may not enter
 into temptation; the spirit is willing
 142 enough, but the flesh is weak. Then he
 went back again, and prayed a second
 time; and his prayer was, My Father, if
 this chalice may not pass me by, but I must
 143 drink it, then thy will be done. And once
 more he found his disciples asleep when he
 came to them, so heavy their eyelids were;
 144 this time he went away without disturbing
 them, and made his third prayer, using the
 145 same words. After that he returned to his
 disciples, and said to them, Sleep and take
 your rest hereafter; as I speak, the time
 draws near when the Son of Man is to be

betrayed into the hands of sinners.³ Rise 46
 up, let us go on our way; already, he that
 is to betray me is close at hand.

And all at once, while he was speaking, 47
 Judas, who was one of the twelve, came
 near; with him was a great multitude carry-
 ing swords and clubs, who had been sent
 by the chief priests and the elders of the
 people. The traitor had appointed them a 48
 signal; It is none other, he told them, than
 the man whom I shall greet with a kiss;
 hold him fast. No sooner, then, had he 49
 come near to Jesus than he said, Hail,
 Master, and kissed him. Jesus said to him, 50
 My friend, on what errand hast thou
 come? Then they came forward and laid
 their hands on Jesus, and held him fast.
 And at that, one of those who were with 51
 Jesus lifted a hand to draw his sword, and
 smote one of the high priest's servants with
 it, cutting off his ear. Whereupon Jesus 52
 said to him, Put thy sword back into its
 place; all those who take up the sword will
 perish by the sword. Dost thou doubt that 53
 if I call upon my Father, even now, he will
 send more than twelve legions of angels to
 my side? But how, were it so, should the 54
 scriptures be fulfilled, which have pro-
 phesied that all must be as it is? And Jesus 55
 said to the multitude at that hour, You
 have come out to my arrest with swords
 and clubs, as if I were a robber; and yet I
 used to sit teaching in the temple close to
 you, day after day, and you never laid
 hands on me. All this was so ordained, to 56
 fulfil what was written by the prophets.
 And now all his disciples abandoned him,
 and fled.⁴ And those who had arrested 57
 Jesus led him away into the presence of the
 high priest, Caiphas, where the scribes and
 the elders had assembled.

Yet Peter followed him at a long dis- 58
 tance, as far as the high priest's palace;
 where he went in and sat among the ser-
 vants, to see the end. The chief priests and 59
 elders and all the Council tried to find false
 testimony against Jesus, such as would
 compass his death. But they could find 60
 none, although many came forward falsely
 accusing him; until at last two false ac-
 cusers came forward who declared, This 61
 man said, I have power to destroy the

¹ Zach. 13. 7.² vv. 31-35; Mk. 14. 27; Lk. 22. 31; Jn. 13. 38.³ 'Hereafter'; some think

this was said in irony, meaning 'from now on', but the sense may be 'sleep at some other time, not now'.

⁴ vv. 36-56; Mk. 14. 32; Lk. 22. 39; Jn. 18. 1.

temple of God and raise it again in three days.¹ Then the high priest stood up, and asked him, Hast thou no answer to make to the accusations these men bring against thee? Jesus was silent; and the high priest said to him openly, I adjure thee by the living God to tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God? Jesus answered, Thy own lips have said it. And moreover I tell you this; you will see the Son of Man again, when he is seated at the right hand of God's power, and comes on the clouds of heaven. At this, the high priest tore his garments, and said, He has blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses? Mark well, you have heard his blasphemy for yourselves. What is your finding? And they answered, The penalty is death. Then they fell to spitting upon his face and buffeting him and smiting him on the cheek, saying as they did so, Shew thyself a prophet, Christ; tell us who it is that smote thee.

69 Meanwhile, Peter sat in the court without; and there a maid-servant came up to him, and said, Thou too wast with Jesus the Galilean. Whereupon he denied it before all the company; I do not know what thou meanest. And he went out into the porch, where a second maid-servant saw him, and said, to the bystanders, This man, too, was with Jesus the Nazarene. And he made denial again with an oath, I know nothing of the man. But those who stood there came up to Peter soon afterwards, and said, It is certain that thou art one of them; even thy speech betrays thee. And with that he fell to calling down curses on himself and swearing, I know nothing of the man; and thereupon the cock crew. Then Peter remembered the word of Jesus, how he had said, Before the cock crows, thou wilt thrice disown me; and he went out, and wept bitterly.²

27 At day-break, all the chief priests and elders of the people laid their plans for putting Jesus to death, and they led him away in bonds, and gave him up to the governor, Pontius Pilate. And now Judas, his betrayer, was full of remorse at seeing him condemned, so that he brought

back to the chief priests and elders their thirty pieces of silver; I have sinned, he told them, in betraying the blood of an innocent man. What is that to us? they said. It concerns thee only. Whereupon he left them, throwing down the pieces of silver there in the temple, and went and hanged himself. The chief priests, thus recovering the money, said, It must not be put in the treasury, since it is the price of blood; and after consultation, they used it to buy the potter's field, as a burial place for strangers; it is upon that account that the field has been called Hacedama, the field of blood, to this day.³ And so the word was fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Jeremy, when he said, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of one who was appraised, for men of the race of Israel appraised him, and bestowed them upon the potter's field, as the Lord had bidden me.⁴

But Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus told him, Thy own lips have said it. And when the chief priests and elders brought their accusation against him, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, Dost thou not hear all the testimony they bring against thee? But Jesus would not answer any of their charges, so that the governor was full of astonishment. At the festival, the governor used to grant to the multitude the liberty of any one prisoner they should choose; and there was one notable prisoner then in custody, whose name was Barabbas; so, when they gathered about him, Pilate asked them, Whom shall I release? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? He knew well that they had only given him up out of malice; and even as he sat on the judgement-seat, his wife had sent him a message, Do not meddle with this innocent man; I dreamed to-day that I suffered much on his account. But the chief priests and elders had persuaded the multitude to ask for Barabbas and have Jesus put to death; and so, when the governor openly asked them, Which of the two would you have me release? they said, Barabbas. Pilate said to them, What am I to do, then,

¹ Jn. 2. 19.² *vv.* 57-75; Mk. 14. 53; Lk. 22. 54; Jn. 18. 12.³ Ac. 1. 18.⁴ This seems to be, not a direct quotation, but a combination of Jer. 32. 7-9 with Zach. 11. 12-13. Cf. p. 33, note 1.

with Jesus, who is called Christ? They
23 said, Let him be crucified. And when the
governor said, Why, what wrong has he
done? they cried louder than ever, Let him
24 be crucified. And so, finding that his good
offices went for nothing, and the uproar
only became worse, Pilate sent for water
and washed his hands in full sight of the
multitude, saying as he did so, I have no
part in the death of this innocent man; it
25 concerns you only. And the whole people
answered, His blood be upon us, and upon
26 our children. And with that he released
Barabbas as they asked; Jesus he scourged,
and gave him up to be crucified.¹

27 After this, the governor's soldiers took
Jesus into the palace, and gathered the
28 whole of their company about him. First
they stripped him, and arrayed him in a
scarlet cloak; then they put on his head a
crown which they had woven out of thorns,
and a rod in his right hand, and mocked
him by kneeling down before him, and
29 saying, Hail, king of the Jews. And they
spat upon him, and took the rod from him
and beat him over the head with it. At last
30 they had done with mockery; stripping
him of the scarlet cloak, they put his own
garments on him, and led him away to be
31 crucified. As for his cross, they forced a
man of Cyrene, Simon by name, whom
32 they met on their way out, to carry it; and
so they reached a place called Golgotha,
33 that is, the place named after a skull. Here
they offered him a draught of wine, mixed
with gall, which he tasted, but would not
34 drink, and then crucified him, dividing his
garments among them by casting lots. The
prophecy must be fulfilled, They divide
35 my spoils among them, cast lots for my
garments.²

36 There, then, they sat, keeping guard
over him. Over his head they set a written
proclamation of his offence, This is Jesus,
37 the king of the Jews; and with him they
crucified two thieves, one on his right and
one on his left. The passers-by blasphemed
38 against him, tossing their heads; Come
now, they said, thou who wouldst destroy
the temple and build it up in three days,
39 rescue thyself; come down from that cross,
40 if thou art the Son of God. The chief
priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked

him in the same way. He saved others, 42
they said, he cannot save himself. If he is
the king of Israel, he has but to come down
from the cross, here and now, and we will
believe in him. He trusted in God; let 43
God, if he favours him, succour him now;
he told us, I am the Son of God.³ Even the 44
thieves who were crucified with him ut-
tered the same taunts.

From the sixth hour onwards there was 45
darkness over all the earth until the ninth
hour;⁴ and about the ninth hour Jesus 46
cried out with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama
sabachthani? that is, My God, my God,
why hast thou forsaken me?⁵ Hearing this, 47
some of those who stood by said, He is
calling upon Elias: and thereupon one of 48
them ran to fetch a sponge, which he filled
with vinegar and fixed upon a rod, and
offered to let him drink; the rest said, Wait, 49
let us see whether Elias is to come and save
him. Then Jesus cried out again with 50
a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit. And
all at once, the veil of the temple was torn 51
this way and that from the top to the bot-
tom, and the earth shook, and the rocks
parted asunder; and the graves were 52
opened, and many bodies arose out of
them, bodies of holy men gone to their
rest: who, after his rising again, left their 53
graves and went into the holy city, where
they were seen by many. So that the cen- 54
turion and those who kept guard over Jesus
with him, when they perceived the earth-
quake and all that befell, were overcome
with fear; No doubt, they said, but this was
the Son of God.

Many women stood watching from far 55
off; they had followed Jesus from Galilee,
to minister to him; among them were 56
Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of
James and Joseph, and the mother of the
sons of Zebedee. And now it was evening, 57
and a man came forward, by name Joseph,
a rich man from Arimathea, who followed
Jesus as a disciple like the rest; he it was who 58
approached Pilate, and asked to have the
body of Jesus; whereupon Pilate ordered
that the body should be given up. Joseph 59
took possession of the body, and wrapped it
in a clean winding-sheet; then he buried it 60
in a new grave, which he had fashioned for
himself out of the rock, and left it there,

¹ *vv.* 11-26 (in part): *Mk.* 15. 2; *Lk.* 23. 2; *Jn.* 18. 33. ² *Ps.* 21. 19. ³ *Ps.* 21. 9. *Wis.* 2. 18.
⁴ 'The earth', or perhaps 'the land' of Palestine. ⁵ *Ps.* 21. 2.

rolling a great stone against the grave-
 61 door. When he had gone, there were two
 who sat on there opposite the tomb, Mary
 Magdalen and the other Mary with her.¹
 62 Next day, the next after the day of pre-
 63 paration, the chief priests and the Phari-
 sees gathered in Pilate's presence, and said,
 Sir, we have recalled it to memory that this
 64 deceiver, while he yet lived, said, I am to
 rise again after three days. Give orders,
 then, that his tomb shall be securely
 guarded until the third day; or perhaps his
 disciples will come and steal him away. If
 they should then say to the people, He has
 risen from the dead, this last deceit will be
 65 more dangerous than the old. Pilate said
 to them, You have guards; away with you,
 66 make it secure as you best know how. And
 they went and made the tomb secure, put-
 ting a seal on the stone and setting a guard
 over it.

28 On the night after the sabbath, at
 the hour when dawn broke on the
 first day of the week, Mary Magdalen and
 the other Mary came near to contemplate
 2 the tomb.² And suddenly there was a great
 trembling of the earth, because an angel of
 the Lord came to the place, descending
 from heaven, and rolled away the stone and
 3 sat over it;³ his face shone like lightning,
 4 and his garments were white as snow; so
 that the guards trembled for fear of him,
 5 and were like dead men. But the angel
 said openly to the women, You need not be
 afraid; I know well that you have come to
 look for Jesus of Nazareth, the man who
 6 was crucified. He is not here; he has risen,
 as he told you. Come and see the place
 7 where the Lord was buried. You must go
 in haste, and tell his disciples that he has
 risen from the dead; and now he is going

on before you into Galilee, where you shall
 have sight of him. That is my message to
 you. Whereupon they left the tomb, in fear
 and in great rejoicing, and ran to tell the
 news to his disciples.⁴ And while they
 were on their way, all at once Jesus met
 them and said, All hail. With that, they
 came near to him, and clung to his feet, and
 worshipped him.⁵ Then Jesus said to
 them, Do not be afraid; go and give word
 to my brethren to remove into Galilee;
 they shall see me there.

They had not finished their journey, 1
 when some of the guards reached the city,
 and told the chief priests of all that befell.
 These gathered with the elders to take 1
 counsel, and offered a rich bribe to the
 soldiers; Let this, they said, be your tale, 1
 His disciples came by night and stole him
 away, while we were asleep. If this should 1
 come to the ears of the governor, we will
 satisfy him, and see that no harm comes to
 you. The soldiers took the bribe, and did 1
 as they were instructed; and this is the tale
 which has gone abroad among the Jews, to
 this day.

And now the eleven disciples took their 1
 journey into Galilee, to the mountain
 where Jesus had bidden them meet him.
 When they saw him there, they fell down 1
 to worship; though some were still doubt-
 ful.⁶ But Jesus came near and spoke to 1
 them; All authority in heaven and on earth,
 he said, has been given to me; you, there-
 fore, must go out, making disciples of all 1
 nations, and baptizing them in the name
 of the Father, and of the Son, and of the
 Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all 1
 the commandments which I have given
 you. And behold I am with you all through
 the days that are coming, until the con-
 summation of the world.

¹ *vv.* 27-61: Mk. 15. 20; Lk. 23. 26; Jn. 19. 17. Greek, 'late of the sabbath', which can bear the meaning 'too late for it to be the sabbath'. This interpretation must be the right one here, since it is clear that St Matthew, like the other Evangelists, is speaking of early morning, not of the evening.

² The words 'of the earth' do not occur in the Greek; and it is possible that the 'trembling' here alluded to is that mentioned in verse 4. ³ *vv.* 1-8: Mk. 16. 1; Lk. 24. 1. ⁴ This encounter may be the same, or may have taken place nearly at the same time, as that recorded in Jn. 20. 11-17. ⁵ 'Were still doubtful', probably in the sense that they did not recognize him while he was still at a distance (cf. Jn. 21. 7, 12, 13). Or it may mean that there were some (not of the apostles, but of those who followed them; 1 Cor. 15. 6) who had doubted until then.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MARK

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the prophecy of Isaias, Behold, I am sending before thee that angel of mine who is to prepare thy way for thy coming; there is a voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, straighten out his paths.¹ And so it was that John appeared in the wilderness baptizing, announcing a baptism whereby men repented, to have their sins forgiven. And all the country of Judaea and all those who dwelt in Jerusalem went out to see him, and he baptized them in the river Jordan, while they confessed their sins. John was clothed with a garment of camel's hair, and had a leather girdle about his loins, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And thus he preached, One is to come after me who is mightier than I, so that I am not worthy to bend down and untie the strap of his shoes. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

At this time, Jesus came from Nazareth, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And even as he came up out of the water he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down and resting upon him. There was a voice, too, out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.² Thereupon, the Spirit sent him out into the desert: and in the desert he spent forty days and forty nights, tempted by the devil; there he lodged with the beasts, and there the angels ministered to him.

But when John had been put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God's kingdom: The appointed time has come, he said, and the kingdom of God is near at hand; repent, and believe

the gospel.³ And as he passed along the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen); Jesus said to them, Come and follow me; I will make you into fishers of men. And they dropped their nets immediately, and followed him. Then he went a little further, and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; these too were in their boat, repairing their nets; all at once he called them, and they, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, turned aside after him.⁴ So they made their way to Capernaum; here, as soon as the sabbath came, he went into the synagogue and taught; and they were amazed by his teaching, for he sat there teaching them like one who had authority, not like the scribes. And there, in the synagogue, was a man possessed by an unclean spirit, who cried aloud: Why dost thou meddle with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Hast thou come to make an end of us? I recognize thee for what thou art, the Holy One of God. Jesus spoke to him threateningly; Silence! he said; come out of him. Then the unclean spirit threw him into a convulsion, and cried with a loud voice, and so came out of him. All were full of astonishment; What can this be? they asked one another. What is this new teaching? See how he has authority to lay his commands even on the unclean spirits, and they obey him! And the story of his doings at once spread through the whole region of Galilee.

As soon as they had left the synagogue, they came into Simon and Andrew's house; James and John were with them. The mother of Simon's wife was lying sick there, with a fever, and they made haste to tell him of her; whereupon he went close

¹ vv. 2-3: The second half of this prophecy is taken from Is. 40. 3; the first half is not from Isaias but from Malachy (3. 1). St Jerome suggests that St Mark may have been using a catena of Old Testament prophecies, in which these two passages came together, and treated them as one, giving a reference only to the more important one. ² vv. 1-11: Mt. 3. 1; Lk. 3. 1. ³ vv. 12-15: Mt. 4. 1; Lk. 4. 1.

⁴ vv. 16-20: Mt. 4. 18.

and took her by the hand, and lifted her up. And all at once the fever left her, and she began ministering to them. And when it was evening and the sun went down, they brought to him all those who were afflicted, and those who were possessed by devils; so that the whole city stood crowding there at the door. And he healed many that were afflicted with diseases of every sort, and cast out many devils; to the devils he would give no leave to speak, because they recognized him.¹ Then, at very early dawn, he left them, and went away to a lonely place, and began praying there. Simon and his companions went in search of him: and when they found him, they told him, All men are looking for thee. And he said to them, Let us go to the next country-towns, so that I can preach there too; it is for this I have come. So he continued to preach in their synagogues, all through Galilee, and cast the devils out.

Then a leper came up to him, asking for his aid; he knelt at his feet and said, If it be thy will, thou hast power to make me clean. Jesus was moved with pity; he held out his hand and touched him, and said, It is my will; be thou made clean. And at the word, the leprosy all at once left him, and he was cleansed. And he spoke to him threateningly, and sent him away there and then: Be sure thou dost not speak of this at all, he said, to anyone; away with thee, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift for thy cleansing which Moses ordained, to make the truth known to them.² But he, as soon as he had gone away, began to talk publicly and spread the story round; so that Jesus could no longer go into any of the cities openly, but dwelt in lonely places apart; and still from every side they came to him.³

2 Then, after some days, he went into Capharnaum again. And as soon as word went round that he was in a house there, such a crowd gathered that there was no room left even in front of the door; and he preached the word to them. And now they came to bring a palsied man to him, four of them carrying him at once; and found they could not bring him close to,

because of the multitude. So they stripped the tiles from the roof over the place where Jesus was, and made an opening; then they let down the bed on which the palsied man lay. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the palsied man, Son, thy sins are forgiven. But there were some of the scribes sitting there, who reasoned in their minds, Why does he speak so? He is talking blasphemously. Who can forgive sins but God, and God only? Jesus knew at once, in his spirit, of these secret thoughts of theirs, and said to them, Why do you reason thus in your minds? Which command is more lightly given, to say to the palsied man, Thy sins are forgiven, or to say, Rise up, take thy bed with thee, and walk?⁴ And now, to convince you that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins while he is on earth (here he spoke to the palsied man: I tell thee, rise up, take thy bed with thee, and go home. And he rose up at once, and took his bed, and went out in full sight of them; so that all were astonished and gave praise to God; they said, We never saw the like.)⁵

Then he went out by the sea again; and all the multitude came to him, and he taught them there. And as he passed further on, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at work in the customs-house, and said to him, Follow me; and he rose up and followed him.⁶ And afterwards, when he was taking a meal in his house, many publicans and sinners were at table with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many of these who followed him. Thereupon the scribes and Pharisees, seeing him eat with publicans and sinners in his company, asked his disciples, How comes it that your master eats and drinks with publicans and sinners? Jesus heard it, and said to them, It is not those who are in health that have need of the physician, it is those who are sick. I have come to call sinners, not the just.

John's disciples and the Pharisees used to fast at that time. And they came and said to him, How is it that thy disciples do not fast, when John's disciples and the Pharisees fast? To them Jesus said, Can you expect the men of the bridegroom,

¹ *vv.* 29-34: Mt. 8. 14; Lk. 4. 38.

² Lev. 14. 2.

³ *vv.* 40-45: Mt. 8. 1; Lk. 5. 12.

⁴ See p. 8, note 2.

⁵ *vv.* 1-12: Mt. 9. 1.

⁶ This was clearly another name for St Matthew, who introduces his more familiar name at this point (Mt. 9. 9).

company to go fasting, while the bridegroom is still with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot be expected to fast; but the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them; then they will fast, when that day comes. Nobody sews on a piece of new cloth to patch an old cloak; if that is done, the new piecing takes away threads from the old cloth, and makes the rent in it worse. Nor does anybody put new wine into old wine-skins; if that is done, the wine bursts the skins, and there is the wine spilt and the skins spoiled. New wine must be put into fresh wine-skins.¹

It happened that he was walking through the corn-fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples fell to plucking the ears of corn as they went. And the Pharisees said to him, Look, why are they doing what it is not lawful to do on the sabbath? Whereupon he said to them, Have you never read of what David did, when he and his followers were hard put to it for hunger?² How he went into the tabernacle, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the loaves set forth there before God, which only the priests may eat, and gave them, besides, to those who were with him? And he told them, The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. So that the Son of Man has even the sabbath at his disposal.³

3 And once more he went into a synagogue; and there was a man there who had one of his hands withered; and they were watching him, to see whether he would do a work of healing on the sabbath, so that they might have a charge to bring against him. So he said to the man who had his hand withered, Rise up, and come forward. Then he said to them, Which is right, to do good on the sabbath day, or to do harm? To save life, or to make away with it? And they sat there in silence. And he looked round on them in anger, grieved at the hardness of their hearts, and said to the man, Stretch out thy hand. He stretched it out, and his hand was restored to him.

6 Then the Pharisees went out, and at

once began plotting with those who were of Herod's party to make away with him.⁴ But Jesus withdrew, with his disciples, towards the sea; and great crowds followed him from Galilee, and from Judaea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and those who lived about Tyre and Sidon, hearing of all that he did, came in great numbers to him. So he told his disciples to keep a boat ready at need because of the multitude, for fear they should press on him too close; for he did many works of healing, so that all those who were visited with suffering thrust themselves upon him, to touch him. The unclean spirits, too, whenever they saw him, used to fall at his feet and cry out, Thou art the Son of God; and he would give them a strict charge not to make him known.

Then he went up on to the mountain-side, and called to him those whom it pleased him to call; so these came to him, and he appointed twelve to be his companions, and to go out preaching at his command, with power to cure diseases and to cast out devils. To Simon he gave the fresh name of Peter; to James the son of Zebedee and his brother John, he gave the fresh name of Boanerges, that is, Sons of thunder. The others were Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananean; and Judas Iscariot, the traitor.⁵

And now they came into a house, and once more the multitude gathered so that they had no room even to sit and eat. When word came to those who were nearest him, they went out to restrain him; they said, He must be mad.⁷ And the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, He is possessed by Beelzebub; it is through the prince of the devils that he casts the devils out. So he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables; How can it be Satan who casts Satan out? Why, if a kingdom is at war with itself, that kingdom cannot stand firm, and if a household is at war with itself, that household cannot stand firm; if Satan, then, has risen up in arms against

¹ *vv.* 14-22: Mt. 9. 9; Lk. 5. 27.

² I Kg. 21. 6.

³ *vv.* 23-28: Mt. 12. 1; Lk. 6. 1.

⁴ *vv.* 1-6: Mt. 12. 9; Lk. 6. 6.

⁵ Thaddaeus (or Lebbaeus) must be identified with Judas, not Iscariot (Jn. 14. 22).

⁶ *vv.* 13-19: Mt. 10. 1; Lk. 6. 12.

⁷ It is uncertain what is meant by 'those who were nearest him'. Some think the Greek means that those who were with him in the house went out to restrain it (the crowd), saying that it must be mad. 'They said'; or perhaps, 'Men said'.

Satan, he is at war with himself; he cannot stand firm; his end has come. No one can enter into a strong man's house and plunder his goods, without first making the strong man his prisoner; then he can plunder his house at will. Believe me, there is pardon for all the other sins of mankind and the blasphemies they utter; but if a man blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, there is no pardon for him in all eternity; he is guilty of a sin which is eternal.¹ This was because they were saying, He has an unclean spirit.²

Then his mother and his brethren came and sent a message to him, calling him to them, while they stood without. There was a multitude sitting round him when they told him, Here are thy mother and thy brethren without, looking for thee. And he answered them, Who is a mother, who are brethren, to me? Then he looked about at those who were sitting around him, and said, Here are my mother and my brethren! If anyone does the will of God, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.³

4 Then he began to teach by the sea-side again; and a great multitude gathered before him, so that he went into a boat, and sat there on the sea, while all the multitude was on the land, at the sea's edge. And he taught them for a long time, but in parables; Listen, his teaching began, here is the sower gone out to sow. And as he sowed, some grains chanced to fall beside the path, so that the birds came and ate them up. And others fell on rocky land, where the soil was shallow; these sprang up all at once, because they had not sunk deep in the ground: and when the sun rose they were parched; they had taken no root, and so they withered away. Some fell among briers, so that the briers grew up and smothered them, and they gave no crop. And others fell where the soil was good, and these sprouted and grew, and yielded a harvest; some of them thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, some a hundredfold. Listen, he said, you that have ears to hear with.

When they could speak with him alone, the twelve who were with him asked the meaning of the parable. And he said to them, It is granted to you to understand

the secret of God's kingdom; for those others, who stand without, all is parable: so they must watch and watch, yet never see, must listen and listen, yet never understand, nor ever turn back, and have their sins forgiven them.⁴ Then he said to them, You do not understand this parable? And are these the men who are to understand all parables? What the sower sows is the word. Those by the way-side are those who have the word sown in them, but no sooner have they heard it than Satan comes, and takes away this word that was sown in their hearts. In the same way, those who take in the seed in rocky ground are those who entertain the word with joy as soon as they hear it, and yet have no root in themselves; they last for a time, but afterwards, when tribulation or persecution arises over the word, their faith is soon shaken. And there are others who take in the seed in the midst of briers; they are those who hear the word, but allow the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and their other appetites to smother the word, so that it remains fruitless. And those who take in the seed in good soil are those who hear the word and welcome it and yield a harvest, one grain thirtyfold, one sixtyfold, one a hundredfold.⁵

And he said to them, Is a lamp brought in to be put under a bushel measure, or under a bed, not in the lamp-stand? What is hidden, is hidden only so that it may be revealed; what is kept secret, is kept secret only that it may come to light. Listen, all you that have ears to hear with. And he said to them, Look well what it is that you hear. The measure in which you give is the measure in which you will be repaid, and more will be given you besides. If a man is rich, gifts will be made to him; if he is poor, even the little he has will be taken away from him.

And he said to them, The kingdom of heaven is like this; it is as if a man should sow a crop in his land, and then go to sleep and wake again, night after night, day after day, while the crop sprouts and grows, without any knowledge of his. So, of its own accord, the ground yields increase, first the blade, then the ear, then the perfect grain in the ear; and when the fruit

¹ See p. 12, note 2.
13, note 2); Lk. 8. 19.

² *vs.* 22-30: Mt. 12. 24; Lk. 11. 14.

⁴ Is. 6. 9.

³ *vs.* 31-35: Mt. 12. 46 (see p. 1-20: Mt. 13. 1; Lk. 8. 4.

appears, then it is time for him to put in the sickle, because now the harvest is ripe.

30 And he said, What likeness can we find
for the kingdom of God? To what image
31 are we to compare it? To a grain of mustard
seed; when this is sown in the earth, no
32 seed on earth is so little; but, once sown, it
shoots up and grows taller than any garden
herb, putting out great branches, so that
all the birds can come and settle under its
33 shade. And he used many parables of this
kind, such as they could listen to easily, in
34 preaching the word to them; to them he
spoke only in parables, and made all plain
to his disciples when they were alone.¹

35 That day, when evening came on, he
said to them, Let us go across to the other
36 side. So they let the multitude go, and
took him with them, just as he was, on the
boat; there were other boats too with him.
37 And a great storm of wind arose, and drove
the waves into the boat, so that the boat
38 could hold no more. Meanwhile, he was
in the stern, asleep on the pillow there; and
they roused him, crying, Master, art thou
39 unconcerned? We are sinking. So he rose
up, and checked the wind, and said to the
sea, Peace, be still. And the wind dropped,
40 and there was deep calm. Then he said to
them, Why are you faint-hearted? Have
you still no faith? And they were overcome
with awe; Why, who is this, they said to
one another, who is obeyed even by the
winds and the sea?²

5 So they came to the further shore of
the sea, in the country of the Ge-
2 rasenes. And as soon as he had disembarked,
a man possessed by an unclean
spirit came out of the rock tombs to meet
3 him. This man made his dwelling among
the tombs, and nobody could keep him
4 bound any longer, even with chains. He
had been bound with fetters and chains
often before, but had torn the chains apart
and broken the fetters, and nobody had the
5 strength to control him. Thus he spent all
his time, night and day, among the tombs
and the hills, crying aloud and cutting
6 himself with stones. When he saw Jesus
from far off, he ran up and fell at his feet,
7 and cried with a loud voice, Why dost thou
meddle with me, Jesus, Son of the most

high God? I adjure thee in God's name,
do not torment me (for he was saying, 8
Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit).
Then he asked him, What is thy name? 9
The spirit told him, My name is Legion;
there are many of us, and it was full of 10
entreaties that he would not send them
away out of the country. There, at the foot 11
of the mountain, was a great herd of swine
feeding; and the devils entreated him, 12
Send us into the swine, let us make our
lodging there. With that, Jesus gave them 13
leave; and the unclean spirits came out,
and went into the swine; whereupon the
herd rushed down at full speed into the
sea, some two thousand in number, and the
sea drowned them. The swineherds fled, 14
and told their news in the city and in the
country-side; so that they came out to see
what had befallen; and when they reached 15
Jesus, they found the possessed man sitting
there, clothed and restored to his wits, and
they were overcome with fear. Then those 16
who had seen it told them the story of the
possessed man, and what had happened to
the swine. Whereupon they began entreat- 17
ing him to leave their country. So he 18
embarked on the boat; and as he did so the
man who had been possessed was eager to
go with him, but Jesus would not give him 19
leave; Go home to thy friends, he said, and
tell them all that the Lord has done for
thee, and what great mercy he shewed
thee. So he went back and began to spread 20
word in Decapolis of what Jesus had done
for him; and all wondered at it.³

So Jesus went back by boat across the 21
sea, and a great multitude gathered about
him; and while he was still by the sea, one 22
of the rulers of the synagogue came up,
Jairus by name, and fell down at his feet
when he saw him, pleading for his aid. My 23
daughter, he said, is at the point of death;
come and lay thy hand on her, that so she
may recover, and live. So he turned aside 24
with him, and a great multitude followed
him, and pressed close upon him. And 25
now a woman who for twelve years had had
an issue of blood, and had undergone much 26
from many physicians, spending all she
had on them, and no better for it, but rather
grown worse, came up behind Jesus in the 27
crowd (for she had been told of him), and

¹ *vv.* 30-34: *Mt.* 13: 31; *Lk.* 13: 18.
28; *Lk.* 8: 26.

² *vv.* 35-40: *Mt.* 8: 23; *Lk.* 8: 26.

³ *vv.* 1-20: *Mt.* 8.

- 28 touched his cloak; If I can even touch his cloak, she said to herself, I shall be healed.
- 29 And immediately the source of the bleeding dried up, and she felt in her body that she had been cured of her affliction. Jesus thereupon, inwardly aware of the power that had proceeded from him, turned back towards the multitude and asked, Who touched my garments? His disciples said to him, Canst thou see the multitude pressing so close about thee, and ask, Who touched me? But he looked round him to catch sight of the woman who had done this. And now the woman, trembling with fear, since she recognized what had befallen her, came and fell at his feet, and told him the whole truth. Whereupon Jesus said to her, My daughter, thy faith has brought thee recovery; go in peace, and be rid of thy affliction.
- 35 While he was yet speaking, messengers came from the ruler's house to say, Thy daughter is dead; why dost thou trouble the Master any longer? Jesus heard the word said, and told the ruler of the synagogue, No need to fear; thou hast only to believe. And now he would not let anyone follow him, except Peter and James and James' brother John; and so they came to the ruler's house, where he found a great stir, and much weeping and lamentation.
- 39 And he went in and said to them, What is this stir, this weeping? The child is not dead, she is asleep. They laughed aloud at him; but he sent them all out, and, taking the child's father and mother and his own companions with him, went in to where the child lay. Then he took hold of the child's hand, and said to her, Talitha, cumi, which means, Maiden, I say to thee, rise up. And the girl stood up immediately, and began to walk; she was twelve years old. And they were beside themselves with wonder.
- 43 Then he laid a strict charge on them to let nobody hear of this, and ordered that she should be given something to eat.¹

6 Then he left the place, and withdrew to his own country-side, his disciples following him. Here, when the sabbath came, he began teaching in the synagogue, and many were astonished when they heard him; How did he come by all this?

they asked. What is the meaning of this wisdom that has been given him, of all these wonderful works that are done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? Do not his sisters live here near us? And they had no confidence in him. Then Jesus said to them, It is only in his own country, in his own home, and among his own kindred, that a prophet goes unhonoured. Nor could he do any wonderful works there, except that he laid his hands on a few who were sick, and cured them; he was astonished at their unbelief. And so he went on round about the villages preaching.²

And now he called the twelve to him, and began sending them out, two and two, giving them authority over the unclean spirits. And he gave them instructions to take a staff for their journey and nothing more; no wallet, no bread, no money for their purses; to be shod with sandals, and not to wear a second coat. You are to lodge, he told them, in the house you first enter, until you leave the place. And wherever they give you no welcome and no hearing, shake off the dust from beneath your feet in witness against them. So they went out and preached, bidding men repent; they cast out many devils, and many who were sick they anointed with oil, and healed them.³

Then, as his name grew better known, king Herod came to hear of it. It is John the Baptist, he said, risen from the dead, and that is why these powers are active in him. Others were saying, It is Elias, and others, It is a prophet like one of the old prophets; but when Herod was told it, he declared, He has risen from the dead, John the Baptist, whom I beheaded. Herod himself had sent and arrested John and put him in prison, in chains, for love of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married; because John had told Herod, It is wrong for thee to take thy brother's wife. Herodias was always plotting against him, and would willingly have murdered him, but could not, because Herod was afraid of John, recognizing him for an upright and holy man; so that he kept him carefully, and followed his advice in many

¹ *vv.* 21-43; *Mt.* 9. 18 (see p. 9, note 1); *Lk.* 8. 41.
³ *vv.* 7-13; *Mt.* 10. 1; *Lk.* 9. 1.

² *vv.* 1-6; *Mt.* 13. 54; *Lk.* 4. 16; *Jn.* 6. 47.

21 things,¹ and was glad to listen to him. And now came a fitting occasion, upon which Herod gave a birthday feast to his lords and officers, and to the chief men of Galilee.

22 Herodias' own daughter came in and danced, and gave such pleasure to Herod and his guests that the king said to the girl, Ask me for whatever thou wilt, and thou shalt have it; he even bound himself by an oath, I will grant whatever request thou makest, though it were a half of my kingdom.

23 Thereupon she went out and said to her mother, What shall I ask for? And she answered, The head of John the Baptist.

24 With that, she hastened into the king's presence and made her request; My will is, she said, that thou shouldst give me the head of John the Baptist; give it me now, on a dish. And the king was full of remorse, but out of respect to his oath and to those who sat with him at table, he would not disappoint her. So he sent one of his guard with orders that the head should be brought on a dish. This soldier cut off his head in the prison, and brought it on a dish, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. When John's disciples heard of it, they came and carried off his body, and laid it in a tomb.

25 And now the apostles came together again in the presence of Jesus, and told him of all they had done, and all the teaching they had given.² And he said to them, Come away into a quiet place by yourselves, and rest a little. For there were many coming and going, and they scarcely had leisure even to eat. So they took ship, and went to a lonely place by themselves.

26 But many saw them going, or came to know of it; gathering from all the cities, they hurried to the place by land, and were there before them. So, when he disembarked, Jesus saw a great multitude there, and took pity on them, since they were like sheep that have no shepherd, and began to give them long instruction. And when it was already late, his disciples came to him and said, This is a lonely place, and it is late already; give them leave to go to the farms and villages round about, and buy themselves food there; they have nothing to eat. But he answered them, It is for you

to give them food to eat. Why then, they said to him, we must go and spend two hundred silver pieces buying bread to feed them. He asked, How many loaves have you? Go and see. When they had found out, they told him, Five, and two fishes.

27 Then he told them all to sit down in companies on the green grass; and they took their places in rows, by hundreds and fifties. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave these to his disciples to set before them, dividing the fishes, too, among them all. All ate and had enough: and when they took up the broken pieces, and what was left of the fishes, they filled twelve baskets with them. The loaves had fed five thousand men.³

As soon as this was done, he prevailed upon his disciples to take ship and cross to Bethsaida, on the other side, before him, leaving him to send the multitude home. And when he had taken leave of them, he went up on to the hill-side, to pray there. Twilight had already come, and the boat was half way across the sea, while he was on the shore alone. And when the night had reached its fourth quarter, seeing them hard put to it with rowing (for the wind was against them), he came to them, walking on the sea, and made as if to pass them by. When they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was an apparition, and cried aloud, for all had seen him, and were full of dismay. But now he spoke to them; Take courage, he said, it is myself; do not be afraid. So he came to them on board the boat, and thereupon the wind dropped. And they were astonished out of all measure; they had not grasped the lesson of the loaves, so dulled were their hearts.

When they had crossed, they came to shore at Genesareth and moored there. As soon as they had disembarked, he was recognized, and they ran off into all the country round, and began bringing the sick after him, beds and all, wherever they heard he was. And wherever he entered villages, or farmsteads, or towns, they used to lay the sick down in the open streets, and

¹ Followed his advice in many things'; some Greek manuscripts have, 'was much perplexed at what he heard from him'. ² *vv.* 14-30: Mt. 14. 1; Lk. 9. 7. ³ *vv.* 31-44: Mt. 14. 15; Lk. 9. 10; Jn. 6. 3.

beg him to let them touch even the hem of his cloak; and all those who touched him recovered.¹

7 Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem, gathered round him; and these found fault, because they saw that some of his disciples sat down to eat with their hands defiled, that is, unwashed. For the Pharisees, and indeed all the Jews, holding to the tradition of their ancestors, never eat without washing their hands again and again; they will not sit down to meat, coming from the market, without thorough cleansing; and there are many other customs which they hold to by tradition, purifying of cups and pitchers and pans and beds. So the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why do thy disciples eat with defiled hands, instead of following the tradition of our ancestors? But he answered, You hypocrites, it was a true prophecy Isaiah made of you, writing as he did, This people does me honour with its lips, but its heart is far from me; their worship of me is vain, for the doctrines they teach are the commandments of men.² You leave God's commandment on one side, and hold to the tradition of man, the purifying of pitchers and cups, and many other like observances. And he told them, You have quite defeated God's commandment, to establish your own tradition instead. Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother, and, He who curses father or mother dies without hope of re-
 11rieve.³ But you say, Let a man tell his father or his mother, All the money out of which you might get help from me is now
 12 Corban (that is, an offering to God),⁴ and then you will not let him do any more for father or mother. With this and many like observances, you are making God's law ineffectual through the tradition you have
 14 handed down. And he called the multitude to him, and said to them, Listen to me, all of you, and grasp this; Nothing that finds its way into a man from outside can make him unclean; what makes a man unclean is what comes out of a man. Listen, you that have ears to hear with.
 17 When he had gone into the house, away from the multitude, his disciples asked him

the meaning of the parable. And he said to them, Are you still so slow of wit? Do you not observe that all the uncleanness which goes into a man has no means of defiling him, because it travels, not into his heart, but into the belly, and so finds its way into the sewer? Thus he declared all meat to be clean, and told them that what defiles a man is that which comes out of him. For it is from within, from the hearts of men, that their wicked designs come, their sins of adultery, fornication, murder, theft, covetousness, malice, deceit, lasciviousness, envy, blasphemy, pride and folly. All these evils come from within, and it is these which make a man unclean.

After this, Jesus left those parts, and withdrew into the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon. There he went into a house, and did not wish anyone to know of it; but he could not go unrecognized, for a woman came to hear of it, whose daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit, and she came in and fell at his feet. This woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by race, and she begged him to cast the devil out of her daughter. But he said to her, Let the children have their fill first; it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs. She answered him, Ah, yes, Lord; the dogs eat of the crumbs the children leave, underneath the table. And he said to her, In reward for this word of thine, back home with thee; the devil has left thy daughter. And when she came back to her house, she found her daughter lying on the bed, and the devil gone.⁵

Then he set out again from the region of Tyre, and came by way of Sidon to the sea of Galilee, right into the region of Decapolis. And they brought to him a man who was deaf and dumb, with the prayer that he would lay his hand upon him. And he took him aside out of the multitude; he put his fingers into his ears, and spat, and touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven, and sighed; Ephpheta, he said, (that is, Be opened). Whereupon his ears were opened, and the bond which tied his tongue was loosed, and he talked plainly. And he laid a strict charge on them, not to speak of it to anyone; but the more he charged them, the more widely they pub-

¹ *vv.* 45-56; *Mt.* 14. 22. ² *Is.* 29. 13.

note 2. ³ *vv.* 1-30; *Mt.* 15. 1.

⁴ *Ex.* 20. 12; 21. 17; *Deut.* 5. 16.

⁵ See p. 16,

lished it, and were more than ever astonished; He has done well, they said, in all his doings; he has made the deaf hear, and the dumb speak.

8 Once more, at this time, the multitude had grown in numbers, and had nothing to eat. And he called his disciples to him, and said to them, I am moved with pity for the multitude; it is three days now since they have been in attendance on me, and they have nothing to eat. If I send them back to their homes fasting, they will grow faint on their journey; some of them have come from far off. His disciples answered him, How could anyone find bread to feed them, here in the desert? And he asked them, How many loaves have you? 6 Seven, they said. And he gave word to the multitude to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, and when he had blessed and broken he gave these to his disciples to set before them; so they set them before the multitude. And they had a few small fishes; these he blessed, and ordered that these, too, should be set before them; and they ate, and had enough. When they picked up what was left of the broken pieces, it filled seven hampers; 19 about four thousand had eaten. And so he sent them home.¹

10 Thereupon he embarked, with his disciples, and went into the part round Dalmanutha. Here the Pharisees came out and entered upon a dispute with him; to put him to the test, they asked him to shew them a sign from heaven. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and said, Why does this generation ask for a sign? Believe me, this generation shall have no sign given it. 13 And so he left them, and took ship again, and crossed to the further side.

14 They had forgotten to take bread with them, and had no more than one loaf in the boat; and when he warned them, Look well, and avoid the leaven of the Pharisees, and the leaven of Herod, they said anxiously to one another, We have brought no bread. Jesus knew it, and said, What is this anxiety, that you have brought no bread with you? Have you no sense, no wits, even now? Is your heart still dull? 18 Have you eyes that cannot see, and ears that cannot hear; do you remember no-

thing? When I broke the five loaves among 19 the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up? They told him, Twelve. And when I broke the 20 seven loaves among the four thousand, how many hampers full of broken pieces did you take up then? And they told him, Seven. Then he said to them, How is it that 21 you still do not understand?²

So they came to Bethsaida. And they 22 brought to him a blind man, whom they entreated him to touch. He took the blind 23 man by the hand, and led him outside the village; then he spat into his eyes, and laid his hands on him, and asked him if he could see anything? He looked up and said, I can see men as if they were trees, but walking. Once more Jesus laid his hands upon his eyes, and he began to see right; and soon he recovered, so that he could see everything clearly. Then he sent him back to his house; Go home, he said, and if thou shouldst enter the village, do not tell anyone of it.

Then Jesus went with his disciples into 27 the villages round Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, Who do men say that I am? They answered, John the Baptist, and others say Elias; others that thou art like one of the prophets. Then he said to them, And what of you? Who do you say that I am? Peter answered him, Thou art the Christ. And he strictly 30 charged them not to tell anyone about him. And now he began to make it known to them that the Son of Man must be much ill-used, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be put to death, and rise again after three days. This he told them openly; whereupon Peter, drawing him to his side, fell to reproaching him. But he turned about, and, seeing his disciples there, rebuked Peter; Back, Satan, he said, these thoughts of thine are man's, not God's. And he called his disciples to him, and the multitude with them, and said to them, If any man has a mind to come my way, let him renounce self, and take up his cross, and follow me. The man who tries to save his life will lose 35 it; it is the man who loses his life for my sake and for the gospel's sake, that will save it. How is a man the better for it, if he gains the whole world at the expense of 36

¹ *vv.* 11-19: Mt. 15, 32.

² *vv.* 11-21: Mt. 16, 1.

37 losing his own soul? For a man's soul,
 38 what price can be high enough? If anyone
 is ashamed of acknowledging me and my
 words before this unfaithful and wicked
 generation, the Son of Man, when he
 comes in his Father's glory with the holy
 angels, will be ashamed to acknowledge
 39 him. Believe me, there are those standing
 here who will not taste of death before they
 have seen the kingdom of God present in
 all its power.¹

9 Six days afterwards, Jesus took Peter
 and James and John with him, and led
 them up to a high mountain where they
 were alone by themselves; and he was
 2 transfigured in their presence. His gar-
 ments became bright, dazzling white like
 snow, white as no fuller here on earth
 3 could have made them. And they had
 sight of Elias, with Moses; these two were
 4 conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said
 aloud to Jesus, Master, it is well that we
 should be here; let us make three arbours,
 one for thee, and one for Moses, and one
 5 for Elias; he did not know what to say, for
 they were overcome with fear. And a
 6 cloud formed, overshadowing them; and
 from the cloud came a voice, which said,
 7 This is my beloved Son; to him, then,
 listen. Then, on a sudden, they looked
 round them, and saw no one any more, but
 Jesus only with them.
 8 And as they were coming down from the
 mountain, he warned them not to tell any-
 one what they had seen, until after the Son
 9 of Man had risen from the dead; so they
 kept the matter to themselves, wondering
 what the words could mean. When he has
 10 risen from the dead. And they asked him,
 Tell us, why do the Pharisees and scribes
 11 say Elias must come before Christ? He
 answered them, Elias must needs come and
 restore all things as they were; and now,
 what is written of the Son of Man? That
 he must be much ill-used, and despised.
 12 Elias too, I tell you, has already come, and
 they have misused him at their pleasure, as
 the scriptures tell of him.²
 13 When he reached his disciples, he found
 a great multitude gathered around them,

and some of the scribes disputing with
 them. The multitude, as soon as they saw
 him, were overcome with awe, and ran up
 to welcome him. He asked them, What is
 the dispute you are holding among you?
 And one of the multitude answered, Mas-
 ter, I have brought my son to thee; he is
 possessed by a dumb spirit, and wherever
 it seizes on him, it tears him, and he foams
 at the mouth, and gnashes his teeth, and
 his strength is drained from him. And I
 bade thy disciples cast it out, but they were
 powerless. And he answered them, Ah,
 faithless generation, how long must I be
 with you, how long must I bear with you?
 Bring him to me. So they brought the boy
 to him; and the evil spirit, as soon as it saw
 him, threw the boy into a convulsion, so
 that he fell on the ground, writhing and
 foaming at the mouth. And now Jesus
 asked the father, How long has this been
 happening to him? From childhood, he
 said; and often it has thrown him into the
 fire, and into water, to make an end of him.
 Come, have pity on us, and help us if thou
 canst. But Jesus said to him, If thou canst
 believe, to him who believes, everything is
 possible. Whereupon the father of the boy
 cried aloud, in tears, Lord, I do believe;
 succour my unbelief. And Jesus, seeing
 how the multitude was gathering round
 them, rebuked the unclean spirit; Thou
 dumb and deaf spirit, he said, it is I that
 command thee; come out of him, and
 never enter into him again. With that,
 crying aloud and throwing him into a vio-
 lent convulsion, it came out of him, and he
 lay there like a corpse, so that many de-
 clared, He is dead. But Jesus took hold of
 his hand, and raised him, and he stood up.
 When he had gone into a house, and they
 were alone, the disciples asked him, Why
 was it that we could not cast it out? And
 he told them, There is no way of casting
 out such spirits as this except by prayer
 and fasting.

Then they left those parts, and passed
 straight through Galilee, and he would not
 let anyone know of his passage; he spent
 the time teaching his disciples. The Son of
 Man, he said, is to be given up into the

¹ *vv.* 27-39: Mt. 16. 13; Lk. 9. 18. St Mark omits here the promises made to St Peter, perhaps because St Peter forbade it, out of humility; perhaps because writing (like St Luke) at Rome he was unwilling to draw attention to the Apostle's prominence in the Church, for fear of persecution arising. ² See p. 11, note 1.

hands of men. They will put him to death, and he will rise again on the third day. But they could not understand his meaning, and were afraid to ask him.¹ So they came to Capharnaum; and there, when they were in the house, he asked them, What was the dispute you were holding on the way? They said nothing, for they had been disputing among themselves which should be the greatest of them. Then he sat down, and called the twelve to him, and said, If anyone has a mind to be the greatest, he must be the last of all, and the servant of all. And he took a little child, and gave it a place in the midst of them; and he took it in his arms, and said to them: Whoever welcomes such a child as this in my name, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes, not me, but him that sent me. And John answered him, Master, we saw a man who does not follow in our company casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him to do it. But Jesus said, Forbid him no more; no one who does a miracle in my name will lightly speak evil of me. The man who is not against you is on your side. Why, if anyone gives you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you are Christ's, I promise you, he shall not miss his reward. And if anyone hurts the conscience of one of these little ones, that believe in me, he had better have been cast into the sea, with a millstone about his neck. If thy hand is an occasion of falling to thee, cut it off; better for thee to enter into life maimed, than to have two hands when thou goest into hell, into unquenchable fire; the worm which eats them there never dies, the fire is never quenched. And if thy foot is an occasion of falling to thee, cut it off; better for thee to enter into eternal life lame, than to have both feet when thou art cast into the unquenchable fire of hell; the worm which eats them there never dies, the fire is never quenched. And if thy eye is an occasion of falling, pluck it out; better for thee to enter blind into the kingdom of God, than to have two eyes when thou art cast into the fire of hell; the worm which eats them there never dies,

the fire is never quenched.² Fire will be every man's seasoning; every victim must be seasoned with salt.³ Salt is a good thing, but if the salt becomes tasteless, what will you use to season it with? You must have salt in yourselves, and keep peace among you.

10 Removing thence, he entered the territory of Judaea which lies beyond the Jordan. Multitudes gathered round him once more; and once more he began to teach them, as his custom was. Then the Pharisees came and put him to the test by asking him, whether it is right for a man to put away his wife. He answered them, What command did Moses give you? And they said, Moses left a man free to put his wife away, if he gave her a writ of separation.⁴ Jesus answered them, It was to suit your hard hearts that Moses wrote such a command as that; God, from the first days of creation, made them man and woman. A man, therefore, will leave his father and mother and will cling to his wife,⁵ and the two will become one flesh. Why then, since they are no longer two, but one flesh, what God has joined, let not man put asunder. And when they were in the house, his disciples asked him further about the same question. Whereupon he told them, If a man puts away his wife and marries another, he behaves adulterously towards her,⁶ and if a woman puts away her husband and marries another, she is an adulteress.⁷

Then they brought children to him, asking him to touch them; and his disciples rebuked those who brought them. But Jesus was indignant at seeing this; Let the children come to me, he said, do not keep them back; the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you truthfully, the man who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a child, will never enter into it. And so he embraced them, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Then he went out to continue his journey; and a man ran up and knelt down before him, asking him, Master, who art so

¹ vv. 1-31: Mt. 17. 1; Lk. 9. 28.

² vv. 32-47: Mt. 18. 1; Lk. 9. 46.

³ The second half of this verse is a quotation from Lev. 2. 13, and is perhaps only added by way of reference; but commentators are not agreed about the meaning of the whole verse, or of the relation which it bears to its context. According to the most common opinion, our Lord means us to understand that we must needs suffer either in this world or in the next.

⁴ Deut. 24. 1.

⁵ Gen. 2. 24.

⁶ See p. 20, note 1.

⁷ vv. 1-12: Mt. 19. 1; cf. Lk. 16. 18; Mt. 5. 32; I Cor. 7. 10.

good, what must I do to achieve eternal
 18 life? Jesus said to him, Why dost thou call
 me good? None is good, except God only.
 19 Thou knowest the commandments, Thou
 shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt do
 no murder, Thou shalt not steal, Thou
 shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not
 wrong any man, Honour thy father and thy
 20 mother.¹ Master, he answered, I have kept
 all these ever since I grew up. Then Jesus
 21 fastened his eyes on him, and conceived a
 love for him; In one thing, he said, thou art
 still wanting. Go home and sell all that
 belongs to thee; give it to the poor, and so
 the treasure thou hast shall be in heaven;
 22 then come back and follow me.² At this,
 his face fell, and he went away sorrowing,
 23 for he had great possessions. And Jesus
 looked round, and said to his disciples,
 With what difficulty will those who have
 24 riches enter God's kingdom! The disci-
 ples were amazed at his words; but Jesus
 gave them a second answer, My children,
 how hard it is for those who trust in riches
 25 to enter God's kingdom! It is easier for a
 camel to pass through a needle's eye, than
 for a man to enter the kingdom of God
 26 when he is rich. They were still more
 astonished; Why then, they said to them-
 27 selves, who can be saved? Jesus fastened
 his eyes on them, and said, Such things are
 impossible to man's powers, but not to
 God's; to God, all things are possible.
 28 Hereupon Peter took occasion to say,
 What of us, who have forsaken all, and
 29 followed thee? Jesus answered, I promise
 you, everyone who has forsaken home, or
 brothers, or sisters, or mother, or children,
 or lands for my sake and for the sake of the
 30 gospel, will receive, now in this world, a
 hundred times their worth, houses, sisters,
 brothers, mothers, children and lands, but
 with persecution; and in the world to come
 31 he will receive everlasting life. But many
 will be first that were last, and last that
 were first.³
 32 And now they were on the way going up
 to Jerusalem; and still Jesus led them on,
 while they were bewildered and followed
 him with faint hearts. Then once more he
 brought the twelve apostles to his side, and
 began to tell them what was to befall him:
 33 Now, we are going up to Jerusalem; and

there the Son of Man will be given up into
 the hands of the chief priests and scribes,
 who will condemn him to death; and these
 will give him up into the hands of the Gen-
 tiles, who will mock him, and spit upon
 him, and scourge him, and kill him; but on
 the third day he will rise again.⁴

Thereupon James and John, the sons of
 Zebedee, came to him and said, Master, we
 would have thee grant the request we are
 to make. And he asked them, What would
 you have me do for you? They said to
 him, Grant that one of us may take his
 place on thy right and the other on thy left,
 when thou art glorified. But Jesus said to
 them, You do not know what it is you ask.
 Have you strength to drink of the cup I am
 to drink of, to be baptized with the bap-
 tism I am to be baptized with? They said
 to him, We have. And Jesus told them.
 You shall indeed drink of the cup I am to
 drink of, and be baptized with the baptism
 I am to be baptized with; but a place on my
 right hand or my left is not mine to give
 you; it is for those for whom it has been
 destined.

The ten others grew indignant with
 James and John when they heard of it. But
 Jesus called them to him, and said to them.
 You know that, among the Gentiles, those
 who claim to bear rule lord it over them,
 and those who are great among them make
 the most of the power they have. With you
 it must be otherwise; whoever has a mind
 to be great among you, must be your ser-
 vant, and whoever has a mind to be first
 among you, must be your slave. So it is
 that the Son of Man did not come to have
 service done him; he came to serve others,
 and to give his life as a ransom for the lives
 of many.⁵

And now they reached Jericho. As he
 was leaving Jericho, with his disciples and
 with a great multitude, Bartimaeus, the
 blind man, Timaeus' son, was sitting there,
 by the way-side, begging. And, hearing
 that this was Jesus of Nazareth, he fell to
 crying out, Jesus, son of David, have pity
 on me. Many of them rebuked him and
 told him to be silent, but he cried out all
 the more, Son of David, have pity on me.
 Jesus stopped, and bade them summon
 him; so they summoned the blind man:

¹ Ex. 20. 12-17.² See p. 20, note 4.³ vv. 13-31: Mt. 19. 13; Lk. 18. 15.⁴ vv. 32-34

Mt. 20. 17; Lk. 18. 31.

⁵ vv. 35-45: Mt. 20. 20.

Take heart, they said, and rise up; he is
 50 summoning thee. Whereupon he threw
 away his cloak and leapt to his feet, and so
 51 came to Jesus. Then Jesus answered him,
 What wouldst thou have me do for thee?
 And the blind man said to him, Lord, give
 52 me back my sight. Jesus said to him,
 Away home with thee; thy faith has
 brought thee recovery. And all at once he
 recovered his sight, and followed Jesus on
 his way.¹

11 When they were approaching Jeru-
 salem, and Bethany, which is close to
 mount Olivet, he sent two of his disciples
 12 on an errand: Go into the village that faces
 you, he told them, and the first thing you
 will find there upon entering will be a colt
 tethered, one on which no man has ever
 13 ridden; untie it, and bring it to me. And if
 anyone asks you, Why are you doing that?
 tell him, the Lord has need of it, and he will
 14 let you have it without more ado. So they
 went, and found the colt tethered before a
 door at the entrance; and they untied it.
 15 Some of the bystanders asked them, What
 16 are you doing, untying the colt? And they
 answered them as Jesus had bidden, and
 17 were allowed to take it. So they brought
 the colt to Jesus, and saddled it with their
 18 garments, and he mounted it. Many of
 them spread their garments in the way, and
 others strewed the way with leaves they
 19 had cut down from the trees. And those
 who went before him and followed after
 20 him cried aloud, Hosanna, blessed is he
 who comes in the name of the Lord;
 21 blessed is the kingdom of our father David
 which is coming to us; Hosanna in heaven
 22 above.² So he came to Jerusalem, and
 went into the temple, where he surveyed
 all that was about him, and then, for the
 hour was already late, went out, with the
 twelve, to Bethany.

When they had left Bethany next day,
 23 he was hungry; and, observing a fig-tree
 some way off with its leaves out, he went up
 to see if he could find anything on it. But
 when he reached it, he found leaves and
 nothing else; it was not the right season for
 24 figs.³ And he said to it aloud, in the hearing
 of his disciples; Let no man ever eat fruit
 25 of thine hereafter. So they came to Jeru-

salem. And there Jesus went into the
 temple, and began driving out those who
 sold and bought in the temple, and over-
 threw the tables of the bankers, and the
 chairs of the pigeon-sellers; nor would he
 16 allow anyone to carry his wares through
 the temple. And this was the admonition
 17 he gave them, Is it not written, My house
 shall be known among all the nations for a
 house of prayer? Whereas you have made
 it into a den of thieves.⁴ The chief priests
 18 and scribes heard of this, and looked for
 some means of making away with him;
 they were afraid of him, because all the
 multitude was so full of admiration at his
 teaching.

He left the city at evening, and next
 19 morning, as they passed by, they saw the
 fig-tree withered from its roots. Peter had
 21 not forgotten; Master, he said, look at the
 fig-tree which thou didst curse; it has
 withered away. And Jesus answered them,
 22 Have faith in God. I promise you, if any-
 one says to this mountain, Remove, and be
 23 cast into the sea, and has no hesitation in
 his heart, but is sure that what he says is to
 come about, his wish will be granted him.
 I tell you, then, when you ask for anything
 24 in prayer, you have only to believe that it
 is yours, and it will be granted you.⁵ When
 25 you stand praying, forgive whatever wrong
 any man has done you; so that your Father
 who is in heaven may forgive you your
 transgressions; if you do not forgive, your
 26 Father who is in heaven will not forgive
 your transgressions either.

So they came back to Jerusalem. And
 27 as he was walking about in the temple, the
 chief priests and scribes and elders came to
 him and asked him, What is the authority
 28 by which thou doest these things, and who
 gave thee this authority to do them? Jesus
 29 answered them, I too have a question to
 ask; if you can tell me the answer, I will
 tell you in return what is the authority by
 which I do these things. Whence did
 30 John's baptism come, from heaven or from
 men? Whereupon they cast about in their
 31 minds; If we tell him it was from heaven,
 they said, he will ask us, Then why did you
 not believe him? And if we say it was from
 32 men, we have reason to be afraid of the
 people; for the people all looked upon John

¹ Mt. 46-52; Mt. 20. 29; Lk. 18. 35.
 p. 22, note 4.

⁴ Is. 56. 7, and Jer. 7. 11.

² vv. 1-10: Mt. 21. 1; Lk. 19. 29; Jn. 12. 12.

⁵ vv. 12-24: Mt. 21. 12; Lk. 19. 45.

³ See

33 as a prophet indeed. And they answered Jesus, We cannot tell. Jesus answered them, And you will not learn from me what is the authority by which I do these things.¹

12 Then he began to speak to them in parables; There was a man who planted a vineyard, and put a wall round it, and dug a wine-press and built a tower in it, and then let it out to some vine-dressers, while he went on his travels. And when the season came, he sent one of his servants on an errand to the vine-dressers, to claim from the vine-dressers the revenue of his vineyard. Whereupon they took him and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant on a second errand to them, and him too they beat over the head and used him outrageously. He sent another, whom they killed; and many others, whom they beat or killed at their pleasure. He had still one messenger left, his own well-beloved son; him he sent to them last of all; They will have reverence, he said, for my son. But the vine-dressers said among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and then his inheritance will be ours. So they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. And now, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come, and make an end of those vine-dressers, and give his vineyard to others. Why, have you not read this passage in the scriptures, The very stone which the builders rejected has become the chief stone at the corner;² this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

This parable, they saw, was aimed at themselves, and they would gladly have laid hands on him, but they were afraid of the multitude; so they went away and left him alone.³ Then they sent some of the Pharisees to him, with those who were of Herod's party, to make him betray himself in his talk. These came and said to him, Master, we know that thou art sincere; that thou holdest no one in awe, making no distinction between man and man, but teachest in all sincerity the way of God. Is it right that tribute should be paid to Caesar? Or should we refuse to pay it? But he

saw their treachery, and said to them, Why do you thus put me to the test? Bring me a silver piece, and let me look at it. When they brought it, he asked them, Whose is this likeness? Whose name is inscribed on it? Caesar's, they said. Whereupon Jesus answered them, Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. And they were lost in admiration of him.

Then he was approached with a question by the Sadducees, men who say that there is no resurrection: Master, they said, Moses prescribed for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a widow behind him but no children, he, the brother, should marry the widow, and beget children in the dead brother's name. There were seven brethren; the first married a wife, and died childless; the second married her, and he too left no children, and so with the third; all seven married her, without having children, and the woman died last of all. And now, when the dead rise again, which of these will be her husband, since she was wife to all seven? Jesus answered them, Is not this where you are wrong, that you do not understand the scriptures, or what is the power of God? When the dead rise, there is no marrying or giving in marriage, they are as the angels in heaven are. But as for the dead rising again, have you never read in the book of Moses how God spoke to him at the burning bush, and said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?⁴ Yet it is of living men, not of dead men, that he is the God; you are wrong, then, altogether.

One of the scribes heard their dispute, and, finding that he answered to the purpose, came up and asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? Jesus answered him, The first commandment of all is, Listen, Israel; there is no God but the Lord thy God; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the love of thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and thy whole mind, and thy whole strength.⁵ This is the first commandment, and the second, its like, is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.⁶ There is no other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said to him, Truly, Master, thou hast answered well; there is but one God, and no

¹ *vv.* 27-33; *Mt.* 21. 23; *Lk.* 20. 1. *Mt.* 21. 33; *Lk.* 20. 9; *cf.* *Is.* 5. 1.

² *Ps.* 117. 22; *cf.* *Rom.* 9. 33; *I Pet.* 2. 7.

³ *vv.* 1-12:

⁴ *Ex.* 3. 6.

⁵ *Deut.* 6. 4.

⁶ *Lev.* 19. 18.

133 other beside him; and if a man loves God
with all his heart and all his soul and all
his understanding and all his strength, and
his neighbour as himself, that is a greater
thing than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices.
134 Then Jesus, seeing how wisely he had
answered, said to him, Thou art not far
from the kingdom of God. And after this,
no one dared to try him with further
questions.

135 Then Jesus said openly, still teaching in
the temple, What do the scribes mean by
saying that Christ is to be the son of Da-
vid? David himself was moved by the
136 Holy Spirit to say, The Lord said to my
Master, Sit on my right hand while I make
thy enemies a footstool under thy feet.¹
137 Thus David himself calls Christ his Mas-
ter; how can he be also his son? And the
multitude at large listened to him readily.²
138 This was part of the teaching he gave them,
Beware of the scribes, who enjoy walking
in long robes, and having their hands
kissed in the market-place, and the first
139 seats in the synagogues, and the chief
places at feasts; who swallow up the prop-
erty of widows, under cover of their long
prayers; their sentence will be all the
heavier for that.

141 As he was sitting opposite the treasury
of the temple, Jesus watched the multitude
throwing coins into the treasury, the many
rich with their many offerings; and there
was one poor widow, who came and put in
142 two mites, which make a farthing. There-
upon he called his disciples to him, and
said to them, Believe me, this poor widow
has put in more than all those others who
143 have put offerings into the treasury. The
others all gave out of what they had to
spare; she, with so little to give, put in all
that she had, her whole livelihood.³

13 As he was leaving the temple, one
of his disciples said to him, Look,
1 Master, what stones! What a fabric! Jesus
answered him, Do you see all this huge
fabric? There will not be a stone of it left
2 on another; it will all be thrown down. So,
when he was sitting down on mount Olivet,
opposite the temple, Peter and James and
John and Andrew asked him, now that they
3 were alone: Tell us, when will this be?

And what sign will be given, when all this
is soon to be accomplished?⁴ Take care,
5 Jesus began in answer, that you do not
allow anyone to deceive you. Many will
6 come making use of my name; they will
say, Here I am, and many will be deceived
by it. When you hear tell of wars, and ru-
7 mours of war, do not be disturbed in mind;
such things must happen, but the end will
not come yet. Nation will rise in arms
8 against nation, and kingdom against king-
dom, there will be earthquakes in this re-
gion or that, there will be famines: all this
is but the beginning of travail. But you
9 will have to think of yourselves; men will
be giving you up to courts of justice, and
scourging you in the synagogues, yes, and
you will be brought before governors and
kings on my account, so that you can bear
witness to them; the gospel must be
10 preached to all nations before the end.
When they take you and hand you over
11 thus, do not consider anxiously before-
hand what you are to say; use what words
are given you when the time comes; it is
not you that speak, it is the Holy Spirit.
Brother will be given up to death by brother,
12 and the son by his father; children
will rise up against their parents, and will
compass their deaths; all the world will be
13 hating you because you bear my name; but
that man will be saved, who endures to the
last.

And now, when you see the abomination
14 of desolation⁵ standing where it should
never stand (let him who reads this, recog-
nize what it means), then those who are in
Judaea must take refuge in the moun-
tains; not going down into the house, if
15 they are on the house-top, or entering the
house to carry anything away from it; not
16 turning back, if they are in the fields,
to pick up a cloak. It will go hard with women
17 who are with child, or have children at the
breast, in those days. And you must pray
that your flight may not be in the winter;
for those days will be days of distress, such
18 as has not been since the beginning of crea-
tion till now, and can never be again. There
19 would have been no hope left for any hu-
man creature, if the Lord had not cut those
days short; but he has cut the days short
20 for the sake of the elect, whom he has

¹ Ps. 109. 1.⁴ See p. 25, note 5.² *vs.* 13-37: Mt. 23. 15; Lk. 20. 19.³ Dan. 9. 27; see p. 26, note 1.⁵ *vs.* 38-44: Lk. 20. 45; 21. 1.

21 chosen. At such a time, if a man tells you,
 See, here is Christ, or, See, he is there, do
 22 not believe him. There will be false Christs
 and false prophets who will rise up and
 shew signs and wonders, so that, if it were
 possible, even the elect would be deceived.
 23 But you must be on your guard; hereby,
 I have given you warning of it all.
 24 In those days, after this distress, the sun
 will be darkened, and the moon will refuse
 25 her light;¹ and the stars will be falling
 from heaven, and the powers that are in
 26 heaven will rock; and then they will see the
 Son of Man coming upon the clouds, with
 27 great power and glory. And then he will
 send out his angels, to gather his elect from
 the four winds, from earth's end to hea-
 28 ven's.² The fig-tree will teach you a para-
 ble; when its branch grows supple, and
 begins to put out leaves, you know that
 29 summer is near; so you, when you see all
 this come about, are to know that it is near,
 30 at your very doors. Believe me, this genera-
 tion will not have passed, before all this
 31 is accomplished. Though heaven and earth
 should pass away, my words will stand.
 32 But as for that day and that hour you
 speak of, they are known to nobody, not
 even to the angels in heaven, not even to
 the Son; only the Father knows them.
 33 Look well to it; watch and pray; you do not
 34 know when the time is to come.³ It is as if
 a man going on his travels had left his
 house, entrusting authority to his servants,
 each of them to do his own work, and en-
 35 joining the door-keeper to watch. Be on
 the watch, then, since you do not know
 when the master of the house is coming, at
 twilight, or midnight, or cock-crow, or
 36 dawn; if not, he may come suddenly, and
 37 find you asleep. And what I say to you,
 I say to all, Watch.

14 It was now two days to the paschal
 feast and the time of unleavened
 bread; and the chief priests and scribes
 were trying to bring Jesus into their power
 2 by cunning, and put him to death; But not
 on the day of the feast, they said, or there
 3 may be an uproar among the people. And
 then, while he was in the house of Simon
 the leper, at Bethany, sitting at table, a
 woman came in with a pot of very precious

spikenard ointment, which, first breaking
 the pot, she poured over his head. There
 were some present who were indignant
 when they saw it, and said among them-
 selves, What did she mean by wasting the
 ointment so? This ointment might have
 been sold for three hundred pieces of sil-
 ver, and alms might have been given to the
 poor. And they rebuked her angrily. But
 Jesus said, Let her alone; why should you
 vex her? She did well to treat me so. You
 have the poor among you always, so that
 you can do good to them when you will;
 I am not always among you. She has done
 what she could; she has anointed my body
 beforehand to prepare it for burial. I pro-
 mise you, in whatever part of the world
 this gospel is preached, the story of what
 she has done shall be told in its place, to
 preserve her memory. Then Judas Is-
 cariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief
 priests and offered to betray him into their
 hands. And they, listening to him eagerly,
 promised him money; whereupon he
 looked about for an opportunity to betray
 him.⁴

On the first of the days of unleavened
 bread, when they killed the paschal victim,
 his disciples asked him, Where wilt thou
 have us go and make ready for thee to eat
 the paschal meal? And he sent two of his
 disciples on this errand, Go into the city,
 and there a man will meet you, carrying a
 jar of water; you are to follow him, and say
 to the owner of the house into which he
 enters, The master says, Where is my
 room, in which I am to eat the paschal
 meal with my disciples? And he will shew
 you a large upper room, furnished and pre-
 pared; it is there that you are to make ready
 for us. So the disciples left him and went
 into the city, where they found all as he had
 told them, and so made ready for the pas-
 chal meal. When it was evening, he came
 there with the twelve. And as they sat at
 table and were eating, Jesus said, Believe
 me, one of you, one who is eating with me,
 is to betray me. They began to ask him
 sorrowfully, each in turn, Is it I? and then
 another, Is it I? He told them, It is one of
 the twelve, the man who puts his hand into
 the dish with me. The Son of Man goes on
 his way, as the scripture foretells of him;

¹ See p. 26, note 3. ² See p. 26, note 6.
 Mt. 26. 1; Lk. 22. 1 (in part); Jn. 12. 1 (in part).

³ *ov.* 1-33; Mt. 24. 1; Lk. 21. 5.

⁴ *ov.* 1-11:

but woe upon that man by whom the Son of Man is to be betrayed; better for that man if he had never been born.¹

22 And while they were still at table, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, Take this; this is my body. Then he took a cup, and offered thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said, This is my blood of the new testament, shed for many. I tell you truthfully, I shall not drink of this fruit of the vine again, until the day when I drink it with you, new wine, in the kingdom of God.² And so they sang a hymn, and went out to mount Olivet. And Jesus said to them, Tonight you will all lose courage over me; for so it has been written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.³ But I will go on before you into Galilee, when I have risen from the dead. Peter said to him, Though all else should lose courage over thee, I will never lose mine. And Jesus said to him, Believe me, this night, before the second cock-crow, thou wilt thrice disown me. 31 But Peter insisted more than ever, I will not disown thee, though I must lay down my life with thee. And all of them said the like.⁴

32 So they came to a plot of land called Gethsemani; and he said to his disciples, Sit down here, while I go and pray. But he took Peter and James and John with him. And now he grew dismayed and distressed: My soul, he said to them, is ready to die with sorrow; do you abide here, and keep watch. So he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass him by: Abba, Father, he said, all things are possible to thee; take away this chalice from before me; only as thy will is, not as mine is. Then he went back, and found them asleep; and he said to Peter, Simon, art thou sleeping? Hadst thou not strength to watch even for an hour? Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing enough, but the flesh is weak. Then he went away and prayed again, using the same words. And when he returned, once more he found them asleep, so heavy their eyelids were;

and they did not know what answer to make to him. When he came the third time, he said to them, Sleep and take your rest hereafter.⁵ Enough; the time has come; behold, the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go on our way; already, he that is to betray me is close at hand.

And thereupon, while he was yet speaking, Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, came near; with him was a great multitude carrying swords and clubs, who had been sent by the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. The traitor had appointed them a signal; it is none other, he said, than the man whom I shall greet with a kiss; hold him fast, and take him away under guard. No sooner, then, had he come up than he went close to Jesus, saying, Hail, Master, and kissed him; and with that they laid their hands on him, and held him fast. And one of those who stood by drew his sword, and smote one of the high priest's servants with it, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them aloud, You have come out to my arrest with swords and clubs, as if I were a robber; and yet I used to teach in the temple close to you, day after day, and you never laid hands on me. But the scriptures must be fulfilled. And now all his disciples abandoned him, and fled.⁶ There was a young man there following him, who was wearing only a linen shirt on his bare body; and he, when they laid hold of him, left the shirt in their hands, and ran away from them naked. So they took Jesus into the presence of the high priest, and all the chief priests and elders and scribes were assembled about him.

Yet Peter followed at a long distance, right into the high priest's palace, and there sat down with the servants by the fire, to warm himself. The high priest and all the council tried to find an accusation against Jesus, such as would compass his death, but they could find none; many accused him falsely, but their accusations did not agree. There were some who stood up and falsely accused him thus: We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made by men's hands, and in three days I will build

¹ *v.* 12-21: *Mt.* 26. 17 (see p. 28, note 3); *Lk.* 22. 7. ² *v.* 22-25: *Mt.* 26. 26; *Lk.* 22. 15; *I Cor.* 11. 23. ³ *Zach.* 13. 7. ⁴ *v.* 27-31: *Mt.* 26. 31; *Lk.* 22. 31; *Jn.* 13. 38. ⁵ See p. 29, note 3. ⁶ *v.* 32-50: *Mt.* 26. 36; *Lk.* 22. 40; *Jn.* 18. 1.

another, with no hand of man to help me.¹

59 But even so their accusations did not
60 agree. Then the high priest stood up, and
asked Jesus, Hast thou no answer to the
accusations these men bring against thee?
61 He was still silent, still did not answer; and
the high priest questioned him again, Art
thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed
62 God? Jesus said to him, I am. And you
will see the Son of Man sitting at the right
hand of God's power, and coming with the
63 clouds of heaven. At this, the high priest
tore his garments, and said, What further
64 need have we of witnesses? You have
heard his blasphemy for yourselves; what
is your finding? And they all pronounced
65 against him a sentence of death. Then
some of them fell to spitting upon him, and
covering his face while they buffeted him
and bade him prophesy; the servants, too,
caught him blows on the cheek.

66 Meanwhile, Peter was in the court with-
out, and one of the maid-servants of the
67 high priest came by; she saw Peter warm-
ing himself, and said, looking closely at
him, Thou too wast with Jesus the Na-
68 zarene. Whereupon he denied it; I know
nothing of it, I do not understand what
thou meanest. Then he went out into the
69 porch; and the cock crew. Again the maid
looked at him, and said to the bystanders,
70 This is one of them.² And again he denied
it. Then, a little while afterwards, the by-
standers said to Peter, It is certain that
thou art one of them; why, thou art a Gali-
71 lean. And he fell to calling down curses
on himself and swearing, I do not know the
72 man you speak of. Then came the second
cock-crow; and Peter remembered the
word Jesus had said to him, Before the
second cock-crow thou wilt thrice deny
me. And all at once he burst out weeping.³

15 No sooner had day broken, than the
chief priests made their plans, with
the elders and scribes and the whole
Council; they took Jesus away in bonds
2 and gave him up to Pilate. And Pilate

asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews?
He answered him, Thy own lips have said
it. And now the chief priests brought
many accusations against him, and Pilate
questioned him again, Dost thou make no
answer? See what a weight of accusation
they bring against thee. But Jesus still
would not answer him, so that Pilate was
full of astonishment. At the festival, he
used to grant them the liberty of any one
prisoner they chose; and the man they
called Barabbas was then in custody, with
the rebels who had been guilty of murder
during the rebellion. So, when the multi-
tude came up towards him, and began to
ask for the customary favour, Pilate an-
swered them, Would you have me release
the king of the Jews? He knew well that
the chief priests had only given him up out
of malice. But the chief priests incited the
multitude to ask for the release of Barabbas
instead. Once more Pilate answered them,
What would you have me do, then, with
the king of the Jews? And they made a
fresh cry of, Crucify him. Why, Pilate said
to them, what wrong has he done? But
they cried all the more, Crucify him. And
so Pilate, determined to humour the mul-
titude, released Barabbas as they asked;
Jesus he scourged, and gave him up to be
crucified.⁴

Then the soldiers led him away into the
court of the palace, and gathered there the
whole of their company. They arrayed him
in a scarlet cloak, and put round his head
a crown which they had woven out of
thorns, and fell to greeting him with, Hail,
king of the Jews. And they beat him over
the head with a rod, and spat upon him,
and bowed their knees in worship of him.
At last they had done with mockery; strip-
ping him of the scarlet cloak, they put his
own garments on him, and led him away to
be crucified.⁵ As for his cross, they forced
a passer-by who was coming in from the
country to carry it, one Simon of Cyrene,
the father of Alexander and Rufus. And
so they took him to a place called Golgotha,

¹ Jn. 2. 19.

² 'The maid', either the portress at the gate, or the same maid who had already challenged the Apostle at the fire; in the latter case, the discrepancy with St Matthew (26. 71) is, in the opinion of the Fathers, too slight to need apology.

³ *sv.* 53-72: Mt. 26. 57; Lk. 22. 54; Jn. 18. 12.
⁴ *sv.* 53-72: Mt. 26. 57; Lk. 22. 54; Jn. 18. 12.
⁵ The other Evangelists only mention one crowing of the cock; which is not wonderful, since it appears that the second crowing of the cock was regarded by the ancients as the time of cock-crow, that is the third division of the night (Mk. 13. 35); the first crowing had been an hour in advance of the time (Lk. 22. 59). The sense of the last three words of this chapter is not certain in the Greek; others render, 'when he thought upon it, he wept'.

⁴ *sv.* 1-15 (in part): Mt. 27. 11; Lk. 23. 2; Jn. 18. 33.
⁵ *sv.* 16-20: Mt. 27. 27.

23 which means, The place of a skull. Here they offered him a draught of wine mixed with myrrh, which he would not take; and then crucified him, dividing his garments among them by casting lots, to decide which should fall to each.

25 It was the third hour when they crucified him.¹ A proclamation of his offence was written up over him, The king of the Jews; and with him they crucified two thieves, one on the right and the other on his left, so fulfilling the words of scripture, And he was counted among the wrong-doers.² 29 The passers-by blasphemed against him, shaking their heads; Come now, they said, thou who wouldst destroy the temple and build it up in three days, come down from that cross, and rescue thyself. In the same way, the chief priests and scribes said mockingly to one another, He saved others, he cannot save himself. Let Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross, here and now, so that we can see it and believe in him. And the men who were crucified with him uttered taunts against him.

33 When the sixth hour came, there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour;³ and at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani? which means, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?⁴ 35 Hearing this, some of those who stood by said, Why, he is calling upon Elias. And thereupon one of them ran off to fill a sponge with vinegar, and fixed it on a rod, and offered to let him drink; Wait, he said, Let us see whether Elias is to come and save him. Then Jesus gave a loud cry, and yielded up his spirit. And the veil of the temple was torn this way and that, from the top to the bottom. The centurion who stood in front of him, perceiving that he so yielded up his spirit with a cry, said, No doubt but this was the Son of God.

There were women there, who stood watching from far off; among them were Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joseph, and Salome. These used to follow him and minister to him when he was in Galilee, and there were many others who had come up with him to Jerusalem. And now it was already evening; and because it was the day of preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,⁵ a rich councillor, named Joseph of Arimathea, one of those who waited for God's kingdom, boldly went to Pilate, and asked to have the body of Jesus. Pilate, astonished that he should have died so soon, called the centurion to him, to ask if he was dead already, and when he heard the centurion's report, gave Joseph the body. Joseph took him down, and wrapped him in a winding-sheet which he had bought, and laid him in a tomb cut out of the rock, rolling a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of Joseph, saw where he had been laid.⁶

16 And when the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome had bought spices, to come and anoint Jesus. So they came to the tomb very early on the day after the sabbath, at sunrise.⁷ And they began to question among themselves, Who is to roll the stone away for us from the door of the tomb? Then they looked up, and saw that the stone, great as it was, had been rolled away already. And they went into the tomb, and saw there, on the right, a young man seated, wearing a white robe; and they were dismayed.⁸ But he said to them, No need to be dismayed; you have come to look for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; he has risen again, he is not here. Here is the place where they laid him. Go and tell Peter and the rest of his disciples that he is going before you into

¹ It is generally thought that St Mark is here treating the space between nine o'clock and noon as a single stretch of time, which he calls 'the third hour'; we are not, then, to suppose that our Lord was nailed to his cross at nine o'clock, and hung six hours upon it. If he was crucified at eleven, or even half-past eleven, it would still be during 'the third hour', in the sense that 'the sixth hour' had not yet begun (cf. v. 33 below). A further difficulty is raised upon the question of time by Jn. 19. 14; see p. 110, note 3.

² Is. 53. 12. ³ See p. 31, note 4.

⁴ Ps. 21. 2.

⁵ The body of a man who had been crucified must be taken down and buried before night-fall (Deut. 21. 23). But here early action was necessary, because it was a Friday, and after six o'clock in the evening the sabbath would have begun, so that the work of burial would have become unlawful.

⁶ *Ev.* 21-47; Mt. 27. 32; Lk. 23. 26; Jn. 19. 17.

⁷ See p. 111, note 4. ⁸ There were two angels according to St Luke (24. 4); perhaps one of them was seen inside the tomb, the other outside (Mt. 28. 2), and the women may not have been agreed, whether it was the same angel they saw in both places.

Galilee.¹ There you shall have sight of him,
 8 as he promised you. So they came out and
 ran away from the tomb, trembling and
 awe-struck, and said nothing to anyone,
 9 out of fear.² But he had risen again, at
 dawn on the first day of the week, and
 shewed himself first of all to Mary Mag-
 dalen,³ the woman out of whom he had cast
 10 seven devils. She went and gave the news
 to those who had been of his company,
 11 where they mourned and wept; and they,
 when they were told that he was alive and
 that she had seen him, could not believe it.
 12 After that, he appeared in the form of a
 stranger to two of them as they were walk-
 ing together, going out into the country;⁴
 13 these went back and gave the news to
 the rest, but they did not believe them
 either.

14 Then at last he appeared to all eleven of
 them as they sat at table, and reproached

them with their unbelief and their ob-
 stinacy of heart, in giving no credit to those
 who had seen him after he had risen. And 15
 he said to them, Go out all over the world
 and preach the gospel to the whole of
 creation; he who believes and is baptized 16
 will be saved; he who refuses belief will be
 condemned. Where believers go, these 17
 signs shall go with them; they will cast out
 devils in my name, they will speak in
 tongues that are strange to them; they will 18
 take up serpents in their hands, and drink
 poisonous draughts without harm; they
 will lay their hands upon the sick and make
 them recover. And so the Lord Jesus, 19
 when he had finished speaking to them,
 was taken up to heaven, and is seated now
 at the right hand of God; and they went 20
 out and preached everywhere, the Lord
 aiding them, and attesting his word by the
 miracles that went with them.⁵

¹ 'Peter and the rest of his disciples'; literally, 'his disciples and Peter', cf. Ac. 1. 14. ² *rv.* 1-8: Mt. 28. 1; Lk. 24. 1. *v.* 8: That is, evidently, they said nothing to those whom they met on their way; if St Mary Magdalen went on in front of the others, they will have passed St Peter and St John (Jn. 20. 3). ³ Jn. 20. 14. ⁴ Lk. 24. 13. ⁵ *rv.* 9-20: It seems that the manuscripts of St Mark were mutilated at the end in very early times; the whole of this chapter being sometimes omitted (St Jerome Ad Hedyb. q. 3). And in a few of our existing manuscripts these last twelve verses are wanting, which fact (together with the abruptness of their style) has made some critics think that they were added from another source. But they are evidently a primitive account, and there is no reason why we should not ascribe their inclusion here to St Mark.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE

MANY have been at pains to set forth the history of what time has brought to fulfilment among us, following the tradition of those first eye-witnesses who gave themselves up to the service of the word.¹ And I too, most noble Theophilus, have resolved to put the story in writing for thee as it befell, having first traced it carefully from its beginnings, that thou mayst understand the instruction thou hast already received, in all its certainty.

In the days when Herod was king of Judaea, there was a priest called Zachary, of Abia's turn of office,² who had married a wife of Aaron's family, by name Elizabeth; they were both well approved in God's sight, following all the commandments and observances of the Lord without reproach. They had no child; Elizabeth was barren, and both were now well advanced in years. He, then, as it happened, was doing a priest's duty before God in the order of his turn of office; and had been chosen by lot, as was the custom among the priests, to go into the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense there, while the whole multitude of the people stood praying without, at the hour of sacrifice. Suddenly he saw an angel of the Lord, standing at the right of the altar where incense was burnt. Zachary was bewildered at the sight, and overcome with fear; but the angel said, Zachary, do not be afraid; thy prayer has been heard, and thy wife Elizabeth is to bear thee a son, to whom thou shalt give the name of John. Joy and gladness shall be thine, and many hearts shall rejoice over his birth, for he is to be high in the Lord's favour; he is to drink neither wine nor strong drink; and from the time when he is yet a child in his

mother's womb he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost. He shall bring back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, ushering in his advent in the spirit and power of an Elias. He shall unite the hearts of all, the fathers with the children, and teach the disobedient the wisdom that makes men just, preparing for the Lord a people fit to receive him.³ And Zachary said to the angel, By what sign am I to be assured of this? I am an old man now, and my wife is far advanced in age. The angel answered, My name is Gabriel, and my place is in God's presence; I have been sent to speak with thee, and to bring thee this good news. Behold, thou shalt be dumb, and have no power of speech, until the day when this is accomplished; and that, because thou hast not believed my promise, which shall in due time be fulfilled. And now all the people were waiting for Zachary, and wondering that he delayed in the temple so long; but he, when he came out, could speak no word to them; whereupon they made sure that he had seen some vision in the sanctuary. He could but stand there making signs to them, for he remained dumb.

And so, when the days of his ministry were at an end, he went back to his house. It was after those days that his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she dwelt retired; she said, It is the Lord who has done this for me, visiting me at his own time, to take away my reproach among men.

When the sixth month came, God sent the angel Gabriel to a city of Galilee called Nazareth, where a virgin dwelt, betrothed to a man of David's lineage; his name was Joseph, and the virgin's name was Mary. Into her presence the angel came, and said,

¹ 'To the service of the word'; many of the early Fathers understood this to mean that they were servants of the Word, that is of Christ. Such a rendering gives a better sense to the Greek; but it is not certain that this title was applied to our Lord by any writer earlier than St John. ² Cf. I Par. 24. 10.

³ Mal. 4. 6.

Hail, thou who art full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.¹

29 She was much perplexed at hearing him speak so, and cast about in her mind, what she was to make of such a greeting. Then she the angel said to her, Mary, do not be afraid; thou hast found favour in the sight of God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call him Jesus. He shall be great, and men will know him for the Son of the most High; the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob eternally; his kingdom shall never have an end. But Mary said to the angel, How can that be, since I have no knowledge of man? And the angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come upon thee, and the power of the most High will overshadow thee. Thus this holy offspring of thine shall be known for the Son of God. See, moreover, how it fares with thy cousin Elizabeth; she is old, yet she too has conceived a son; she who was reproached with barrenness is now in her sixth month, to prove that nothing can be impossible with God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be unto me according to thy word. And with that the angel left her.

39 In the days that followed, Mary rose up and went with all haste to a town of Juda, in the hill country where Zachary dwelt; and there entering in she gave Elizabeth greeting. No sooner had Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, than the child leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth herself was filled with the Holy Ghost; so that she cried out with a loud voice, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. How have I deserved to be thus visited by the mother of my Lord? Why, as soon as ever the voice of thy greeting sounded in my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed art thou for thy believing; the message that was brought to thee from the Lord shall have fulfilment.

46 And Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord; my spirit has found joy in God, who

is my Saviour, because he has looked graciously upon the lowliness of his handmaid. Behold, from this day forward all generations will count me blessed; because he who is mighty, he whose name is holy, has wrought for me his wonders. He has mercy upon those who fear him, from generation to generation; he has done valiantly with the strength of his arm, driving the proud astray in the conceit of their hearts; he has put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty-handed. He has protected his servant Israel, keeping his merciful design in remembrance, according to the promise which he made to our forefathers, Abraham and his posterity for evermore.

Mary returned home when she had been with her about three months; meanwhile, Elizabeth's time had come for her child-bearing, and she bore a son.² Her neighbours and her kinsfolk, hearing how wonderfully God had shewed his mercy to her, came to rejoice with her; and now, when they assembled on the eighth day for the circumcision of the child, they were for calling him Zachary, because it was his father's name; but his mother answered, No, he is to be called John. And they said, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name, and began asking his father by signs, what name he would have him called by.³ So he asked for a tablet, and wrote on it the words, His name is John; and they were all astonished. Then, of a sudden, his lips and his tongue were unloosed, and he broke into speech, giving praise to God; so that fear came upon all their neighbourhood, and there was none of these happenings but was noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. All those who heard it laid it to heart; Why then, they asked, what will this boy grow to be? And indeed the hand of the Lord was with him.

Then his father Zachary was filled with the Holy Ghost, and spoke in prophecy: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; he

¹ 'Blessed art thou among women'; these words are wanting here in some manuscripts. They are to be found in verse 42, below. ² *vv.* 56-57: It is not certain whether the Blessed Virgin returned home before or after her cousin's delivery, since, by Greek usage, the verbs in verse 57 might have a pluperfect sense, 'she had brought forth a son'. ³ It would appear from this verse that Zachary became, not dumb only, but deaf; unless we understand that her kinsfolk made signs to him in private, for fear they should distress Elizabeth by their contradiction. Nothing is said of his being deaf in verse 64.

has visited his people, and wrought their
 69 redemption. He has raised up a sceptre of
 salvation for us among the posterity of his
 70 servant David,¹ according to the promise
 which he made by the lips of holy men that
 have been his prophets from the begin-
 71 ning; salvation from our enemies, and
 72 from the hand of all those who hate us. So
 he would carry out his merciful design
 towards our fathers, by remembering his
 73 holy covenant. He had sworn an oath to
 our father Abraham, that he would enable
 us to live without fear in his service, deli-
 75 vered from the hand of our enemies, pass-
 ing all our days in holiness, and approved
 76 in his sight. And thou, my child, wilt be
 known for a prophet of the most High,
 going before the Lord, to clear his way for
 77 him; thou wilt make known to his people
 the salvation that is to release them from
 78 their sins. Such is the merciful kindness
 of our God, which has bidden him come to
 79 us, like a dawning from on high, to give
 light to those who live in darkness, in the
 shadow of death, and to guide our feet into
 the way of peace.

80 And as the child grew, his spirit achieved
 strength, and he dwelt in the wilderness
 until the day when he was made manifest
 to Israel.

2 It happened that a decree went out at
 this time from the emperor Augustus,
 enjoining that the whole world should be
 2 registered; this register was the first one
 made during the time when Cyrenus was
 3 governor of Syria.² All must go and give in
 4 their names, each in his own city; and Jo-
 seph, being of David's clan and family,
 came up from the town of Nazareth, in
 Galilee, to David's city in Judaea, the city
 5 called Bethlehem, to give in his name there.
 With him was his espoused wife Mary,
 6 who was then in her pregnancy; and it was
 while they were still there that the time
 7 came for her delivery. She brought forth
 a son, her first-born,³ whom she wrapped
 in his swaddling-clothes, and laid in a

manger, because there was no room for
 them in the inn.

In the same country there were shep- 8
 herds awake in the fields, keeping night- 9
 watches over their flocks. And all at once 9
 an angel of the Lord came and stood by
 them, and the glory of the Lord shone
 about them, so that they were overcome
 with fear. But the angel said to them, Do 10
 not be afraid; behold, I bring you good 10
 news of a great rejoicing for the whole
 people. This day, in the city of David, a 11
 Saviour has been born for you, the Lord 11
 Christ himself. This is the sign by which 12
 you are to know him; you will find a child 12
 still in swaddling-clothes, lying in a
 manger. Then, on a sudden, a multitude 13
 of the heavenly army appeared to them at 13
 the angel's side, giving praise to God, and
 saying, Glory to God in high heaven, 14
 and peace on earth to men that are God's 14
 friends.

When the angels had left them, and gone 15
 back into heaven, the shepherds said to one 15
 another, Come, let us make our way to 15
 Bethlehem, and see for ourselves this hap- 15
 pening which God has made known to us.
 And so they went with all haste, and found 16
 Mary and Joseph there, with the child 16
 lying in the manger. On seeing him, they 17
 discovered the truth of what had been told 17
 them about this child.⁴ All those who 18
 heard it were full of amazement at the story 18
 which the shepherds told them; but Mary 19
 treasured up all these sayings, and re- 19
 flected on them in her heart. And the 20
 shepherds went home giving praise and
 glory to God, at seeing and hearing that all 20
 was as it had been told them.

When eight days had passed, and the 21
 boy must be circumcised, he was called 21
 Jesus, the name which the angel had given 21
 him before ever he was conceived in the 21
 womb. And when the time had come for 22
 purification according to the law of Moses, 22
 they brought him up to Jerusalem, to 22
 present him before the Lord there. It is 23
 written in God's law, that whatever male 23

¹ 'A sceptre'; literally, 'a horn'. This was a common Hebrew metaphor for any means of defence, as for example in II Kg. 22. 3, but here the reference is perhaps rather to such passages as Dan. 7. 24.

² There is here an ambiguity in the Greek, and some have thought the sense to be, 'This was the register which was made before Cyrenus was governor of Syria'. (The same doubt arises in Mt. 26. 17.) This gives an excellent sense; St Luke would be explaining that this was not the well-known census of the year 6 A.D., which led to an insurrection (Ac. 5. 37), but an earlier one. But the facts of Quirinius' career are not fully recorded.

³ See p. 1, note 3.

⁴ 'Discovered'; that is, to Mary and Joseph, according to the common usage of the Greek verb; the Latin, however, renders it as if the shepherds had discovered for themselves the truth of the angelic announcement.

offspring opens the womb is to be reckoned sacred to the Lord;¹ and so they must offer in sacrifice for him, as God's law commanded, a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.² At this time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem, an upright man of careful observance, who waited patiently for comfort to be brought to Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him; and by the Holy Spirit it had been revealed to him that he was not to meet death, until he had seen that Christ whom the Lord had anointed. He now came, led by the Spirit, into the temple; and when the child Jesus was brought in by his parents, to perform the custom which the law enjoined concerning him, Simeon too was able to take him in his arms. And he said, blessing God: Ruler of all, now dost thou let thy servant go in peace, according to thy word; for my own eyes have seen that saving power of thine which thou hast prepared in the sight of all nations. This is the light which shall give revelation to the Gentiles, this is the glory of thy people Israel. The father and mother of the child were still wondering over all that was said of him, when Simeon blessed them, and said to his mother Mary, Behold, this child is destined to bring about the fall of many and the rise of many in Israel; to be a sign which men will refuse to acknowledge; and so the thoughts of many hearts shall be made manifest; as for thy own soul, it shall have a sword to pierce it. There was besides a prophetess named Anna, daughter to one Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser (a woman greatly advanced in age, since she had lived with a husband for seven years after her maidenhood, and had now been eighty-four years a widow) who abode continually in the temple night and day, serving God with fasting and prayer. She too, at that very hour, came near to give God thanks, and spoke of the child to all that patiently waited for the deliverance of Israel. And now, when all had been done that the law of the Lord required, they returned to Galilee, and to their own town of Nazareth.

And so the child grew and came to his strength, full of wisdom; and the grace of God rested upon him.³ Every year, his parents used to go up to Jerusalem at the paschal feast. And when he was twelve years old, after going up to Jerusalem, as the custom was at the time of the feast, and completing the days of its observance, they set about their return home. But the boy Jesus, unknown to his parents, continued his stay in Jerusalem. And they, thinking that he was among their travelling companions, had gone a whole day's journey before they made enquiry for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances. When they could not find him, they made their way back to Jerusalem in search of him, and it was only after three days that they found him. He was sitting in the temple, in the midst of those who taught there, listening to them and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were in amazement at his quick understanding and at the answers he gave. Seeing him there, they were full of wonder, and his mother said to him, My Son, why hast thou treated us so? Think, what anguish of mind thy father and I have endured, searching for thee. But he asked them, What reason had you to search for me? Could you not tell that I must needs be in the place which belongs to my Father?⁴ These words which he spoke to them were beyond their understanding; but he went down with them on their journey to Nazareth, and lived there in subjection to them, while his mother kept in her heart the memory of all this. And so Jesus advanced in wisdom with the years, and in favour both with God and with men.⁵

3 It was in the fifteenth year of the emperor Tiberius' reign,⁶ when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, when Herod was prince in Galilee, his brother Philip in the Ituraean and Trachonitid region, and Lysanias in Abilina, in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas,⁷ that the word of God came upon John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he went all

¹ Ex. 13. 2. ² Lev. 12. 8. ³ 'Grace'; or perhaps 'favour', as in verse 52, below. ⁴ The phrase used is, 'in the things which are my Father's', and some would translate, 'about my Father's business'.
⁵ Our Lord, as Man, acquired experimental knowledge of the world about him, like other men. ⁶ There is some uncertainty about the system on which the Romans computed the years of a given reign; probably the fifteenth year of Tiberius would be 28 or 29 A.D. by our reckoning. ⁷ Caiaphas was the actual high priest; Annas, who had been deposed from that office, continued to exercise much influence.

over the country round Jordan, announcing a baptism whereby men repented, to have their sins forgiven: as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaias, There is a voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, straighten out his paths. Every valley is to be bridged, and every mountain and hill levelled, and the windings are to be cut straight, and the rough paths made into smooth roads, and all mankind is to see the saving power of God.¹ He said to the multitudes who came out to be baptized by him, Who was it that taught you, brood of vipers, to flee from the vengeance that draws near? Come then, yield the acceptable fruit of repentance; do not think to say, We have Abraham for our father; I tell you, God has power to raise up children to Abraham out of these very stones. Already the axe has been put to the root of the trees, so that every tree which does not shew good fruit will be hewn down and cast into the fire. And the multitudes asked him, What is it, then, we are to do? He answered them, The man who has two coats must share with the man who has none; and the man who has food to eat, must do the like. The publicans, too, came to be baptized; Master, they said to him, what are we to do? He told them, Do not go beyond the scale appointed you. Even the soldiers on guard asked him, What of us? What are we to do? He said to them, Do not use men roughly, do not lay false information against them; be content with your pay.²

And now the people was full of expectation; all had the same surmise in their hearts, whether John might not be the Christ. But John gave them their answer by saying publicly, As for me, I am baptizing you with water; but one is yet to come who is mightier than I, so that I am not worthy to untie the strap of his shoes. He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. He holds his winnowing-fan ready, to purge his threshing-floor clean; he will gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will consume with fire that can never be quenched. With these and many other warnings he gave his message to the

people: but when he rebuked prince Herod over his brother Philip's wife, and his shameful deeds, Herod, to crown all, shut John up in prison. It was while all the people were being baptized that Jesus was baptized too, and stood there praying. Suddenly heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form, like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.³

Jesus himself had now reached the age of about thirty. He was, by repute, the son of Joseph, son of Heli, son of Mathat, son of Levi, son of Melchi, son of Janne, son of Joseph, son of Matthatias, son of Amos, son of Nahum, son of Hesli, son of Nagge, son of Mahath, son of Matthatias, son of Semei, son of Joseph, son of Juda, son of Joanna, son of Resa, son of Zorobabel, son of Salathiel, son of Neri, son of Melchi, son of Addi, son of Cosan, son of Elmardan, son of Her, son of Jesu, son of Eliezer, son of Jorim, son of Mathat, son of Levi, son of Simeon, son of Juda, son of Joseph, son of Jona, son of Eliacim, son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mathatha, son of Nathan, son of David, son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Booz, son of Salmon, son of Naasson, son of Aminadab, son of Aram, son of Esron, son of Phares, son of Juda, son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Thare, son of Nachor, son of Sarug, son of Ragau, son of Phaleg, son of Heber, son of Sale, son of Cainan, son of Arphaxad, son of Sem, son of Noe, son of Lamech, son of Methusale, son of Henoch, son of Jared, son of Malaleel, son of Cainan, son of Henos, son of Seth, son of Adam, who was the son of God.⁴

4 Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit, and by the Spirit he was led on into the wilderness, where he remained forty days, tempted by the devil. During those days he ate nothing, and when they were over, he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, If thou art the Son of God, bid this stone turn into a loaf of bread. Jesus answered him, It is written, Man cannot live by bread only; there is life for him in all the words that come from

¹ Is. 40. 3. ² The soldiers were perhaps those on guard at the customs houses; the temptations they are to resist would be, in the modern world, those of the police. ³ *lv.* 3-22; *Mt.* 3. 1; *Mk.* 1. 1.

⁴ *lv.* 23-38; See p. 1, note 1.

5 God.¹ And the devil led him up on to a high mountain, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time; I will give thee command, the devil said to him, over all these, and the glory that belongs to them; they have been made over to me, and I may give them to whomsoever I please; come then, all shall be thine, if thou wilt fall down before me and worship. Jesus answered him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God; to him only shalt thou do service.² And he led him to Jerusalem, and there set him down on the pinnacle of the temple; If thou art the Son of God, he said to him, cast thyself down from this to the earth; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee safe, and they will hold thee up with their hands, lest thou shouldst chance to trip on a stone.³ And Jesus answered him, We are told, Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the proof.⁴ So the devil, when he had finished tempting him every way, left him in peace until the time should come.⁵

14 And Jesus came back to Galilee with the power of the Spirit upon him; word of him went round through all the neighbouring country, and he began to preach in their synagogues, so that his praise was on all men's lips. Then he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went into the synagogue there, as his custom was, on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. The book given to him was the book of the prophet *Isaias*; so he opened it, and found the place where the words ran:

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has anointed me, and sent me out to preach the gospel to the poor, to restore the broken-hearted; to bid the prisoners go free, and the blind have sight; to set the oppressed at liberty, to proclaim a year when men may find acceptance with the Lord, a day of retribution.⁶ Then he shut the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All those who were in the synagogue fixed their eyes on him, and thus he began speaking to them, This scripture which I have read in your hearing is to-day fulfilled. All bore testimony to him, and were as-

tonished at the gracious words which came from his mouth; Why, they said, is not this the son of Joseph? Then he said to them, No doubt you will tell me, as the proverb says, Physician, heal thyself; do here in thy own country all that we have heard of thy doing at Capharnaum. And he said, Believe me, no prophet finds acceptance in his own country.⁷ Why, you may be sure of this, there were many widows among the people of Israel in the days of *Elias*, when a great famine came over all the land, after the heavens had remained shut for three years and six months, but *Elias* was not sent to any of these. He was sent to a widow woman in *Sarepta*, which belongs to *Sidon*.⁸ And there were many lepers among the people of Israel in the days of the prophet *Eliseus*; but it was none of them, it was *Naaman* the Syrian, who was made clean.⁹ All those who were in the synagogue were full of indignation at hearing this; they rose up and thrust him out of the city, and took him up to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, to throw him over it. But he passed through the midst of them, and so went on his way.

Then he went down to Capharnaum, which is a city in Galilee, and began teaching them there on the sabbath; and they were amazed by his teaching, such was the authority with which he spoke. In the synagogue was a man who was possessed by an unclean spirit, that cried out with a loud voice: Nay, why dost thou meddle with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Hast thou come to make an end of us? I recognize thee for what thou art, the Holy One of God. Jesus rebuked it; Silence! he said; come out of him. Then the unclean spirit threw him into a convulsion before them all, and went out of him without doing him any injury. Wonder fell upon them all, as they said to one another, What is this word of his? See how he has authority and power to lay his command on the unclean spirits, so that they come out! And the story of his doings spread into every part of the country-side.¹⁰

So he rose up and left the synagogue, and went into Simon's house. The mother

¹ Deut. 8. 3.² Deut. 6. 13.³ Ps. 90. 11, 12.⁴ Deut. 6. 16. See p. 3, note 5.⁵ *vv.* 1-13; *Mt.* 4. 1; *Mk.* 1. 12. We have no means to determine whether it is *St. Matthew* or *St. Luke* that has recorded the second and third temptations in their historical order.⁶ *Is.* 61. 1, 2.⁷ *vv.* 22-24; *Mt.* 13. 54; *Mk.* 6. 1; *Jn.* 6. 42.⁸ *III Kg.* 17. 9.⁹ *IV Kg.* 5. 9.¹⁰ *vv.* 31-37; *Mk.* 1. 21.

of Simon's wife was in the grip of a violent fever, and they entreated his aid for her. **9** He stood over her, and checked the fever, so that it left her; all at once she rose, and ministered to them. And when the sun was going down, all those who had friends afflicted with diseases of any kind brought them to him: and he laid his hands upon each one of them, and healed them. Many, too, had devils cast out of them, which cried aloud, Thou art the Son of God; but he rebuked them and would not have them speak, because they knew that he was the **12** Christ.¹ Then, when day came, he went out and retired to a desert place. The multitude, who had set out in search of him and caught him up, would have kept him there, and not let him leave them. But he told them, I must preach the gospel of God's kingdom to the other cities too; it is **13** for this that I was sent. And so he went on preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.²

5 It happened that he was standing by the lake of Genesareth, at a time when the multitude was pressing close about **1** him to hear the word of God; and he saw two boats moored at the edge of the lake; the fishermen had gone ashore, and were **2** washing their nets. And he went on board one of the boats, which belonged to Simon, and asked him to stand off a little from the land; and so, sitting down, he began to **3** teach the multitudes from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Stand out into the deep water, and let **4** down your nets for a catch. Simon answered him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and caught nothing; but at thy word **5** I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they took a great quantity of **6** fish, so that the net was near breaking, and they must needs beckon to their partners who were in the other boat to come and help them. When these came, they filled **7** both boats, so that they were ready to sink. **8** At seeing this, Simon Peter fell down and caught Jesus by the knees; Leave me to myself, Lord, he said; I am a sinner. Such amazement had overcome both him and all his crew, at the catch of fish they had **9** made; so it was, too, with James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's

partners. But Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid; henceforth thou shalt be a fisher of men. So, when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed him.

Afterwards, while he was in one of the **12** cities, he came upon a man who was far gone in leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell on his face in entreaty; Lord, he said, if it be thy will, thou hast power to make me clean. And he stretched out his hand, and **13** touched him, and said, It is my will; be thou made clean. Whereupon all at once his leprosy passed from him. And Jesus **14** warned him not to tell anyone of it; Go and shew thyself to the priest, he said, and bring an offering for thy cleansing, as Moses commanded, to make the truth **15** known to them.³ But still the talk of him spread more and more, and great multitudes came together to listen to him, and be healed of their infirmities. And he **16** would steal away from them into the desert and pray there.⁴

It chanced one day that he was teaching, **17** and that some Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting by, who had come from every village in Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was there, to grant healing. Just then, some **18** men brought there on a bed one who was palsied, whom they tried to carry in and set down in Jesus' presence. But, finding no **19** way of carrying him in, because of the multitude, they went up on to the house-top, and let him down between the tiles, bed and all, into the clear space in front of **20** Jesus. And he, seeing their faith, said, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. Where- **21** upon the Pharisees and scribes fell to reasoning thus, Who can this be, that he talks so blasphemously? Who can forgive sins but God and God only? Jesus knew of **22** these secret thoughts of theirs, and said to them openly, Why do you reason thus in your hearts? Which command is more **23** lightly given, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk?⁵ And **24** now, to convince you that the Son of Man has power to forgive sins while he is on earth (here he spoke to the palsied man), I tell thee, rise up, take thy bed with thee and go home. And he rose up at once in **25**

¹ *vv.* 38-41: Mt. 8. 14; Mk. 1. 29.

² *vv.* 42-44: Mk. 1. 35.

³ Lev. 14. 2.

⁴ *vv.* 12-

16: Mt. 8. 1; Mk. 1. 40.

⁵ See p. 8, note 2.

26 full sight of them, took up his bedding, and went home, giving praise to God. Astonishment came over them all, and they praised God, full of awe; We have seen strange things, they said, to-day.

27 Then he went out, and caught sight of a publican, called Levi, sitting at work in the customs house, and said to him, Follow me. And he rose up, and left all behind, and followed him. Then Levi made a great feast for him in his house, and there was a crowded company of publicans and others who were their fellow guests. Whereupon the Pharisees and scribes complained to his disciples, How comes it that you eat and drink with publicans and sinners? But Jesus answered them, It is those who are sick, not those who are in health, that have need of the physician. I have not come to call the just; I have come to call sinners to repentance.

33 Then they said to him, How is it that thy disciples eat and drink, when John's disciples are always fasting and praying, and the Pharisees' disciples too? And he said to them, Can you persuade the men of the bridegroom's company to fast, while the bridegroom is still with them? No, the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them; then they will fast, when that day comes. And he told them this parable; Nobody uses a piece taken from a new cloak to patch an old one; if that is done, he will have torn the new cloak, and the piece taken from the new will not match the old. Nor does anybody put new wine into old wine-skins; if that is done, the new wine bursts the skins, and there is the wine spilt and the skins spoiled. 38 If the wine is new, it must be put into fresh wine-skins, and so both are kept safe.¹ Nobody who has been drinking old wine calls all at once for new; he will tell you, The old is better.

6 It happened that on the next sabbath but one he was walking through the corn-fields; and his disciples were plucking the ears of corn and eating them, rubbing them between their hands. And some of the Pharisees said to them, Why are you doing what it is not lawful to do on the

sabbath? Whereupon Jesus answered them, Why, have you never read of what David did, when he and his followers were hungry?² How he went into the tabernacle, and ate the loaves set forth there before God, and gave them to his followers, although it is not lawful for anyone except the priests to eat them? And he told them, The Son of Man has even the sabbath at his disposal.³ And on another sabbath day it happened that he went into the synagogue to teach, when there was a man there who had his right hand withered. The scribes and Pharisees were watching him, to see whether he would restore health on the sabbath, so that they might have a charge to bring against him. He knew their secret thoughts, and said to the man who had his hand withered, Rise up, and come forward; whereupon he rose to his feet. Then Jesus said to them, I have a question to ask you; which is right, to do good on the sabbath day, or to do harm? To save life, or to make away with it? And he looked round on them all, and said to him, Stretch out thy hand. And he did so, and his hand was restored to him. And they were overcome with fury, debating with one another what they could do to Jesus.⁴

It was at this time that he went out on to the mountain-side, and passed the whole night offering prayer to God, and when day dawned, he called his disciples to him, choosing out twelve of them; these he called his apostles. Their names were, Simon, whom he also called Peter, his brother Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who is called the Zealot, Jude the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, the man who turned traitor.⁵ With them he went down and stood on a level place; a multitude of his disciples was there, and a great gathering of the people from all Judaea, and Jerusalem, and the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon. These had come there to listen to him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled by unclean spirits were also cured; so that all the multitude was eager to touch him, because power went out from him, and healed them all.

¹ vv. 17-38: Mt. 9. 1; Mk. 2. 1. ² I Kg. 21. 6.

Mt. 12. 9; Mk. 3. 1.

³ vv. 1-5: Mt. 12. 1; Mk. 2. 23.

⁴ vv. 6-11:

Mt. 12. 9; Mk. 3. 1. ⁵ vv. 12-16: Mt. 10. 1; Mk. 3. 13.

⁶ v. 16: Jude brother of James, the author of the epistle, seems to have been also called Thaddaeus (Mt. 10. 3; Mk. 3. 18).

0 Then he lifted up his eyes towards his disciples, and said; Blessed are you who are poor; the kingdom of God is yours.
 1 Blessed are you who are hungry now; you will have your fill. Blessed are you who
 2 weep now; you will laugh for joy. Blessed are you, when men hate you and cast you off and revile you, when they reject your name as something evil, for the Son of
 3 Man's sake. When that day comes, rejoice and exult over it; for behold, a rich reward awaits you in heaven; their fathers treated
 4 the prophets no better. But woe upon you who are rich; you have your comfort already. Woe upon you who are filled full; you shall be hungry. Woe upon you who laugh now; you shall mourn and weep.
 5 Woe upon you, when all men speak well of you; their fathers treated the false prophets no worse.
 7 And now I say to you who are listening to me, Love your enemies, do good to those
 8 who hate you; bless those who curse you, and pray for those who treat you insultingly. If a man strikes thee on the cheek,
 9 offer him the other cheek too; if a man would take away thy cloak, do not grudge
 0 him thy coat along with it. Give to every man who asks, and if a man takes what is thine, do not ask him to restore it. As you would have men treat you, you are to treat them; no otherwise. Why, what credit is it to you, if you love those who love you? Even sinners love those who love them.
 3 What credit is it to you, if you do good to those who do good to you? Even sinners do as much. What credit is it to you, if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much in exchange. No, it is your enemies you must love, and do them good, and lend to them, without any hope of return; then your reward will be a rich one, and you will be true sons of the most High, generous like him towards the thankless and unjust.
 6 Be merciful, then, as your Father is merciful. Judge nobody, and you will not be judged; condemn nobody, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and gifts will be yours; good measure, pressed down and shaken up and running over, will be poured into

your lap; the measure you award to others is the measure that will be awarded to you.

And he told them this parable, Can one blind man lead another? Will not both fall into the ditch together?

A disciple is no better than his master; he will be fully perfect if he is as his master is.

How is it that thou canst see the speck of dust which is in thy brother's eye, and art not aware of the beam which is in thy own? By what right wilt thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me rid thy eye of that speck, when thou canst not see the beam that is in thy own? Thou hypocrite, take the beam out of thy own eye first, and so thou shalt have clear sight to rid thy brother's of the speck.

There is no sound tree that will yield withered fruit, no withered tree that will yield sound fruit. Each tree is known by its proper fruit; figs are not plucked from thorns, nor grapes gathered from brier bushes. A good man utters what is good from his heart's store of goodness; the wicked man, from his heart's store of wickedness, can utter nothing but what is evil; it is from the heart's overflow that the mouth speaks.

How is it that you call me, Master, Master, and will not do what I bid you? If anyone comes to me and listens to my commandments and carries them out, I will tell you what he is like; he is like a man that would build a house, who dug, dug deep, and laid his foundation on rock. Then a flood came, and the river broke upon that house, but could not stir it; it was founded upon rock. But the man who listens to what I say and does not carry it out is like a man who built his house in the earth without foundation; when the river broke upon it, it fell at once, and great was that house's ruin.¹

7 When he had said his say in the hearing of the people, he went to Capernaum. There was a centurion that had a servant, very dear to him, who was then at the point of death; and he, when he was told about Jesus, sent some of the elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. And these, presenting

¹ vv. 20-49: Many of the sayings recorded in these verses are also to be found in St Matthew, especially 5. 39; 7. 27.

themselves before Jesus, began to make earnest appeal to him; He deserves, they said, to have this done for him; he is a good friend to our race, and has built our synagogue for us at his own cost. So Jesus set out in their company; and when he was already near the house, the centurion sent some friends to him; Do not put thyself to any trouble, Lord, he said; I am not worthy to receive thee under my roof. That is why I did not presume to come to thee myself. My servant will be healed if thou wilt only speak a word of command. I too know what it is to obey authority; I have soldiers under me, and I say, Go, to one man, and he goes, or, Come, to another, and he comes, or, Do this, to my servant, and he does it. When he heard that, Jesus turned in amazement to the multitude which followed him, and said, Believe me, I have not found faith like this, even in Israel. And the messengers, when they came back to the house, found the servant who had been sick fully recovered.¹

And now it happened that he was going into a city called Naim, attended by his disciples and by a great multitude of people. And just as he drew near the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out to his burial; the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a crowd of folk from the city went with her. When the Lord saw her, he had pity on her, and said, Do not weep. Then he went up and put his hand on the bier; and those who were carrying it stood still. And he said, Young man, I say to thee, rise up. And the dead man sat up, and spoke; and Jesus gave him back to his mother. They were all overcome with awe, and said, praising God, A great prophet has risen up among us; God has visited his people. And this story of him was noised abroad throughout the whole of Judaea and all the country round.

John was told of all this by his disciples. And he summoned two of his disciples, and sent them to Jesus to ask, Is it thy coming that was foretold, or are we yet waiting for some other? So they presented themselves before him, and said, John the Baptist has sent us to ask, Is it thy coming that was

foretold, or are we yet waiting for some other? At the very time of their visit, Jesus rid many of their diseases and afflictions and of evil spirits, and gave many that were blind the gift of sight. Then he answered, Go and tell John what your own eyes and ears have witnessed; how the blind see, and the lame walk, and the lepers are made clean, and the deaf hear; how the dead are raised to life, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Blessed is he who does not lose confidence in me.

Then, when John's messengers had gone away, he took occasion to speak of John to the multitudes; What was it, he asked, that you expected to see when you went out into the wilderness? Was it a reed trembling in the wind? No, not that; what was it you went out to see? Was it a man clad in silk? You must look in kings' palaces for men that go proudly dressed, and live in luxury. What was it, then, that you went out to see? A prophet? Yes, and something more, I tell you, than a prophet. This is the man of whom it is written, Behold, I am sending before thee that angel of mine who is to prepare the way for thy coming.² I tell you, there is no greater than John the Baptist among all the sons of women; and yet to be least in the kingdom of heaven is to be greater than he. It was the common folk who listened to him, and the publicans, that had given God his due, by receiving John's baptism, whereas the Pharisees and lawyers, by refusing it, had frustrated God's plan for them. And the Lord said, To what, then, shall I compare the men of this generation? What are they like? They put me in mind of those children who call out to their companions as they sit in the market-place and say, You would not dance when we piped to you, you would not mourn when we wept to you. When John came, he would neither eat nor drink, and you say, He is possessed. When the Son of Man came, he ate and drank with you, and of him you say, Here is a glutton; he loves wine; he is a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is vindicated by all her children.³

One of the Pharisees invited him to a

¹ *vv.* 1-10: *Mt.* 8. 5-13. St Matthew represents the centurion as going to our Lord personally, and making no request that he should come to his house. St Augustine and other commentators explain that the centurion 'approached' our Lord only through his friends. Others have thought that the centurion, perhaps anxious at the delay, followed up his two messages by coming out to meet our Lord in person.

² *Mal.* 3. 1. ³ *vv.* 18-35: *Mt.* 11. 2; see p. 10, notes 4, 5; p. 11, notes 1, 2.

meal; so he went into the Pharisee's house
 17 and took his place at table. And there was
 then a sinful woman in the city, who, hearing
 that he was at table in the Pharisee's
 1 house, brought a pot of ointment with her,
 8 and took her place behind him at his feet,
 weeping; then she began washing his feet
 with her tears, and drying them with her
 hair, kissing his feet, and anointing them
 9 with the ointment. His host, the Pharisee,
 1 saw it, and thought to himself, If this man
 were a prophet, he would know who this
 1 woman is that is touching him, and what
 2 kind of woman, a sinner. But Jesus answered
 him thus, Simon, I have a word for thy
 hearing. Tell it me, Master, he said.
 3 There was a creditor who had two debtors;
 4 one owed him five hundred pieces of silver,
 5 the other fifty; they had no means of paying
 him, and he gave them both their discharge.
 6 And now tell me, which of them
 7 loves him the more? I suppose, Simon
 8 answered, that it is the one who had the
 greater debt discharged. And he said,
 9 Thou hast judged rightly. Then he turned
 towards the woman, and said to Simon,
 10 Dost thou see this woman? I came into thy
 house, and thou gavest me no water for my
 feet; she has washed my feet with her tears,
 11 and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest
 me no kiss of greeting; she has never
 12 ceased to kiss my feet since I entered; thou
 didst not pour oil on my head; she has
 13 anointed my feet, and with ointment. And
 14 so, I tell thee, if great sins have been
 forgiven her, she has also greatly loved.¹ He
 loves little, who has little forgiven him.
 15 Then he said to her, Thy sins are forgiven.
 16 And his fellow guests thereupon thought
 to themselves, Who is this, that he even
 17 forgives sins? But he told the woman, Thy
 faith has saved thee; go in peace.

8 Then followed a time in which he
 went on journeying from one city or
 1 village to another, preaching and spreading
 2 the good news of God's kingdom. With
 him were the twelve apostles, and certain
 3 women, whom he had freed from evil
 spirits and from sicknesses, Mary who is
 4 called Magdalen, who had had seven devils

cast out of her, and Joanna, the wife of
 3 Chusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and
 many others, who ministered to him with
 the means they had. When a great multi-
 4 tude had gathered, and more came flocking
 to him out of the cities, he spoke to them in
 a parable. Here is the sower gone out to
 5 sow his seed. And as he sowed, there were
 some grains that fell beside the path, so
 that they were trodden under foot, and the
 birds flew down and ate them. And others
 6 fell on the rocks, where they withered as
 soon as they were up, because they had no
 moisture. And some fell among briars, and
 7 the briars grew up with them and smothered
 them. But others fell where the soil
 8 was good, and when these grew up they
 yielded a hundredfold. So saying, he cried
 aloud, Listen, you that have ears to hear
 with.

Then his disciples asked him what this
 9 parable meant. And he told them, It is
 10 granted to you to understand the secret of
 God's kingdom; the rest must learn of it by
 parables, so that they can watch without
 seeing, and listen without understanding.
 The parable means this; the seed is God's
 11 word. Those by the way-side hear the
 word, and then the devil comes and takes
 it away from their hearts, so that they cannot
 12 find faith and be saved. Those on the
 rock, are those who entertain the word
 with joy as soon as they hear it, and yet
 13 have no roots; they last for a while, but in
 time of temptation they fall away. And the
 14 grain that fell among the briars stands for
 those who hear it, and then, going on their
 way, are stifled by the cares, the riches, and
 the pleasures of life, and never reach maturity.
 And the grain that fell in good soil
 15 stands for those who hear the word, and
 hold by it with a noble and generous heart,
 and endure, and yield a harvest.²

Nobody lights a lamp, to hide it away in
 16 a jar or under a bed; it is put on a lamp-
 stand, so that all who come into the house
 can see its light. What is covered up will all
 17 be revealed; what is hidden will all be
 made known, and come to light. Look
 18 well, then, how you listen. If a man is
 rich, gifts will be made to him; if he is

¹ This may mean that the woman has shewn great love because she has been forgiven much, or that the woman has been forgiven much because she has shewn great love. The former interpretation seems to fit in with the parable which goes before, and with the sentence which immediately follows; the latter has the authority of the older commentators.

² *vv.* 4-15: *Mt.* 13, 1; *Mk.* 4, 1.

poor, he will lose even what he thinks his own.

And his mother and brethren came to visit him, but could not reach him because of the multitude. So word was given him, Thy mother and thy brethren are standing without, asking to see thee. But he answered them, My mother and my brethren are those who hear the word of God, and keep it.¹

A day came when he and his disciples embarked on a boat; Let us cross to the other side of the lake, he said to them; and they began their voyage. While they were sailing, he fell asleep. And now a storm of wind came down upon the lake, and they began to ship water perilously. So they came and roused him, crying, Master, master, we are sinking. And he rose up, and checked both wind and wave, and there was calm. Then he said to them, Where is your faith? And they were full of awe and astonishment, saying to one another, Why, who is this, who gives his command to wind and water, and is obeyed?²

So they came to land in the country of the Gerasenes, which is on the coast opposite Galilee; and as he went ashore, he was met by a possessed man who for a long time had gone naked, and lived homeless among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him, and cried with a loud voice, Why dost thou meddle with me, Jesus, Son of the most High God? I pray thee, do not torment me. (For he was bidding the unclean spirit come out of the man.) Often, at times when it had seized upon him, the man had been bound, under guard, with chains and fetters, but still he would break his bonds, and the devil would drive him out into the wilderness. Then Jesus asked him, What is thy name? And he said, Legion; for there were many devils that had entered into him. And they enreated him not to bid them go back to the abyss. There was a great herd of swine feeding on the mountain-side, and the devils besought his leave to go into these instead; this leave he granted them. So the devils left the man and entered into the swine; whereupon the herd rushed down the cliff into the lake, and were drowned.

The herdsmen fled when they saw it happen, and spread the news of it in the city and about the country-side; so that they came out to see what had happened for themselves. When they reached Jesus, they found the man from whom the devils had been driven out sitting there, clothed and restored to his wits, at Jesus' feet; and they were terrified. Those who had witnessed it told them how the possessed man had been delivered. Then all the common folk of the country round Gerasa asked Jesus to leave them, such fear had gripped them; and he embarked on the boat and returned. The man from whom the devils had been driven out asked leave to accompany him; but Jesus sent him away; Go back home, he said, and make known all God's dealings with thee. So he went back, and published all over the city the news of the great things Jesus had done for him.³

When Jesus returned, he found the multitude there to greet him; they had all been awaiting him. And now a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, imploring him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years old, who was dying. It happened that, as he went, the multitude pressed about him closely. And a woman who for twelve years had had an issue of blood, and had spent all her money on doctors without finding one who could cure her, came up behind and touched the hem of his cloak; and suddenly her issue of blood was stanchd. Then Jesus said, Who touched me? All disclaimed it; Master, said Peter and his companions, the multitudes are hemming thee in and crowding upon thee, and canst thou ask, Who touched me? But Jesus said, Somebody touched me; I can tell that power has gone out from me. And the woman, finding that there was no concealment, came forward trembling and fell at his feet, and so told him before all the people of her reason for touching him, and of her sudden cure. And he said to her, My daughter, thy faith has brought thee recovery; go in peace.

While he was yet speaking, a messenger came to the ruler of the synagogue, to say, Thy daughter is dead; it do not trouble the

¹ *vv.* 19-21: Mt. 12. 46; Mk. 3. 31; see p. 13, note 2.

² *vv.* 22-25: Mt. 8. 23; Mk. 4. 35.

³ *vv.* 26-39: Mt. 8. 28; Mk. 5. 1.

50 Master. Jesus heard it, and said to him
 openly, Do not be afraid; thou hast only
 51 to believe, and she will recover. When he
 reached the house, he would not let anyone
 come in with him, except Peter and James
 and John, and the child's father and
 52 mother. All were weeping and bewailing
 her; There is no need to weep, he told
 53 them; she is not dead, she is asleep. And
 they laughed aloud at him, well knowing
 54 that she was dead. But he took her by the
 hand, and called aloud, Rise up, maiden;
 55 and she rose up there and then with life
 restored to her. He ordered that she
 56 should be given something to eat, and
 warned her parents, who were beside
 themselves with wonder, to let no one hear
 of what had befallen.¹

9 And he called the twelve apostles to
 him, and gave them power and author-
 ity over all devils, and to cure diseases,
 12 sending them out to proclaim the kingdom
 of God, and to heal the sick. He told them,
 13 Take nothing with you to use on your
 journey, staff or wallet or bread or money;
 you are not to have more than one coat
 14 apiece. You are to lodge in the house you
 first enter, and not change your abode.
 15 And wherever they deny you a welcome,
 as you leave the city, shake off the dust
 from your feet, in witness against them.²
 16 So they set out and passed through the
 villages, preaching the gospel and healing
 the sick wherever they went.

17 And Herod, who was prince in that
 quarter, heard of all his doings, and did not
 18 know what to think, some telling him that
 John had risen from the dead, and some
 that Elias had appeared, and some that one
 of the old prophets had returned to life.
 19 John, said Herod, I beheaded; who can
 this be, of whom I hear such reports? And
 he was eager to see him.

20 And now the apostles came back and
 told Jesus of all they had done. And he
 retired, taking them with him, to a desert
 place in the Bethsaida country, where they
 could be alone. But the multitudes heard
 of it, and followed him; so he gave them
 welcome, and spoke to them of the king-
 dom of God, and cured those who were in
 21 need of healing. And now the day began

to wear on; and the twelve came and said
 to him, Give the multitudes leave to go to
 the villages and farms round about, so that
 they can find lodging and food; we are in
 desert country here. But he told them, It
 13 is for you to give them food to eat. We have
 no more, they said, than five loaves and
 two fishes, unless thou wouldst have us go
 ourselves and buy food for all this as-
 14 sembly. About five thousand men were
 gathered there. So he said to his disciples,
 Make them sit down by companies of fifty;
 and they did this, bidding all of them sit
 15 down. Then he took the five loaves and the
 16 two fishes, and looked up to heaven, and
 blessed them, and broke, and gave them to
 his disciples, to set before the multitude.
 All ate and had their fill, and when what
 17 they left over was picked up, it filled twelve
 baskets.³

There was a time when he had gone
 18 apart to pray, and his disciples were with
 him; and he asked them, Who do the mul-
 titude say that I am? They answered, John
 19 the Baptist; others say Elias; others, that
 one of the old prophets has returned to life.
 Then he said to them, But who do you say
 20 that I am? And Peter answered, Thou art
 the Christ whom God has anointed. And
 21 he laid a strict charge upon them, bidding
 them tell no one of it; The Son of Man, he
 22 said, is to be much ill-used, and rejected by
 the elders and chief priests and scribes, and
 be put to death, and rise again on the third
 23 day. And he said to all alike, If any man
 has a mind to come my way, let him re-
 nounce self, and take up his cross daily,
 and follow me. He who tries to save his
 24 life will lose it; it is the man who loses his
 life for my sake, that will save it. How is
 25 a man the better for gaining the whole world,
 if he loses himself, if he pays the forfeit of
 himself? If anyone is ashamed of acknow-
 26 ledging me and my words, the Son of Man
 will be ashamed to acknowledge him,
 when he comes in his glory, with his
 Father and the holy angels to glorify him.
 Believe me, there are those standing here
 27 who will not taste of death before they have
 seen the kingdom of God.⁴

It was about a week after all this was
 28 said, that he took Peter and John and
 James with him, and went up on to the

¹ vv. 40-56. Mt. 9. 18; Mk. 5. 21.

² vv. 1-5; Mt. 10. 1; Mk. 6. 7.

³ vv. 10-17; Mt. 14.

⁴ vv. 18-27; Mt. 16. 13; Mk. 8. 27.

29 mountain-side to pray. And even as he prayed, the fashion of his face was altered, and his garments became white and dazzling; and two men appeared conversing with him, Moses and Elias, seen now in glory; and they spoke of the death which he was to achieve at Jerusalem. Meanwhile, Peter and his companions were sunk in sleep; and they awoke to see him in his glory, and the two men standing with him.

33 And, just as these were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is well that we should be here; let us make three arbours in this place, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. But he spoke at random: and even as he said it, a cloud formed, overshadowing them; they saw those others disappear into the cloud, and were terrified. And a voice came from the cloud, This is my beloved Son; to him, then, listen. And as the voice sounded, Jesus was discovered alone. They kept silence, and at the time said nothing of what they had seen to anybody.

37 It was on the next day that they came down from the mountain, and were met by a great multitude; and now, from the midst of this multitude, a man cried out, I entreat thee, Master, look with favour upon my son; he is my only child. There are times when a spirit seizes upon him, making him cry out suddenly, and throws him into a convulsion, foaming at the mouth; then it goes away, but only with a pang which lacerates him. And I entreated thy disciples to cast it out, but they could not.

41 Jesus answered, Ah, faithless and misguided generation, how long must I be with you, how long must I bear with you? Bring thy son here. And even as the boy was on his way, the devil threw him down in a convulsion. But Jesus checked the unclean spirit, and cured the boy, and gave him back to his father;¹ so that all were amazed at this great evidence of God's power. And while men were yet wondering at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, Remember this well. The Son of Man is soon to be betrayed into the hands of men.

45 But they could not understand what he said; it was hidden from them, so that they

could not perceive the meaning of it; and they were afraid to ask him about this saying of his.

And a question arose among them, which of them was the greatest. Jesus, who saw what was occupying their thoughts, took hold of a little child and gave it a place beside him, and said to them, He who welcomes this child in my name, welcomes me; and he who welcomes me welcomes him that sent me. He who is least in all your company is the greatest. And John answered, Master, we saw a man who does not follow in our company casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him to do it. But Jesus said, Forbid him no more; the man who is not against you is on your side.²

And now the time was drawing near for his taking away from the earth, and he turned his eyes steadfastly towards the way that led to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers before him, who came into a Samaritan village, to make all in readiness. But the Samaritans refused to receive him, because his journey was in the direction of Jerusalem. When they found this, two of his disciples, James and John, asked him, Lord, wouldst thou have us bid fire come down from heaven, and consume them?³ But he turned and rebuked them, You do not understand, he said, what spirit it is you share. The Son of Man has come to save men's lives, not to destroy them. And so they passed on to another village.⁴

As they went on their journey, a man said to him, I will follow thee wherever thou art going. But Jesus told him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their resting-places; the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. To another he said, Follow me, and he answered, Lord, give me leave to go home and bury my father first. But Jesus said to him, Leave the dead to bury their dead; it is for thee to go out and proclaim God's kingdom.⁵ And there was yet another who said, Lord, I will follow thee, but first let me take leave of my friends. To him Jesus said, No one who looks behind him, when he has once put his hand to the plough, is fitted for the kingdom of God.

¹ *vv.* 28-43: Mt. 17. 1; Mk. 9. 1. ² *vv.* 46-50: Mt. 18. 1; Mk. 9. 32. ³ IV Kg. 1. 10. Many Greek manuscripts add, 'as Elias did'. ⁴ *vv.* 55, 56: Many Greek manuscripts have simply 'But he turned and rebuked them. And so they passed on to another village'. 'What spirit it is', perhaps in reference to IV Kg. 2. 9, cf. verse 51 above.

⁵ *vv.* 57-60: Mt. 8. 19.

10 After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others, and sent them before him, two and two, into all the cities and villages he himself was to visit. The harvest, he told them, is plentiful enough, but the labourers are few; you must ask the Lord to whom the harvest belongs to send labourers out for the harvesting. Go then, and remember, I am sending you out to be like lambs among wolves. You are not to carry purse, or wallet, or shoes; you are to give no one greeting on your way. When you enter a house, say first of all, Peace be to this house; and if those who dwell there are men of good will, your good wishes shall come down upon it; if not, they will come back to you the way they went. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they have to give you; the labourer has a right to his maintenance; do not move from one house to another. When you enter a city, and they make you welcome, be content to eat the fare they offer you; and heal those who are sick there; and tell them, The kingdom of God is close upon you. But if you enter a city where they will not make you welcome, go out into their streets, and say, We brush off in your faces the very dust from your city that has clung to our feet; and be sure of this, the kingdom of God is close at hand. I tell you, it shall go less hard with Sodom at the day of judgement, than with that city. Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida! Tyre and Sidon would have repented long ago, humbling themselves with sackcloth and ashes, if the miracles done in you had been done there instead. And indeed, it shall go less hard with Tyre and Sidon at the judgement, than with you. And thou, Capharnaum, dost thou hope to be lifted up high as heaven? Thou shalt be brought low as hell. He who listens to you, listens to me; he who despises you, despises me; and he who despises me, despises him that sent me. And the seventy-two disciples came back full of rejoicing; Lord, they said, even the devils are made subject to us through thy name. He said to them, I watched, while Satan was cast down like a lightning-flash from heaven. Behold, I have given you the right to trample on snakes and scorpions, and all the power of

the enemy, and take no hurt from it. But you, instead of rejoicing that the devils are made subject to you, should be rejoicing that your names are enrolled in heaven. At this time, Jesus was filled with gladness by the Holy Spirit, and said, O Father, who art Lord of heaven and earth, I give thee praise that thou hast hidden all this from the wise and the prudent, and revealed it to little children. Be it so, Lord, since this finds favour in thy sight. My Father has entrusted everything into my hands; none knows what the Son is, except the Father, and none knows what the Father is, except the Son, and those to whom it is the Son's good pleasure to reveal him. Then, turning to his own disciples, he said, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see; I tell you, there have been many prophets and kings who have longed to see what you see, and never saw it, to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

It happened once that a lawyer rose up, trying to put him to the test; Master, he said, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus asked him, What is it that is written in the law? What is thy reading of it? And he answered, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the love of thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and thy whole strength, and thy whole mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.¹ Thou hast answered right, he told him; do this, and thou shalt find life. But he, to prove himself blameless, asked, And who is my neighbour? Jesus gave him his answer; A man who was on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell in with robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and went off leaving him half dead. And a priest, who chanced to be going down by the same road, saw him there and passed by on the other side. And a Levite who came there saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, who was on his travels, saw him and took pity at the sight; he went up to him and bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine into them, and so mounted him upon his own beast and brought him to an inn, where he took care of him. And next day he took two silver pieces, which he gave to the inn-keeper, and said, Take care of him, and on my way home I will give thee whatever else is owing to thee for thy pains.

¹ Deut. 6. 5; Lev. 19. 18.

36 Which of these, thinkest thou, proved him-
 37 self a neighbour to the man who had fallen
 in with robbers? And he said, He that
 shewed mercy on him. Then Jesus said,
 Go thy way, and do thou likewise.
 38 In one of the villages he entered during
 his journey, a woman called Martha entertained
 39 him in her house. She had a sister
 called Mary; and Mary took her place at
 the Lord's feet, and listened to his words.
 40 Martha was distracted by waiting on many
 needs; so she came to his side, and asked,
 Lord, art thou content that my sister
 should leave me to do the serving alone?
 41 Come, bid her help me. Jesus answered
 her, Martha, Martha, how many cares and
 42 troubles thou hast! But only one thing is
 necessary; and Mary has chosen for herself
 the best part of all, that which shall never
 be taken away from her.

11 Once, when he had found a place to
 pray in, one of his disciples said to
 him, after his prayer was over, Lord, teach
 us how to pray, as John did for his disci-
 2 ples. And he told them, When you pray,
 you are to say, Father, hallowed be thy
 3 name; thy kingdom come; give us this day
 our daily bread; and forgive us our sins;
 4 we too forgive all those who trespass
 against us; and lead us not into temptation.
 5 Let us suppose that one of you has a
 friend, to whom he goes at dead of night,
 and asks him, Lend me three loaves of
 6 bread, neighbour; a friend of mine has
 turned in to me after a journey, and I have
 7 nothing to offer him. And suppose the
 other answers, from within doors, Do not
 put me to such trouble; the door is locked,
 my children and I are in bed; I cannot be-
 8 stir myself to grant thy request. I tell you,
 even if he will not bestir himself to grant
 it out of friendship, shameless asking will
 make him rise and give his friend all that
 9 he needs. And I say the same to you; ask,
 and the gift will come, seek, and you shall
 find; knock, and the door shall be opened
 10 to you. Everyone that asks, will receive,
 that seeks, will find, that knocks, will have
 11 the door opened to him. Among your-
 selves, if a father is asked by his son for
 bread, will he give him a stone? Or for a
 fish, will he give him a snake instead of a
 12 fish? Or if he is asked for an egg, will he

give him a scorpion? Why then, if you, 1
 evil as you are, know well enough how to
 give your children what is good for them,
 is not your Father much more ready to
 give, from heaven, his gracious Spirit to
 those who ask him?¹

He had just cast out a devil, which was 1
 dumb; and no sooner had the devil gone
 out than the dumb man found speech. The
 multitudes were filled with amazement;
 but some of them said, It is through Beel- 1
 zebub, the prince of the devils, that he
 casts the devils out, while others, to put 1
 him to the test, would have him shew a
 sign out of heaven. But he could read 1
 their thoughts, and said to them, No king-
 dom can be at war with itself without being
 brought to desolation, one house falling
 upon another. And how do you suppose 1
 that Satan's kingdom can stand firm if he
 is at war with himself, that you should
 accuse me of casting out devils through
 Beelzebub? Again, if it is through Beelze- 1
 bub that I cast out devils, by what means
 do your own sons cast them out? It is for
 these, then, to pronounce judgement on
 you. But if, when I cast out devils, I do it 2
 through God's power, then it must be that
 the kingdom of God has suddenly ap-
 peared among you. When a strong man, 1
 fully armed, mounts guard over his own
 palace, his goods are left in peace; but 2
 when a man comes who is stronger still, he
 will take away all the armour that bred such
 confidence, and divide among others the
 spoils of victory.² He who is not with me, 1
 is against me; he who does not gather his
 store with me, scatters it abroad. The un- 2
 clean spirit which has possessed a man, and
 then goes out of him, walks about the desert
 looking for a resting-place, and finds none;
 and it says, I will go back to my own dwell- 1
 ing, from which I came out. And it comes
 back, to find that dwelling swept out, and
 neatly set in order. Thereupon, it goes 1
 away and brings in seven other spirits
 more wicked than itself to bear it company,
 and together they enter in and settle down
 there; till the last state of that man is worse
 than the first.³ When he spoke thus, a 2
 woman in the multitude said to him aloud,
 Blessed is the womb that bore thee, the
 breast which thou hast sucked. And he 1
 answered, Shall we not say, Blessed are

¹ vv. 2-4, 9-13; Mt. 6. 9; 7. 7.² vv. 14-22; Mt. 12. 22; Mk. 3. 22.³ See p. 13, note 1.

those who hear the word of God, and keep it?

29 The multitudes gathered round him, and he began speaking to them thus; This is a wicked generation; it asks for a sign, and the only sign that will be given to it is
30 the sign of the prophet Jonas. Jonas was the sign given to the men of Nineve; the sign given to this generation will be the Son
31 of Man. The queen of the south will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgement, and will leave them without
excuse; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.
32 The men of Nineve will rise up with this generation at the judgement, and will leave it without excuse; for they did penance when Jonas preached to them, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.¹

33 Nobody lights a lamp, and then puts it away in a cellar or under a bushel measure; it is put on the lamp-stand, so that its light
34 may be seen by all who come in. Thy body has the eye for its lamp; and if thy eye is clear, the whole of thy body will be lit up; when it is diseased, the whole of thy body
35 will be in darkness. Take good care then, that this principle of light which is in thee is light, not darkness; then, if thy whole
36 body is in the light, with no part of it in darkness, it will all be lit up as if by a bright lamp enlightening thee.

37 At the time when he said this, one of the Pharisees invited him to his house for the mid-day meal; so he went in and sat down
38 at table; the Pharisee meanwhile was inwardly surmising, why he had not washed before his meal. And the Lord said to him, You Pharisees are content to cleanse the outward part of cup and dish, while all within is running with avarice and wickedness. Fools, did not he who made the outward part make the inward too? Nay, you should give alms out of the store you have, and at once all that is yours becomes clean.

39 Woe upon you, you Pharisees, that will award God his tithe, though it be of mint or rue or whatever herb you will, and leave on one side justice and the love of God; you do ill to forget one duty while you perform the other. Woe upon you, you Pharisees, for loving the first seats in the syna-

gogues, and to have your hands kissed in the market-place; woe upon you, that are like hidden tombs which men walk over without knowing it.

And here one of the lawyers answered
41 him; Master, he said, in speaking thus thou art bringing us too into contempt. And he said, Woe upon you too, you lawyers, for loading men with packs too heavy
42 to be borne, packs that you yourselves will not touch with one finger. Woe upon you,
43 for building up the tombs of the prophets, the same prophets who were murdered by your fathers; sure witness that you approve
44 what your fathers did, since you build tombs for the men they murdered. Whereupon the wisdom of God warns you,
45 I will send my prophets and my apostles to them, and there will be some they will kill and persecute; so they will be answerable
46 for all the blood of prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from
47 the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, who was killed between the altar and the temple; yes, I tell you, this generation will be held answerable for it.² Woe upon you,
48 you lawyers, for taking away with you the key of knowledge; you have neither entered yourselves, nor let others enter when they would.³

As he said all this to them, the scribes
49 and Pharisees resolved to hunt him down mercilessly and to browbeat him with a multitude of questions. Thus they lay
50 in wait for him, hoping to catch some word from his lips which would give them ground of accusation against him.

12 And now great multitudes had gathered round him, so that they trod one another down; and he addressed himself first to his disciples; Have nothing to do with the leaven of the Pharisees, he said, it is all hypocrisy. What is veiled will all be revealed, what is hidden will all be known; what you have said in darkness,
51 will be repeated in the light of day, what you have whispered in secret chambers, will be proclaimed on the house-tops. And
52 I say this to you who are my friends, Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body, and after that can do no more. I will tell
53 you who it is you must fear; fear him who has power not only to kill but to cast a man

¹ *vv.* 24-32: *Mt.* 12. 38.

² See p. 25, note 2.

³ *vv.* 39-52: *Mt.* 23. 4.

6 into hell; him you must fear indeed. Are not sparrows sold five for two pence? And yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. As for you, he takes every hair of your head into his reckoning; do not be afraid, then; you count for more than a host of sparrows. And I tell you this; whoever acknowledges me before men, will be acknowledged by the Son of Man in the presence of God's angels; he who disowns me before men, will be disowned before God's angels. There is no one who speaks a word against the Son of Man but may find forgiveness; there will be no forgiveness for the man who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit.¹ When they bring you to trial before synagogues, and magistrates, and officers, do not consider anxiously what you are to say, what defence to make or how to make it; the Holy Spirit will instruct you when the time comes, what words to use.²

13 One of the multitude said to him, Master, bid my brother give me a share of our inheritance. And he answered, Why, man, who has appointed me a judge to make awards between you? Then he said to them, Look well and keep yourselves clear of all covetousness. A man's life does not consist in having more possessions than he needs. And he told them a parable, There was a rich man whose lands yielded a heavy crop; and he debated in his mind, What am I to do, with no room to store my crops in? Then he said, This is what I will do; I will pull down my barns, and build greater ones, and there I shall be able to store all my harvest and all the goods that are mine; and then I will say to my soul, Come, soul, thou hast goods in plenty laid up for many years to come; take thy rest now, eat, drink, and make merry. And God said, Thou fool, this night thou must render up thy soul; and who will be master now of all thou hast laid by? Thus it is with the man who lays up treasure for himself, and has no credit with God.

22 Then he said to his disciples, I say to you, then, do not fret over your life, how to support it with food, over your body, how to keep it clothed. Life is a greater gift than food, the body than clothing; see how the ravens never sow or reap, have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God

feeds them; have you not an excellence far beyond theirs? Can any of you, for all his fretting, add a cubit's growth to his height? And if you are powerless to do so small a thing, why do you fret about your other needs? See how the lilies grow; they do not toil, or spin, and yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God, then, so clothes the grasses which live to-day in the fields and will feed the oven to-morrow, will he not be much more ready to clothe you, men of little faith? You should not be asking, then, what you are to eat or drink, and living in suspense of mind; it is for the heathen world to busy itself over such things; your Father knows well that you need them. No, make it your first care to find the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be yours without the asking.³

Do not be afraid, you, my little flock. Your Father has determined to give you his kingdom. Sell what you have, and give alms, so providing yourselves with a purse that time cannot wear holes in, an inexhaustible treasure laid up in heaven, where no thief comes near, no moth consumes. Where your treasure-house is, there your heart is too. Your loins must be girt, and your lamps burning, and you yourselves like men awaiting their master's return from a wedding feast, so that they may open to him at once when he comes and knocks at the door. Blessed are those servants, whom their master will find watching when he comes; I promise you, he will gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and minister to them. Whether he comes in the second quarter of the night or in the third, blessed are those servants if he finds them alert. Be sure of this; if the master of the house had known at what time the thief was coming, he would have kept watch, and not allowed his house to be broken open. You too, then, must stand ready; the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him.

Hereupon Peter said to him, Lord, dost thou address this parable to us, or to all men? And the Lord answered, Who, then, is a faithful and wise steward, one whom his master will entrust with the care of the household, to give them their allowance of food at the appointed time? Blessed is that

¹ See p. 12, note 2.² *ev.* 1-12: *Mt.* 10. 26.³ *ev.* 22-31: *Mt.* 6. 25.

servant who is found doing this when his lord comes; I promise you, he will give him charge of all his goods. But if that servant says in his heart, My lord is long in coming, and falls to beating the men and the maids, eating and drinking himself drunk; then on some day when he expects nothing, at an hour when he is all unaware, his lord will come, and will cut him off, and assign him his portion with the unfaithful.¹ Yet it is the servant who knew his Lord's will, and did not make ready for him, or do his will, that will have many strokes of the lash; he who did not know of it, yet earned a beating, will have only a few. Much will be asked of the man to whom much has been given; more will be expected of him, because he was entrusted with more.

It is fire that I have come to spread over the earth, and what better wish can I have than that it should be kindled? There is a baptism I must needs be baptized with, and how impatient am I for its accomplishment! Do you think that I have come to bring peace on the earth? No, believe me, I have come to bring dissension. Henceforward five in the same house will be found at variance, three against two and two against three; the father will be at variance with his son, and the son with his father, the mother against her daughter, and the daughter against her mother, the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.²

And he said to the multitudes, When you find a cloud rising out of the west, you say at once, There is rain coming, and so it does; when you find the south-west wind blowing, you say, It will be hot, and so it is. Poor fools, you know well enough how to interpret the face of land and sky; can you not interpret the times you live in?³ Does not your own experience teach you to make the right decision?⁴ If one has a claim against thee, and thou art going with him to the magistrate, then do thy utmost, while thou art still on the road, to be quit of his claim; or it may be he will drag thee into the presence of the judge, and the

judge will hand thee over to his officer, and the officer will cast thee into prison. Be sure of this, thou wilt find no discharge from it until thou hast paid the last farthing.

13 At this very time there were some present that told him the story of those Galileans, whose blood Pilate had shed in the midst of their sacrifices. And Jesus said in answer, Do you suppose, because this befell them, that these men were worse sinners than all else in Galilee? I tell you it is not so; you will all perish as they did, if you do not repent. What of those eighteen men on whom the tower fell in Siloe, and killed them; do you suppose that there was a heavier account against them, than against any others who then dwelt at Jerusalem? I tell you it was not so; you will all perish as they did, if you do not repent.

And this was a parable he told them; There was a man that had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, but when he came and looked for fruit on it, he could find none; whereupon he said to his vine-dresser, See now, I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig-tree for three years, and cannot find any. Cut it down; why should it be a useless charge upon the land? But he answered thus, Sir, let it stand this year too, so that I may have time to dig and put dung round it; perhaps it will bear fruit; if not, it will be time to cut it down then.

There was a sabbath day on which he was preaching in one of their synagogues. Here there was a woman who for eighteen years had suffered under some influence that disabled her; she was bent down, and could not lift her head straight. Jesus saw her and called her to him; Woman, he said, thou art rid of thy infirmity. Then he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was raised upright, and gave praise to God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant that Jesus should heal them on the sabbath day, turned and said to the multitude, You have six days on which work is allowed;

¹ *vv.* 39-46: *Mt.* 24. 43.

² *vv.* 51-53: *Mt.* 10. 34.

³ *vv.* 54-56: *Mt.* 16. 2.

⁴ This verse seems to be a link between what went before and what follows. From the signs of their own times (our Lord's miracles, etc.), the Jews can satisfy themselves that the kingdom of God is at hand. Let them, then, use the same prudence in spiritual, as they would use in worldly affairs. Let them repent of their sins here and now, before punishment comes upon them, just as they would be anxious to settle out of court a law-suit which was likely to go against them. Cf. *Mt.* 5. 25, 26.

you should come and be healed on those days, not on the sabbath. And the Lord gave him this answer, What, you hypocrites, is there any one of you that will not untie his ox or his ass from the stall and take them down to water, when it is the sabbath? And here is this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had kept bound these eighteen years past; was it wrong that she should be delivered on the sabbath day from bonds like these? All his adversaries were put to shame by this saying of his, and the whole multitude rejoiced over the marvellous works he did.

He said, What is there that bears a likeness to the kingdom of heaven; what comparison shall I find for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, that a man has taken and planted in his garden, where it has thriven and grown into a great tree, and all the birds have come and settled in its branches. And again, he said, What comparison shall I find for the kingdom of heaven? It is like leaven, that a woman has taken and buried away in three measures of meal, enough to leaven the whole batch.¹

And so he went through the cities and villages teaching, and making his journey towards Jerusalem. There was a man that said to him, Lord, is it only a few that are to be saved? Whereupon he said to them: Fight your way in at the narrow door; I tell you, there are many who will try and will not be able to enter. When the master of the house has gone in and has shut the door, you will fall to beating on the door as you stand without, and saying, Lord, open to us. But this will be his answer, I know nothing of you, nor whence you come. Thereupon you will fall to protesting, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence; thou hast taught in our streets. But he will say, I tell you, I know nothing of you, nor whence you come; depart from me, you that traffic in iniquity. Weeping shall be there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets within God's kingdom, while you yourselves are cast out. Others will come from the east and the west, the north and the south, to take their ease in the kingdom of God. And indeed, there are some who are last, and shall then be first, some who are first, and shall then be last.

It was on that day that some of the Pharisees came to him and said, Go elsewhere, and leave this place; Herod was a mind to kill thee. And he said to them, Go and tell that fox, Behold, to-day and to-morrow I am to continue casting out devils, and doing works of healing; it is on the third day that I am to reach my consummation. But to-day and to-morrow and the next day I must go on my journeys; there is no room for a prophet to meet his death, except at Jerusalem. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, still murdering the prophets, and stoning the messengers that are sent to thee, how often have I been ready to gather thy children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and thou didst refuse it! Behold, your house is left to you, a house uninhabited. I tell you, you shall see nothing of me until the time comes, when you will be saying, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

14 There was a sabbath day on which he was asked to take a meal with one of the chief Pharisees, and as he went into the house, they were watching him. Here his eye was met by the sight of a man who had the dropsy. Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees openly, Is healing allowed on the sabbath day? Then, as they did not answer, he took the man by the hand, and sent him away healed. And he turned on them, and said, Is there any one of you who will not pull out his ass or his ox immediately, if it falls into a pit on the sabbath? To this they could make no answer. He also had a parable for the guests who were invited, as he observed how they chose the chief places for themselves; he said to them: When any man invites thee to a wedding, do not sit down in the chief place; he may have invited some guest whose rank is greater than thine. If so, his host and thine will come and say to thee, Make room for this man; and so thou wilt find thyself taking, with a blush, the lowest place of all. Rather, when thou art summoned, go straight to the lowest place and sit down there; so, when he who invited thee comes in, he will say, My friend, go higher than this; and then honour shall be thine before all that sit down in thy company. Everyone who

¹ *lv. 18-21; Mt. 13. 31; Mk. 4. 30.*

exalts himself shall be humbled, and he
12 that humbles himself shall be exalted. He
said, moreover, to his host, When thou
givest a dinner or a supper, do not ask thy
neighbours to come, or thy brethren, or
thy kindred, or thy friends who are rich;
it may be they will send thee invitations
in return, and so thou wilt be recompensed
13 for thy pains. Rather, when thou givest
hospitality, invite poor men to come, the
14 cripples, the lame, the blind: so thou shalt
win a blessing, for these cannot make thee
any return; thy reward will come when the
just rise again.

Hearing this, one of his fellow guests
15 said to him, Blessed is the man who shall
feast in the kingdom of God. He answered
him thus, There was a man that gave a
great supper, and sent out many invita-
16 tions. And when the time came for his
supper, he sent one of his own servants
telling the invited guests to come, for all
17 was now ready. And all of them, with one
accord, began making excuses. I have
bought a farm, the first said to him, and I
must needs go and look over it; I pray thee,
18 count me excused. And another said, I
have bought five pair of oxen, and I am on
my way to make trial of them; I pray thee,
19 count me excused. And another said, I
have married a wife, and so I am unable to
20 come. The servant came back and told his
master all this, whereupon the host fell
into a rage, and said to his servant, Quick,
go out into the streets and lanes of the city;
bring in the poor, the cripples, the blind
21 and the lame. And when the servant told
him, Sir, all has been done according to thy
command, but there is room left still, the
22 master said to the servant, Go out into the
highways and the hedge-rows, and give
them no choice but to come in, that so my
23 house may be filled. I tell you, none of
those who were first invited shall taste of
my supper.¹

Great multitudes bore him company on
24 his way; to these he turned, and said: If
any man comes to me, without hating his
father and mother and wife and children
and brethren and sisters, yes, and his own
life too, he can be no disciple of mine.
25 A man cannot be my disciple unless he
takes up his own cross, and follows after
26 me. Consider, if one of you has a mind to

build a tower, does he not first sit down and
count the cost that must be paid, if he is to
have enough to finish it? Is he to lay the
27 foundation, and then find himself unable
to complete the work, so that all who see it
will fall to mocking him and saying, Here
is a man who began to build, and could not
28 finish his building? Or if a king is setting
out to join battle with another king, does he
not first sit down and deliberate, whether
with his army of ten thousand he can meet
the onset of one who has twenty thousand?
If he cannot, then, while the other is still
29 at a distance, he despatches envoys to ask
for conditions of peace. And so it is with
you; none of you can be my disciple if he
does not take leave of all that he possesses.
Salt is a good thing; but if the salt itself
30 becomes tasteless, what is there left to give
taste to it? It is of no use either to the soil
or to the dung-heap; it will be thrown away
altogether. Listen, you that have ears to
hear with.

15 When they found all the publicans
and sinners coming to listen to him,
the Pharisees and scribes were indignant;
Here is a man, they said, that entertains
sinners, and eats with them. Whereupon
31 he told them this parable: If any of you
owns a hundred sheep, and has lost one of
them, does he not leave the other ninety-
nine in the wilderness, and go after the one
which is lost until he finds it? And when
32 he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders,
rejoicing, and so goes home, and calls his
friends and his neighbours together; Re-
joice with me, he says to them, I have
found my sheep that was lost. So it is, I tell
33 you, in heaven; there will be more rejoicing
over one sinner who repents, than over
ninety-nine souls that are justified, and
have no need of repentance.² Or if some
34 woman has ten silver pieces by her, and has
lost one of them, does she not light a lamp,
and sweep the house, and search carefully
until she finds it? And when she does find
it, she calls her friends and her neighbours
together; Rejoice with me, she says, I have
35 found the silver piece which I lost. So it is,
I tell you, with the angels of God; there is
joy among them over one sinner that
repents.

Then he said, There was a certain man 11

¹ *vv.* 16-24: A similar parable is found in Mt. 22. 2.

² *vv.* 3-7: Mt. 18. 12.

- 12 who had two sons. And the younger of these said to his father, Father, give me that portion of the estate which falls to me. So he divided his property between them.
- 13 Not many days afterwards, the younger son put together all that he had, and went on his travels to a far country, where he wasted his fortune in riotous living. Then, when all was spent, a great famine arose in that country, and he found himself in want; whereupon he went and attached himself to a citizen of that country, who put him on his farm, to feed swine. He would have been glad to fill his belly with husks, such as the swine used to eat; but
- 17 none was ready to give them to him. Then he came to himself, and said, How many hired servants there are in my father's house, who have more bread than they can eat, and here am I perishing with hunger!
- 18 I will arise and go to my father, and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee; I am not worthy, now, to be called thy son; treat me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and went on his way to his father. But, while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and took pity on him; running up, he threw his arms round his neck and kissed him. And when the son said, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not
- 22 worthy, now, to be called thy son, the father gave orders to his servants, Bring out the best robe, and clothe him in it; put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.
- 23 Then bring out the calf that has been fattened, and kill it; let us eat, and make merry; for my son here was dead, and has come to life again, was lost, and is found. And so they began their merry-making.
- 25 The elder son, meanwhile, was away on the farm; and on his way home, as he drew near the house, he heard music and dancing; whereupon he called one of the servants and asked what all this meant. He told him, Thy brother has come back, and thy father has killed the fattened calf, glad to have him restored safe and sound. At this he fell into a rage, and would not go in. When his father came out and tried to win
- 29 him over, he answered his father thus,

Think how many years I have lived as thy servant, never transgressing thy commands, and thou hast never made me a present of a kid, to make merry with my friends; and now, when this son of thine has come home, one that has swallowed up his patrimony in the company of harlots, thou hast killed the fattened calf in his honour. He said to him, My son, thou art always at my side, and everything that I have is already thine; but for this merry-making and rejoicing there was good reason; thy brother here was dead, and has come to life again; was lost, and is found.

16 And he said to his disciples, There was a rich man that had a steward, and a report came to him that this steward had wasted his goods. Whereupon he sent for him, and said to him, What is this that I hear of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou canst not be my steward any longer. At this, the steward said to himself, What am I to do, now that my master is taking my stewardship away from me? I have no strength to dig; I would be ashamed to beg for alms. I see what I must do, so as to be welcomed into men's houses when I am dismissed from my stewardship. Then he summoned his master's debtors one by one; and he said to the first, How much is it that thou owest my master? A hundred firkins of oil, he said; and he told him, Here is thy bill; quick, sit down and write it as fifty. Then he said to a second, And thou, how much dost thou owe? A hundred quarters of wheat, he said; and he told him, Here is thy bill, write it as eighty. And this knavish steward was commended by his master for his prudence in what he had done; for indeed, the children of this world are more prudent after their own fashion than the children of the light. And my counsel to you is, make use of your base wealth to win yourselves friends, who, when you leave it behind, will welcome you into eternal habitations.¹ He who is trustworthy over a little sum is trustworthy over a greater; he who plays false over a little sum, plays false over a greater; if you, then, could not be

¹ *ov.* 1-9: The chief lesson of this parable seems to be that we should do service to God by giving alms to the poor, while we have still time for it. The steward was prudent in making himself friends before the audit of his accounts, while he had still money to do it; so we must give alms while life still lasts. It is doubtful whether we are meant to interpret the parable more closely than this.

trusted to use the base riches you had, who will put the true riches in your keeping?
 12 Who will give you property of your own, if you could not be trusted with what was only lent you?

13 No servant can be in the employment of two masters at once; either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will devote himself to the one and despise the other. You must serve God or money; you cannot serve both.

14 The Pharisees, who were fond of riches, heard all this, and poured scorn on him.
 15 And he said to them, You are always courting the approval of men, but God sees your hearts; what is highly esteemed among
 16 men is an abomination in God's sight. The law and the prophets lasted until John's time; since that time, it is the kingdom of heaven that has its preachers, and all who
 17 will, press their way into it. And yet it is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for one line of the law to perish.
 18 Every man who puts away his wife and marries another is an adulterer, and he too is an adulterer, that marries a woman who has been put away.

19 There was a rich man once, that was clothed in purple and lawn, and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a beggar, called Lazarus, who lay at his gate,
 20 covered with sores, wishing that he could be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, but none was ready to give them to him; the very dogs came and
 21 licked his sores. Time went on; the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom; the rich man died too,
 22 and found his grave in hell.¹ And there, in his suffering, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
 23 And he said, with a loud cry, Father Abraham, take pity on me; send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; I am tormented in this flame. But
 24 Abraham said, My son, remember that thou didst receive thy good fortune in thy life-time, and Lazarus, no less, his ill fortune; now he is in comfort, thou in torment.
 25 And, besides all this, there is a great gulf fixed between us and you, so that there is no passing from our side of it to you, no
 26 crossing over to us from yours. Whereupon

he said, Then, father, I pray thee send him to my own father's house; for I have five
 28 brethren; let him give these a warning, so that they may not come, in their turn, into this place of suffering. Abraham said to
 29 him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to these. They will not do that, father Abraham, said he; but if a mes-
 30 senger comes to them from the dead, they will repent. But he answered him, If they
 31 do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will be unbelieving still, though one should rise from the dead.

17 And he said to his disciples, It is impossible that hurt should never be done to men's consciences; but woe be-
 32 tide the man who is the cause of it. Better for him to have had a mill-stone tied about his neck, and to be cast into the sea, than to have hurt the conscience of one of these little ones. Keep good watch over your-
 33 selves. As for thy brother, if he is in fault, tax him with it, and if he is sorry for it, forgive him; nay, if he does thee wrong
 34 seven times in the day, and seven times in the day comes back to thee and says, I am sorry, thou shalt forgive him.

The apostles said to the Lord, Give us
 35 more faith. And the Lord said, If you had
 36 faith, though it were like a grain of mustard seed, you might say to this mulberry tree, Uproot thyself and plant thyself in the sea, and it would obey you.

If any one of you had a servant following
 37 the plough, or herding the sheep, would he say to him, when he came back from the farm, Go and fall to at once? Would he not
 38 say to him, Prepare my supper, and then gird thyself and wait upon me while I eat and drink; thou shalt eat and drink thyself afterwards? Does he hold himself bound
 39 in gratitude to such a servant, for obeying his commands? I do not think it of him; and you, in the same way, when you have done all that was commanded you, are to say, We are servants, and worthless; it was our duty to do what we have done.

A time came when he was on his way to
 40 Jerusalem, and was passing between Samaria and Galilee; and as he was going into
 41 a village, ten men that were lepers came towards him; they stood far off, crying
 42

¹ The best Greek manuscripts include the words 'in hell' not in this sentence, but in the sentence which follows.

14 aloud, Jesus, Master, have pity on us. He met them with the words, Go and shew yourselves to the priests; and thereupon, as they went, they were made clean. One of them, finding that he was cured, came back, praising God aloud, and threw himself at Jesus' feet with his face to the ground, to thank him; and this was a Samaritan. Jesus answered, Were not all ten made clean? And the other nine, where are they? Not one has come back to give God the praise, except this stranger. And he said to him, Arise and go on thy way, thy faith has brought thee recovery.

20 Upon being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God was to come, he answered, The kingdom of God comes unwatched by men's eyes; there will be no saying, See, it is here, or See, it is there; the kingdom of God is here, within you.¹ And to his own disciples he said, The time will come when you will long to enjoy, but for a day, the Son of Man's presence, and it will not be granted you.² Men will be saying to you, See, he is here, or See, he is there; do not turn aside and follow them; the Son of Man, when his time comes, will be like the lightning which lightens from one border of heaven to the other. But before that, he must undergo many sufferings, and be rejected by this generation.

26 In the days when the Son of Man comes, all will be as it was in the days of Noe; they ate, they drank, they married and were given in marriage, until the day when Noe went into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. So it was, too, in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought and sold, they planted and built; but on the day when Lot went out of Sodom, a rain of fire and brimstone came from heaven and destroyed them all. And so it will be, in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, if a man is on the house-top and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them with him; and if a man is in the fields, he too must beware of turning back. Remember Lot's wife. The man who tries to save his own life will lose it; it is the man who loses it that will keep it safe. I tell you, on that

night, where two men are sleeping in one bed, one will be taken and the other left; one woman taken, one left, as they grind together at the mill, one man taken, one left, as they work together in the fields. Then they answered him, Where, Lord? And he told them, It is where the body lies that the eagles will gather.³

18 And he told them a parable, shewing them that they ought to pray continually, and never be discouraged. There was a city once, he said, in which lived a judge who had no fear of God, no regard for man; and there was a widow in this city who used to come before him and say, Give me redress against one who wrongs me. For a time he refused; but then he said to himself, Fear of God I have none, nor regard for man, but this widow wearies me; I will give her redress, or she will wear me down at last with her visits. Listen, the Lord said, to the words of the unjust judge, and tell me, will not God give redress to his elect, when they are crying out to him, day and night? Will he not be impatient with their wrongs? I tell you, he will give them redress with all speed. But ah, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith left on the earth?

There were some who had confidence in themselves, thinking they had won acceptance with God, and despised the rest of the world; to them he addressed this other parable: Two men went up into the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee stood upright, and made this prayer in his heart, I thank thee, God, that I am not like the rest of men, who steal and cheat and commit adultery, or like this publican here; for myself, I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican stood far off; he would not even lift up his eyes towards heaven; he only beat his breast, and said, God, be merciful to me; I am a sinner. I tell you, this man went back home higher in God's favour than the other; everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and the man who humbles himself shall be exalted.

¹ 'Within you'; the Greek might also mean, 'among you'. ² Some think this means, that in the time of persecution the Apostles will sigh for the glories of heaven; others, that they will look back with regret to the days when their Master was on earth. ³ *vs.* 23-37: Much of what is said here is found also in Mt. 24 and in Mk. 13.

15 Then they brought little children to him, asking him to touch them. The disciples saw them and rebuked them for it: but Jesus called the children to him, and said, Let them be, do not keep them back from me; the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Believe me, the man who does not accept the kingdom of God like a little child, will never enter into it. And one of the rulers asked him, Master, who art so good, what must I do to win eternal life? Jesus said to him, Why dost thou call me good? None is good, except God only. Thou knowest the commandments, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.¹ I have kept all these, he said, ever since I grew up. When he heard that, Jesus said, In one thing thou art still wanting; sell all that belongs to thee, and give to the poor; so the treasure thou hast shall be in heaven; then come back and follow me.² The answer filled him with sadness, for he was very rich; and Jesus, seeing his mournful look, said, With what difficulty will those who have riches enter God's kingdom! It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a man to enter the kingdom of God when he is rich. But when he was asked by those who were listening to him, Why then, who can be saved? he told them, What is impossible to man's powers is possible to God.

28 Hereupon Peter said, And what of us? we have forsaken all that was ours, and followed thee. Jesus said to them, I promise you, everyone who has forsaken home, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children for the sake of the kingdom of God, will receive, in this present world, many times their worth, and in the world to come, everlasting life.³

31 Then he took the twelve apostles aside, and warned them, Now we are going up to Jerusalem, and all that has been written by the prophets about the Son of Man is to be accomplished. He will be given up to the Gentiles, and mocked, and beaten, and

spat upon; they will scourge him, and then they will kill him; but on the third day he will rise again.⁴ They could make nothing of all this; his meaning was hidden from them, so that they could not understand what he said.

When he came near Jericho, there was a blind man sitting there by the way-side begging. And he, hearing a multitude passing by, asked what it meant; so they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth was going past. Whereupon he cried out, Jesus, son of David, have pity on me. Those who were in front rebuked him, and told him to be silent, but he cried out all the more, Son of David, have pity on me. Then Jesus stopped, and gave orders that the man should be brought to him; and when he came close, he asked him, What wouldst thou have me do for thee? Lord, he said, give me back my sight. Jesus said to him, Receive thy sight; thy faith has brought thee recovery. And at once the man recovered his sight, and followed him, glorifying God; all the people, too, gave praise to God at seeing it.⁵

19 He had entered Jericho, and was passing through it; and here a rich man named Zacchaeus, the chief publican, was trying to distinguish which was Jesus, but could not do so because of the multitude, being a man of small stature. So he ran on in front, and climbed up into a sycamore tree, to catch sight of him, since he must needs pass that way. Jesus, when he reached the place, looked up and saw him; Zacchaeus, he said, make haste and come down; I am to lodge to-day at thy house. And he came down with all haste, and gladly made him welcome. When they saw it, all took it amiss; He has gone in to lodge, they said, with one who is a sinner. But Zacchaeus stood upright and said to the Lord, Here and now, Lord, I give half of what I have to the poor; and if I have wronged anyone in any way, I make restitution of it fourfold. Jesus turned to him and said, To-day, salvation has been brought to this house; he too is a son of

¹ Ex. 20. 12. ² See p. 20, note 4.

³ vv. 15-30: Mt. 19. 13; Mk. 10. 13.

⁴ vv. 31-33:

Mt. 20. 17; Mk. 10. 32. ⁵ vv. 35-43: Mt. 20. 29; Mk. 10. 46. It would appear that St Luke, in speaking of our Lord as drawing near Jericho, is only giving a vague indication of where the miracle took place, since the other Evangelists tell us that he met the blind man when he was leaving the city. It may be, however, that there is some confusion between the old city of Jericho, and that built by Herod the Great about two miles away.

- 10 Abraham. That is what the Son of Man has come for, to search out and to save what was lost.
- 11 While they stood listening, he went on and told them a parable; this was because he had now nearly reached Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. He told them, then, There was a man of noble birth, who went away to a distant country, to have the royal title bestowed on him, and so return.
- 13 And he summoned ten of his servants, to whom he gave ten pounds, and said to them, Trade with this while I am away.
- 14 But his fellow citizens hated him, and sent ambassadors after him to say, We will not have this man for our king. Afterwards, when he came back as king, he sent for the servants to whom he had entrusted the money, to find out how much each of them had gained by his use of it. The first came before him and said, Lord, thy pound has made ten pounds. And he said to him, Well done, my true servant: since thou hast been faithful over a very little, thou shalt have authority over ten cities. The second came and said, Lord, thy pound has made five pounds; and to him he said, Thou too shalt have authority, over five cities. Then another came and said, Lord, here is thy pound; I have kept it laid up in a handkerchief. I was afraid of thee, knowing how exacting a man thou art; thou dost claim what thou didst never venture, dost reap what thou didst never sow. Then he said to him, Thou false servant, I take thy judgement from thy own lips. Thou knewest that I was an exacting man, claiming what I never ventured and reaping what I never sowed; then why didst thou not put my money into the bank, so that I might have recovered it with interest when I came? Then he gave orders to those who stood by, Take the pound away from him, and give it to the man who has ten pounds.
- 25 (They said to him, Lord, he has ten pounds already.) Nay, but I tell you, if ever a man is rich, gifts will be made to him, and his riches will abound; if he is poor, even the little he has will be taken from him. But as for those enemies of mine, who refused to have me for their king, bring them here and kill them in my presence.¹ And when

he had spoken thus, he went on his way, going up to Jerusalem.

After this, when he was approaching Bethphage and Bethany, close to the mountain which is called Olivet, he sent two of his disciples on an errand; Go into the village that faces you, he told them, and as you enter it you will find a colt tethered there, one on which no man has yet ridden; untie it and bring it here. And if anybody asks you, Why are you untying it? this must be your answer, The Lord has need of it. So the two he had appointed went on their way, and found the colt standing there, just as he had told them. As they were untying it, its owners asked them, Why are you untying the colt? And they said, Because the Lord has need of it. So they brought the colt to Jesus, and spread out their garments on it, and bade Jesus mount. As he went, they strewed the road with their garments; and when he drew near the descent of mount Olivet, the whole company of his disciples began rejoicing and praising God for all the miracles they had seen. Blessed is the king, they said, who comes in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, glory above.² Some of the Pharisees who were among the multitude said to him, Master, rebuke thy disciples; but he answered, I tell you, if they should keep silence, the stones will cry out instead.

And as he drew near, and caught sight of the city, he wept over it, and said: Ah, if thou too couldst understand, above all in this day that is granted thee, the ways that can bring thee peace! As it is, they are hidden from thy sight. The days will come upon thee when thy enemies will fence thee round about, and encircle thee, and press thee hard on every side, and bring down in ruin both thee and thy children that are in thee, not leaving one stone of thee upon another; and all because thou didst not recognize the time of my visiting thee. Then he went into the temple, and began driving out those who sold and bought there; It is written, he told them, My house is a house of prayer; and you have made it into a den of thieves.³ And he taught in the temple daily. The chief priests and scribes and the leading men

¹ *v.* 12-27: A similar parable is found in Mt. 25. 14. Jn. 12. 12.

² *Is.* 56. 7; *Jer.* 7. 11.

³ *cc.* 29-38: Mt. 21. 1; Mk. 11. 1;

among the people were eager to make away
48 with him, but they could not find any
means to do it, because all the people hung
upon his words.¹

20 One day, as he taught the people
and preached to them in the temple,
the chief priests and scribes, with the
2 elders, came up and said to him, Tell us,
What is the authority by which thou doest
these things, and who gave thee this au-
3 thority? Jesus answered them, I too have
a question to ask; you must tell me this,
4 Whence did John's baptism come, from
heaven or from men? Whereupon they
5 cast about in their minds; If we tell him it
was from heaven, they said, he will ask,
6 Then why did you not believe him? And
if we say it was from men, all the people
7 will be ready to stone us; they will have it
that John was a prophet. So they answered
that they could not tell whence it came.
8 Jesus said to them, And you will not learn
from me what is the authority by which I
do these things.²

9 And now he took occasion to tell the
people this parable; There was a man who
planted a vineyard, and let it out to some
vine-dressers, while he went away to spend
10 a long time abroad. And when the season
came, he sent one of his servants on an
errand to the vine-dressers, bidding them
pay him his share of the vineyard's re-
venues. Whereupon the vine-dressers beat
him, and sent him away empty-handed.
11 Then he sent another servant; and him too
they sent away empty-handed, beating him
12 first, and insulting him. Then he sent a
third; and they drove him away wounded,
13 like the others. So the owner of the vine-
yard said, What am I to do? I will send my
well-beloved son, perhaps they will have
14 reverence for him. But the vine-dressers,
on seeing him, debated thus among them-
selves; This is the heir, let us kill him, so
that his inheritance may pass into our
15 hands. And they thrust him out of the
vineyard and killed him. And now, what
will the owner of the vineyard do to them?
16 He will come and make an end of those
vine-dressers, and give his vineyard to
others. God forbid, they said, when they

heard that. But he fastened his eyes on
17 them, and said, Why then, what is the
meaning of those words which have been
written, The very stone which the builders
rejected has become the chief stone at the
corner?³ If ever a man falls against that
stone, he will break his bones; if it falls
upon him, it will grind him to powder.⁴

At this, the chief priests and scribes
19 would gladly have laid hands on him there
and then, but they were afraid of the peo-
ple. They saw clearly that this parable of
his was aimed at them.⁵ And so, watching
20 for their opportunity, they sent agents of
their own, who pretended to be men of
honest purpose, to fasten on his words;
then they would hand him over to the su-
preme authority of the governor. These
21 put a question to him; Master, they said,
we know that thou art direct in thy talk and
thy teaching; thou makest no distinction
between man and man, but teachest the
way of God in all sincerity. Is it right that
22 we should pay tribute to Caesar, or not?
And he, aware of their malice, said to them,
23 Why do you thus put me to the test? Shew
me a silver piece. Whose likeness, whose
24 name does it bear inscribed on it? When
they answered, Caesar's, he told them,
25 Why then, give back to Caesar what is
Caesar's, and to God what is God's. And
26 they said no more; they were full of ad-
miration at his answer, finding no means of
discrediting his words in the eyes of the
people.

Then he was approached with a question
27 by some of the Sadducees, men who deny
the resurrection; Master, they said, Moses
prescribed for us, If a man has a married
28 brother who dies without issue, the sur-
viving brother must marry the widow, and
beget children in the dead brother's name.⁶
There were seven brethren, the first of
29 whom married a wife, and died without
issue. So the next took her, and also died
30 without issue, then the third, and so with
all the seven; they left no children when
31 they died, and the woman herself died last
of all. And now, when the dead rise again,
32 which of these will be her husband, since
she was wife to all seven? Jesus told them,
34 The children of this world marry and are

¹ *vv.* 45-48: Mt. 21. 12; Mk. 11. 15.

² *vv.* 1-8: Mt. 21. 23; Mk. 11. 27.

³ Ps. 117. 22; cf.

Rom. 9. 33, and 1 Pet. 2. 7.

⁴ See p. 23, note 2.

⁵ *vv.* 9-19: Mt. 21. 33; Mk. 12. 2.

⁶ Deut. 25. 5.

35 given in marriage; but those who are found worthy to attain that other world, and resurrection from the dead, take neither wife nor husband; mortal no longer, they will be as the angels in heaven are, children of God, now that the resurrection
 37 has given them birth. But as for the dead rising again, Moses himself has told you of it in the passage about the burning bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of
 38 Jacob.¹ It is of living men, not of dead men, that he is the God; for him, all men
 39 are alive. At this, some of the scribes answered, Master, thou hast spoken well; no
 40 one dared to try him with further questions.
 41 Then he said to them, What do they mean by saying that Christ is the son of David? Why, David himself says in the
 42 book of Psalms, The Lord said to my
 43 Master, sit on my right hand² while I make thy enemies a footstool under thy feet.
 44 Thus David calls Christ his Master; how
 45 can he also be his son?³ And he said to his disciples, in the hearing of all the people:
 46 Beware of the scribes, who enjoy walking in long robes, and love to have their hands kissed in the market-place, and to take the first seats in the synagogues, and the chief
 47 places at feasts; who swallow up the property of widows, under cover of their long prayers; their sentence will be all the heavier for that.

21 And he looked up, and saw the rich folk putting their gifts into the
 2 treasury; he also saw one poor widow, who
 3 put in two mites. Thereupon he said, Believe me, this poor widow has put in more
 4 than all the others. The others all made an offering to God out of what they had to spare; she, with so little to give, put in her whole livelihood.

5 There were some who spoke to him of the temple, of the noble masonry and the offerings which adorned it; to these he
 6 said, The days will come when, of all this fabric you contemplate, not one stone will be left on another; it will all be thrown
 7 down. And they asked him, Master, when will this be? What sign will be given,
 8 when it is soon to be accomplished? Take care, he said, that you do not allow anyone

to deceive you. Many will come making use of my name; they will say, Here I am, the time is close at hand; do not turn aside after them. And when you hear of wars and revolts, do not be alarmed by it; such things must happen first, but the end will not come all at once. Then he told them, Nation will rise in arms against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes in this region or that, and plagues and famines; and sights of terror and great portents from heaven. Before all this, men will be laying hands on you and persecuting you; they will give you up to the synagogues, and to prison, and drag you into the presence of kings and governors on my account; that will be your opportunity for making the truth known. Resolve, then, not to prepare your manner of answering beforehand; I will give you such eloquence and such wisdom as all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand, or to confute. You will be given up by parents and brethren and kinsmen and friends, and some of you will be put to death; all the world will be hating you because you bear my name; and yet no hair of your head shall perish. It is by endurance that you will secure possession of your souls.

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, be sure that the time has come when she will be laid waste. Then those who are in Judaea must take refuge in the mountains, those who are in the city itself withdrawing from it, and those who are in the country-side not making their way into it; these will be days of vengeance, bringing fulfilment of all that has been written. It will go hard with women who are with child, or have children at the breast, in those days; it will be a time of bitter distress over all the land, and retribution against this people. They will be put to the sword, and led away into captivity all over the world; and Jerusalem will be trodden under the feet of the Gentiles, until the time granted to the Gentile nations has run out. The sun and the moon and the stars will give portents, and on earth the nations will be in distress, bewildered by the roaring of the sea and of its waves; men's hearts will be dried up with fear, as they await the troubles that are overtaking the whole

¹ Ex. 3. 6.² Ps. 109. 1.³ *Ev.* 20-44: Mt. 22. 15; Mk. 12. 13.

world; the very powers of heaven will rock.

27 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with his full power and majesty.

28 When all this begins, look up, and lift up your heads; it means that the time draws near for your deliverance. And he told

29 them a parable; Look at the fig-tree, or any of the trees; when they put out their fruit,

30 you know by your own experience that summer is near. Just so, when you see this happen, be sure that the kingdom of God

31 is close at hand. Believe me, this generation will not have passed, before all this is accomplished. Though heaven and earth

32 should pass away, my words will stand.¹ Only look well to yourselves; do not let

33 your hearts grow dull with revelry and drunkenness and the affairs of this life, so

34 that that day overtakes you unawares; it will come like the springing of a trap on

35 all those who dwell upon the face of the earth. Keep watch, then, praying at all

36 times, so that you may be found worthy to come safe through all that lies before you,

and stand erect to meet the presence of the Son of Man.

37 Each day he went on teaching in the temple, and at night he lodged on the

38 mountain which is called Olivet; and all the people waited for him at early morning

in the temple, to listen to him.

22 And now the feast of unleavened bread, the paschal feast, as it is

2 called, was drawing near. The chief priests and scribes were still at a loss for some

3 means of making away with him, frightened as they were of the people. But now

4 Satan found his way into the heart of Judas, who was also called Iscariot, one of

5 the twelve, and he went off and conferred with the chief priests and magistrates about

6 the means to betray Jesus. These gladly consented to pay him a sum of money; so

7 he promised to do it, and looked about for an opportunity to hand him over without

ready? he said to them, Just as you are 10 entering the city, you will be met by a man carrying a jar of water; follow him into the

11 house to which he is going; and there you will say to the owner of the house, The

12 master sends word, Where is the room in which I am to eat the paschal meal with my

13 disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room, furnished; it is there that you

14 are to make ready. So they went, and found all as he had told them, and so made ready

15 for the paschal meal. And when the time came, he sat down with his twelve disciples.

16 And he said to them, I have longed and longed to share this paschal meal with you

17 before my passion; I tell you, I shall not eat it again, till it finds its fulfilment in the

18 kingdom of God. And he took a cup, and blessed it, and said, Take this and share it

19 among you; I tell you, I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine again, till the kingdom

20 of God has come. Then he took bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them,

21 saying, This is my body, given for you; do this for a commemoration of me. And so

22 with the cup, when supper was ended, This cup, he said, is the new testament, in

23 my blood which is to be shed for you. And now, the hand of my betrayer rests on this

24 table, at my side. The Son of Man goes on his way, for so it has been ordained; but

25 woe upon that man by whom he is to be betrayed. Thereupon they fell to surmising

26 among themselves, which of them it was that would do this.²

27 And there was rivalry between them over the question, which of them was to be

28 accounted the greatest. But he told them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them,

29 and those who bear rule over them win the name of benefactors. With you it is not to be

30 so; no difference is to be made, among you, between the greatest and the youngest

of all, between him who commands and him who serves. Tell me, which is greater, the

man who sits at table, or the man who serves him? Surely the man who sits at table; yet

I am here among you as your servant.

You are the men who have kept to my side in my hours of trial: and, as my Father

has allotted a kingdom to me, so I allot to you a place to eat and drink at my table in

my kingdom; you shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

¹ vv. 1-33: Mt. 24. 1; Mk. 13. 1.

² vv. 1-23: Mt. 26. 1; Mk. 14. 1.

- 31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has claimed power over you all, so that he can sift you like wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail; when, after a while, thou hast come back to me, it is for thee to be the support of thy brethren. Lord, said he, I am ready to bear thee company, though it were to prison or to death. But he answered, I tell thee, Peter, by cock-crow this morning thou wilt thrice have denied knowledge of me.
- 32 Then he said to them, Did you go in want of anything, when I sent you out without purse, or wallet, or shoes? They told him, Nothing; and he said, But now it is time for a man to take his purse with him, if he has one, and his wallet too; and to sell his cloak and buy a sword, if he has none.
- 33 Believe me, one word has been written that has yet to find its fulfilment in me, And he was counted among the malefactors. Sure enough, all that has been written of me must be fulfilled.¹ See, Lord, they told him, here are two swords. And he said to them, That is enough.
- 34 And now he went out, as his custom was, to mount Olivet, his disciples following him. When he reached the place, he said to them, Pray that you may not enter into temptation. Then he parted from them, going a stone's throw off, and knelt down to pray; Father, he said, if it pleases thee, take away this chalice from before me; only as thy will is, not as mine is. And he had sight of an angel from heaven, encouraging him. And now he was in an agony, and prayed still more earnestly; his sweat fell to the ground like thick drops of blood. When he rose from his prayer, he went back to his disciples, and found that they were sleeping, overwrought with sorrow. How can you sleep? he asked. Rise up and pray, so that you may not enter into temptation.
- 35 Even as he spoke, a multitude came near; their guide was the man called Judas, one of the twelve, who came close to Jesus,

to kiss him. Jesus said to him, Judas, wouldst thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss? Then those who were about him, seeing what would come of it, asked, Lord, shall we strike out with our swords? And one of them struck a servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. Jesus answered, Let them have their way in this.² And he touched his ear, and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests and temple officers and elders who had come to find him, Have you come out with swords and clubs, as if I were a robber? I was close to you in the temple, day after day, and you never laid hands on me. But your time has come now, and darkness has its will.³

So they apprehended him, and led him away to the house of the high priest; and Peter followed at a long distance. They had lit a fire in the midst of the court, and were sitting round it; and there Peter sat among them. One of the maidservants, as she saw him sitting there in the firelight, looked closely at him and said, This is one of those who were with him. And he disowned him; Woman, he said, I have no knowledge of him. After a short while, another of the company said, when he caught sight of him, Thou too art one of them; and Peter said, Man, I am not.⁴ Then there was an interval of about an hour, before another man insisted, It is the truth that this fellow was in his company; why, he is a Galilean. Man, said Peter, I do not understand what thou meanest; and all at once, while the words were on his lips, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked at Peter; and Peter remembered what the Lord had said to him, Before cock-crow, thou wilt thrice disown me. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

The men who held Jesus prisoner beat him and mocked him; they blindfolded him and struck him on the face, and then questioned him, Come, prophesy; tell us who it is that smote thee.⁵ And they used many other blasphemous words against

¹ Is. 53. 12. Our Lord seems to suggest, in irony, that since he is to be apprehended like a robber, it is time his companions should go armed like robbers, no longer in the peaceable manner of apostles.

² Our Lord's words here are commonly interpreted as addressed to the apostles, in answer to their question (verse 49); some, however think that they are addressed to his captors, who were already holding him. "Release me for this once," that is, while he cured Malchus.

³ Ex. 29-32; Mt. 26. 36; Mk. 14. 32; Jn. 18. 1. ⁴ This second challenge by the fireside is treated by St. Matthew and St. Mark as all one with the first; St. Luke does not record the encounter in the porch, which they interpret as the second denial (Mt. 26. 71; Mk. 14. 69).

⁵ vs. 63-64: It is possible that St. Luke, here again, has not narrated the facts in their historical order; it would seem from the account given by St. Matthew and St. Mark that our Lord was insulted only after his condemnation by the priests.

66 him. When day came, all the elders of the
people, chief priests and scribes, brought
him before their council; If thou art the
67 Christ, they said, tell us. Why, he said, if
68 I tell you, you will never believe me: and
if I ask you questions, I know you will not
69 answer them, nor acquit me. I will only
tell you that a time is coming when the Son
of Man will be seated in power at God's
70 right hand. And they all said, Thou art,
then, the Son of God? He told them, Your
71 lips have said that I am.¹ And they said,
What further need have we of witnesses?
We have heard the words from his own
mouth.²

23 Then the whole assembly of them
rose up and brought him before
2 Pilate, and there fell to accusing him; We
have discovered, they said, that this man is
subverting the loyalty of our people, forbids
the payment of tribute to Caesar, and
3 calls himself Christ the king. And Pilate
asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews?
He answered him, Thy own lips have said
4 it. Pilate said to the chief priests and the
multitudes, I cannot discover any fault in
5 this man. But they insisted, He rouses
sedition among the people; he has gone
round the whole of Judaea preaching, be-
6 ginning in Galilee and ending here. Pilate,
upon the mention of Galilee, asked whether
7 the man was a Galilean; and learning that
he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, re-
mitted his cause to Herod, who was also in
8 Jerusalem at this time. Herod was over-
joyed at seeing Jesus; for a long time he had
been eager to have sight of him, because he
had heard so much of him, and now he
9 hoped to witness some miracle of his. He
asked him many questions, but could get
10 no answer from him, although the chief
priests and scribes stood there, loudly ac-
cusing him. So Herod and his attendants
made a jest of him, arraying him in festal
attire out of mockery, and sent him back to
12 Pilate. That day Herod and Pilate, who
had hitherto been at enmity with one an-
other, became friends.
13 And now Pilate summoned the chief
priests, and the rulers, and the people, and

said to them, You have brought this man
14 before me as one who seduces the people
from their allegiance; I examined him in
your presence, and could find no substance
in any of the charges you bring against
him; nor could Herod, when I referred you
15 to him. It is plain that he has done nothing
which deserves death. I will scourge him,
16 and then he shall go free. At the festival,
he was obliged to grant them the liberty of
one prisoner: but the whole concourse
18 raised the cry, Away with this man; we
must have Barabbas released. (Barabbas
was a man who had been thrown into prison
for raising a revolt in the city, and for
murder.) Once more Pilate spoke to them,
20 offering to set Jesus at liberty; but they
continued to answer with shouts of, Cru-
cify him, crucify him. Then for the third
22 time he said to them, Why, what wrong has
he done? I can find no fault in him that
deserves death; I will scourge him, and
then he shall go free. But they, with loud
23 cries, insisted on their demand that he
should be crucified; and their voices car-
ried the day; Pilate gave his assent that
24 their request should be granted, releasing
the man of their choice who had been im-
prisoned for revolt and murder, while he
handed Jesus over to their will.³

As they led him off, they caught hold of
26 a man called Simon of Cyrene, who was
coming in from the country, and loaded
him with the cross, so that he should carry
it after Jesus. Jesus was followed by a
27 great multitude of the people, and also
of women, who beat their breasts and
mourned over him; but he turned to them,
28 and said, It is not for me that you should
weep, daughters of Jerusalem; you should
weep for yourselves and your children.
Behold, a time is coming when men will
29 say, It is well for the barren, for the wombs
that never bore children, and the breasts
that never suckled them. It is then that
30 they will begin to say to the mountains,
Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us. If it
31 goes so hard with the tree that is still green,
what will become of the tree that is already
dried up?⁴ Two others, who were crimi-
32 nals, were led off with him to be put to

¹ This is a formula of assent, not a refusal to answer. ² vv. 54-71: Mt. 26. 57; Mk. 14. 53; Jn. 18. 12. St Luke describes the denial of St Peter first of all, and then goes back to the condemnation of our Lord, not necessarily following the historical order of events. ³ vv. 1-25 (in part): Mt. 27. 11; Mk. 15. 1; Jn. 18. 28. ⁴ This verse is generally understood to mean, If crucifixion is the lot of the innocent, what punishment is to be expected by the guilty (that is, the Jews)?

33 death. And when they reached the place which is named after a skull, they crucified him there; and also the two criminals, one on his right and the other on his left. Jesus meanwhile was saying, Father, forgive them; they do not know what it is they are doing. And they divided his garments among themselves by lot.

35 The people stood by, watching; and the rulers joined them in pouring scorn on him; He saved others, they said; if he is the Christ, God's chosen, let him save himself.

36 The soldiers, too, mocked him, when they came and offered him vinegar, by saying, If thou art the king of the Jews, save thyself.

37 (A proclamation had been written up over him in Greek, Latin and Hebrew,

39 This is the king of the Jews.) And one of the two thieves who hung there fell to blaspheming against him; Save thyself, he said, and us too, if thou art the Christ. But the other rebuked him; What, he said, hast thou no fear of God, when thou art undergoing the same sentence?

41 And we justly enough; we receive no more than the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing amiss. Then he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him, I promise thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

42 It was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. The sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in the midst:

44 and Jesus said, crying with a loud voice, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and yielded up his spirit as he said it. And the centurion, when he saw what befell, gave glory to God; This, he said, was indeed a just man.¹

45 And the whole multitude of those who stood there watching it, when they saw the issue, went home beating their breasts.²

46 All his acquaintances, with the women who had followed him from Galilee, watched while this happened, standing at a distance. And now a man called Joseph came forward, one of the councillors, a good and upright man, who had not taken

part with the council and its doings; he was from Arimathea, a Jewish city, and was one of those who waited for the kingdom of God. He it was who approached Pilate, and asked to have the body of Jesus. This he took, and wrapped it in a winding-sheet, and laid it in a tomb fashioned out of the rock, in which no man had ever been buried. It was the day of preparation; the next day was the sabbath. And the women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and saw the tomb, and how his body was buried; so they went back, and prepared spices and ointments, and while it was the sabbath they kept still, as the law commanded.³

47 And at very early dawn on the first day of the week they came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared: and found the stone already rolled away from the door of the tomb. They went into it, and could not find the body of the Lord Jesus. They were still puzzling over this, when two men came and stood by them, in shining garments. These said to them, as they bowed their faces to the earth in fear, Why are you seeking one who is alive, here among the dead? He is not here, he has risen again; remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee. The Son of Man is to be given up into the hands of sinners, and to be crucified, and to rise again the third day. Then they remembered what he had said, and returned from the tomb bringing news of all this to the eleven apostles and to all the rest.⁴

48 It was Mary Magdalen, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, who told the apostles this; but to their minds the story seemed madness, and they could not believe it. Only Peter rose up and ran to the tomb, where he looked in, and saw the grave-clothes lying by themselves, and went away full of surmise over what had befallen.⁵

49 It was on the same day that two of them were walking to a village called Emmaus, sixty furlongs away from Jerusalem, discussing all that had happened. They were still conversing and debating together,

¹ See Mt. 27. 54; Mk. 15. 39. St Augustine suggests that the centurion did not recognize in our Lord the unique Son of God, but only 'a son of God' in the general sense in which 'a just man' would be the equivalent of that term; cf. Wis. 2. 16. But it is possible that 'the Just One' was used in very early times as a cipher-word for 'Son of God'; cf. Ac. 3. 14; 7. 52; 22. 14. ² *et.* 26-48 (in part); Mt. 27. 32; Mk. 15. 21; Jn. 19. 17. ³ *et.* 49-56; Mt. 27. 55; Mk. 15. 40; Jn. 19. 38. ⁴ *et.* 1-9; Mt. 28. 1; Mk. 16. 1; Jn. 20. 1. ⁵ Jn. 20. 3.

24 And at very early dawn on the first day of the week they came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared: and found the stone already rolled away from the door of the tomb. They went into it, and could not find the body of the Lord Jesus. They were still puzzling over this, when two men came and stood by them, in shining garments. These said to them, as they bowed their faces to the earth in fear, Why are you seeking one who is alive, here among the dead? He is not here, he has risen again; remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee. The Son of Man is to be given up into the hands of sinners, and to be crucified, and to rise again the third day. Then they remembered what he had said, and returned from the tomb bringing news of all this to the eleven apostles and to all the rest.⁴ It was Mary Magdalen, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, who told the apostles this; but to their minds the story seemed madness, and they could not believe it. Only Peter rose up and ran to the tomb, where he looked in, and saw the grave-clothes lying by themselves, and went away full of surmise over what had befallen.⁵

It was on the same day that two of them were walking to a village called Emmaus, sixty furlongs away from Jerusalem, discussing all that had happened. They were still conversing and debating together,

when Jesus himself drew near, and began
 16 to walk beside them; but their eyes were
 held fast, so that they could not recognize
 17 him. And he said to them, What talk is
 this you exchange between you as you go
 18 along, sad-faced? And one of them, who
 was called Cleophas, answered him, What,
 art thou the only pilgrim in Jerusalem who
 has not heard of what has happened there
 19 in the last few days? What happenings?
 he asked; and they said, About Jesus of
 Nazareth, a prophet whose words and acts
 had power with God, and with all the
 20 people; how the chief priests, and our
 rulers, handed him over to be sentenced to
 21 death, and so crucified him. For ourselves,
 we had hoped that it was he who was to
 deliver Israel; but now, to crown it all,
 22 to-day is the third day since it befell. Some
 women, indeed, who belonged to our com-
 pany, alarmed us; they had been at the
 23 tomb early in the morning and could not
 find his body; whereupon they came back
 and told us that they had seen a vision of
 24 angels, who said that he was alive.¹ Some
 of those who were with us went to the
 tomb, and found that all was as the women
 had said, but of him they saw nothing.

25 Then he said to them, Too slow of wit,
 too dull of heart, to believe all those say-
 26 ings of the prophets! Was it not to be
 expected that the Christ should undergo
 these sufferings, and enter so into his
 27 glory? Then, going back to Moses and the
 whole line of the prophets, he began to
 28 interpret the words used of himself by all
 the scriptures. And now they were draw-
 ing near the village to which they were
 walking, and he made as if to go on further;
 29 but they pressed him, Stay with us, they
 said; it is towards evening, and it is far on
 in the day. So he went in to stay with
 30 them. And then, when he sat down at
 table with them, he took bread, and
 blessed, and broke it, and offered it to
 31 them; whereupon their eyes were opened,
 and they recognized him; and with that,
 32 he disappeared from their sight. And they
 said to one another, Were not our hearts
 burning within us when he spoke to us on
 the road, and when he made the scriptures

plain to us? Rising up there and then, they
 33 went back to Jerusalem, where they found
 the eleven apostles and their companions
 gathered together, now saying, The Lord
 34 has indeed risen, and has appeared to
 Simon.² And they told the story of their
 35 encounter in the road, and how they recog-
 nized him when he broke bread.

While they were speaking of this, he
 36 himself stood in the midst of them, and
 said, Peace be upon you; it is myself, do
 not be afraid.³ They cowered down, full
 37 of terror, thinking that they were seeing an
 apparition. What, he said to them, are you
 38 dismayed? Whence come these surmises
 in your hearts? Look at my hands and my
 39 feet, to be assured that it is myself; touch
 me, and look; a spirit has not flesh and
 40 bones, as you see that I have. And as he
 spoke thus, he shewed them his hands and
 his feet. Then, while they were still doubt-
 41 ful, and bewildered with joy, he asked
 them, Have you anything here to eat? So
 42 they put before him a piece of roast fish,
 and a honeycomb; and he took these and
 43 ate in their presence and shared his meal
 with them.⁴ This is what I told you, he
 44 said, while I still walked in your company;
 how all that was written of me in the law
 of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the
 psalms, must be fulfilled. Then he en-
 45 lightened their minds, to make them un-
 derstand the scriptures; So it was written,
 46 he told them, and so it was fitting that
 Christ should suffer, and should rise again
 47 from the dead on the third day; and that
 repentance and remission of sins should be
 48 preached in his name to all nations, begin-
 ning at Jerusalem. Of this, you are the
 49 witnesses. And behold, I am sending down
 upon you the gift which was promised by
 my Father; you must wait in the city until
 you are clothed with power from on high.

When he had led them out as far as
 50 Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed
 them; and even as he blessed them he
 51 parted from them, and was carried up into
 heaven. So they bowed down to worship
 52 him, and went back full of joy to Jerusalem,
 where they spent their time continually in
 53 the temple, praising and blessing God.⁵

¹ That the disciples do not mention the appearance of our Lord himself to the women (Mt. 28. 9) is perhaps due to their incredulity (Mk. 16. 11). ² I Cor. 15. 5. ³ Jn. 20. 19. ⁴ And shared his meal with them'; literally, 'took what I desired and gave it to them'. These words do not occur in the Greek manuscripts. ⁵ *vv.* 46-53: St Luke does not here mention the interval of forty days before the Ascension, although he certainly knew of it (Ac. 1. 3).

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

AT the beginning of time the Word already was; and God had the Word abiding with him, and the Word was God. He abode, at the beginning of time, with God. It was through him that all things came into being, and without him came nothing that has come to be. In him there was life, and that life was the light of men.¹ And the light shines in darkness, a darkness which was not able to master it.²

A man appeared, sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, so that through him all men might learn to believe. He was not the Light; he was sent to bear witness to the light. There is one who enlightens every soul born into the world; he was the true Light. He, through whom the world was made, was in the world, and the world treated him as a stranger. He came to what was his own, and they who were his own gave him no welcome. But all those who did welcome him, he empowered to become the children of God, all those who believe in his name; their birth came, not from human stock, not from nature's will or man's, but from God.³ And the Word was made flesh, and came to dwell among us; and we had sight of his glory, glory such as belongs to the Father's only-begotten Son, full of grace and truth. We have John's witness to him; I told you, cried John, there was one coming after me who takes rank before me; he was when I was not. We have all received something out of his abundance, grace answering to grace. Through Moses the law was given to us; through Jesus Christ grace came to us, and truth. No man has ever seen God;

but now his only-begotten Son, who abides in the bosom of the Father, has himself become our interpreter.⁴

This, then, was the testimony which John bore, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou? He admitted the truth, without concealment, admitted that he was not the Christ. What then, they asked him, art thou Elias? Not Elias, he said. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No.⁵ So they said, Tell us who thou art, that we may give an answer to those who sent us; what account dost thou give of thyself? And he told them, I am what the prophet Isaia spoke of, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Straighten out the way of the Lord.⁶ The Pharisees (for they were Pharisees who had come on this errand) asked him, Why dost thou baptize, then, if thou thyself art not the Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them, I am baptizing you with water; but there is one standing in your midst of whom you know nothing; he it is, who, though he comes after me, takes rank before me. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his shoes. All this happened in Bethany that is beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.⁷

Next day, John saw Jesus coming towards him; and he said, Look, this is the Lamb of God; look, this is he who takes away the sin of the world. It is of him that I said, One is coming after me who takes rank before me; he was when I was not. I myself did not know who he was, although the very reason why I have come, with my baptism of water, is to make him known to Israel. John also bore witness

¹ *ev.* 3, 4: Some divide these two sentences differently, and interpret thus: 'It was through him that all things came into being, and without him came nothing. What was in him was life, and that life was the light of men.'

² 'Master it' may be taken in the sense of overcoming it, or of understanding it.

³ 'Their birth came'; several of the early Fathers seem to have used a text which read 'His birth came'.

⁴ Some of the best manuscripts here read 'God, the only-begotten' instead of 'the only-begotten Son'.

⁵ That is, the prophet whose coming was foretold by Moses in Deut. 18. 15-19.

⁶ Is. 40. 3.

⁷ *ev.* 23-28: Mt. 3. 1; Mk. 1. 1; Lk. 3. 1.

thus, I saw the Spirit coming down from heaven like a dove, and resting upon him. Till then, I did not know him; but then I remembered what I had been told by the God who sent me to baptize with water. He told me, The man who will baptize with the Holy Spirit is the man on whom thou wilt see the Spirit come down and rest. Now I have seen him, and have borne my witness that this is the Son of God.

The next day after this, John was standing there again, with two of his disciples; and, watching Jesus as he walked by, he said, Look, this is the Lamb of God. The two disciples heard him say it, and they followed Jesus. Turning, and seeing them follow him, Jesus asked, What would you have of me? Rabbi, they said (a word which means Master), where dost thou live? He said to them, Come and see; so they went and saw where he lived, and they stayed with him all the rest of the day, from about the tenth hour onwards. One of the two who had heard what John said, and followed him, was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. He, first of all, brought his own brother Simon, and told him, We have discovered the Messias (which means, the Christ), and brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him closely, and said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas (which means the same as Peter). He was to remove into Galilee next day; and now he found Philip; to him Jesus said, Follow me. This Philip came from Bethsaida, a fellow townsman of Andrew and Peter.

And Philip found Nathanael, and told him. We have discovered who it was Moses wrote of in his law, and the prophets too; it is Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth. When Nathanael asked him, Can anything that is good come from Nazareth? Philip said, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, and said of

him, Here comes one who belongs to the true Israel; there is no falsehood in him. How dost thou know me? Nathanael asked; and Jesus answered him, I saw thee when thou wast under the fig-tree, before Philip called thee. Then Nathanael answered him, Thou, Master, art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered, What, believe because I told thee that I saw thee under the fig-tree? Thou shalt see greater things than that. And he said to him, Believe me when I tell you this; you will see heaven opening, and the angels of God going up and coming down upon the Son of Man.²

Two days afterwards, there was a wedding-feast at Cana, in Galilee; and Jesus' mother was there. Jesus himself, and his disciples, had also been invited to the wedding. Here the supply of wine failed; whereupon Jesus' mother said to him, They have no wine left. Jesus answered her, Nay, woman, why dost thou trouble me with that? My time has not come yet.³ And his mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you. There were six water-pots standing there, as the Jewish custom of ceremonial washing demanded; they were of stone, and held two or three firkins apiece. And when Jesus said, Fill the water-pots with water, they filled these up to the brim. Then he said to them, Now draw, and give a draught to the master of the feast. So they gave it to him;⁴ and the master of the feast tasted this water, which had now been turned into wine. He did not know whence it came; only the servants who had drawn the water knew that. The master of the feast, then, called to the bridegroom, and said to him, It is ever the good wine that men set out first, and the worse kind only when all have drunk deep; thou hast kept the good wine till now. So, in Cana of Galilee, Jesus began his

¹ 'First of all'; some have thought that the other disciple was St John, who then called his brother St James. But the contrast may be with verse 43 below. ² This is variously explained as referring to the Ascension, or to the Last Judgement.

³ 'Why dost thou trouble me with that?' The Greek here is ambiguous; some would interpret it, 'What concern is that of mine or of thine?', but it is more probably to be understood as a Hebrew idiom, 'What have I to do with thee?', that is, 'Leave me alone, do not interfere with me', as in Mt. 8. 29, and in many passages of the Old Testament. 'My time has not come yet' is understood by some commentators as referring to his Passion; others suppose that the time had not yet come for his performing this miracle, or perhaps for performing a miracle in public, since this was witnessed only by a few. 'Woman' was an address used in the ancient world without any suggestion of disrespect. ⁴ Our Lord is generally understood to have turned the water in the six water-pots into wine. But, since the verb here used for 'to draw' applies more properly to drawing from a well, it is possible to suppose that the water-pots contained only water throughout, and that the wine came from the well itself, at the seventh time of drawing.

miracles, and made known the glory that was his, so that his disciples learned to believe in him.

12 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brethren, and his disciples, not staying there many days.

13 And now the paschal feast which the Jews keep was drawing near, so Jesus went

14 up to Jerusalem. And in the temple there he found the merchants selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-

15 changers sitting at their trade. So he made a kind of whip out of cords, and drove them all, with their sheep and oxen, out of the temple, spilling the bankers' coins and

16 overthrowing their tables; and he said to the pigeon-sellers, Take these away, do not

17 turn my Father's house into a place of barter. And his disciples remembered how it is written, I am consumed with jealousy

18 for the honour of thy house.¹ Then the Jews answered him, What sign canst thou

19 shew us as thy warrant for doing this? Jesus answered them, Destroy this temple,

20 and in three days I will raise it up again.² At which the Jews said, This temple took

21 forty-six years to build; wilt thou raise it up in three days? But the temple he was

22 speaking of was his own body; and when he had risen from the dead his disciples remembered his saying this, and learned

23 to believe in the scriptures, and in the words Jesus had spoken.

24 At this paschal season, while he was in Jerusalem for the feast, there were many

25 who came to believe in his name, upon seeing the miracles which he did. But Jesus would not give them his confidence; he had knowledge of them all, and did not need assurances about any man, because he could read men's hearts.

3 There was a man called Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and one of the rulers of the Jews, who came to see Jesus by night;

Master, he said to him, we know that thou hast come from God to teach us; no one, unless God were with him, could do the miracles which thou doest. Jesus answered him, Believe me when I tell thee this; a man cannot see the kingdom of God without being born anew.³ Why, Nicodemus

asked him, how is it possible that a man should be born when he is already old? Can he enter a second time into his

mother's womb, and so come to birth? Jesus answered, Believe me, no man can

enter into the kingdom of God unless birth comes to him from water, and from the Holy Spirit. What is born by natural birth

is a thing of nature, what is born by spiritual birth is a thing of spirit. Do not be

surprised, then, at my telling thee, You must be born anew. The wind breathes

where it will, and thou canst hear the sound of it, but knowest nothing of the

way it came or the way it goes; so it is, when a man is born by the breath of the Spirit.⁴ Nicodemus answered him, How

can such things come to be? What, answered Jesus, can such things be strange

to thee, who art one of the teachers of Israel? Believe me, we speak of what is

known to us, and testify of what our eyes have seen, and still you will not accept our

testimony.⁵ You cannot trust me when I tell you of what passes on earth; how will

you be able to trust me when I tell you of what passes in heaven? No man has ever

gone up into heaven; but there is one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man, who dwells in heaven.⁶ And this Son of Man must be lifted up, as the serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness; so that those who believe in him may not

perish, but have eternal life. God so loved the world, that he gave up his only-begotten Son, so that those who

believe in him may not perish, but have eternal life. When God sent his Son into

¹ *vs.* 15-17: Cf. Mt. 21. 12; Mk. 11. 15; Lk. 19. 45; but it would seem that these passages refer to a different occasion. *v.* 17: Ps. 68. 10.

² Mt. 26. 61; 27. 40, 63.

³ In the Greek, the word which Nicodemus understands as meaning 'anew' may have meant 'from above'.
⁴ 'The wind'; this word in the Greek has three principal meanings, (i) a wind or breeze, (ii) the breath, (iii) spirit, and especially the Holy Spirit. The older commentators understood it here in the third sense, but it is difficult to see how it could be said to Nicodemus, 'thou hearest his voice'. By the moderns, it is generally understood of the wind. Maldonatus suggests that it may mean life, the breath of life, in living creatures and in man especially; the voice being conceived as the characteristic sign of life, because it is produced by the breath.

⁵ 'You' in the plural seems to mean the Jews generally, of whose incredulity Nicodemus, at present, offers an example; 'we' in the plural is more difficult to account for, but it may be that our Lord is identifying his own preaching, by anticipation, with that of his apostles.

⁶ 'But there is one who has come down'; literally, 'except him who has come down': the same Hebrew idiom occurs in Apoc. 21. 27, and many other passages.

⁷ Num. 21. 9.

the world, it was not to reject the world, but so that the world might find salvation through him.¹ For the man who believes in him, there is no rejection; the man who does not believe is already rejected; he has not found faith in the name of God's only-begotten Son. Rejection lies in this, that when the light came into the world men preferred darkness to light; preferred it, because their doings were evil. Anyone who acts shamefully hates the light, will not come into the light, for fear that his doings will be found out. Whereas the man whose life is true comes to the light, so that his deeds may be seen for what they are, deeds done in God.²

After this, Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judaea, and there he remained with them, baptizing. John was still baptizing, too, in Aenon, near Salim, where there was abundance of water; men went to him there to be baptized. (It was only later that John was thrown into prison.) John's disciples had had a dispute with the Jews, about purification, and now they came to John, and told him, Master, there was one with thee on the other side of Jordan, to whom thou didst then bear testimony. We find that he is baptizing now, and all are flocking to him. John answered, A man must be content to receive the gift which is given him from heaven, and nothing more. You yourselves are my witnesses that I told you, I am not the Christ; I have been sent to go before him. The bride is for the bridegroom; but the bridegroom's friend, who stands by and listens to him, rejoices too, rejoices at hearing the bridegroom's voice; and this joy is mine now in full measure. He must become more and more, I must become less and less.

He who comes from above is above all men's reach; the man who belongs to earth talks the language of earth, but one who comes from heaven must needs be beyond the reach of all; he bears witness of things he has seen and heard, and nobody accepts his witness. The man who does accept his witness has declared, once for all, that God

cannot lie, since the words spoken by him whom God has sent are God's own words; so boundless is the gift God makes of his Spirit. The Father loves his Son, and so has given everything into his hands; and he who believes in the Son possesses eternal life, whereas he who refuses to believe in the Son will never see life; God's displeasure hangs over him continually.³

4 And now it became known to Jesus that the Pharisees had been told, Jesus is making more disciples and baptizing a greater number than John; although it was his disciples who baptized, not Jesus himself. So he left Judaea, and once more withdrew into Galilee. And he was obliged to go by way of Samaria. Thus he came to a Samaritan city called Sichar, close by the plot of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph;⁴ and there was a well there called Jacob's well. There, then, Jesus sat down, tired after his journey, by the well; it was about noon. And when a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, Give me some to drink. (His disciples were away in the city at this time, buying food.) Whereupon the Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that thou, who art a Jew, dost ask me, a Samaritan, to give thee drink? (The Jews, you must know, have no dealings with the Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, If thou knewest what it is God gives, and who this is that is saying to thee, Give me drink, it would have been for thee to ask him instead, and he would have given thee living water. Sir, the woman said to him, thou hast no bucket, and the well is deep; how then canst thou provide living water? Art thou a greater man than our father Jacob? It was he who gave us this well; he himself and his sons and his cattle have drunk out of it. Jesus answered her, Anyone who drinks such water as this will be thirsty again afterwards, the man who drinks the water I give him will not know thirst any more. The water I give him will be a spring of water within him, that flows continually to bring him everlasting life. Then, Sir, said the

¹ 'To reject'; the word used in the Greek may mean 'to judge' or 'to separate', and is perhaps used here with a certain play of sense upon the two meanings. ² *vv.* 16-21: These verses, and possibly the three which go before them, may be regarded if we will as a comment by the Evangelist, not as part of our Lord's utterance to Nicodemus.

³ *vv.* 31-36: These verses may be regarded either as part of what St John the Baptist said, or (perhaps more probably) as a comment by the Evangelist.

⁴ Gen. 48. 22; Jos. 24. 32.

woman, give me water such as that, so that I may never be thirsty and have to come here for water again.

- 16 At this, Jesus said to her, Go home, fetch
 17 thy husband, and come back here. I have
 no husband, answered the woman; and
 Jesus told her, True enough, thou hast no
 18 husband. Thou hast had five husbands,
 but the man who is with thee now is no
 husband of thine; thou hast told the truth
 19 over this. The woman said to him, Sir,
 20 I perceive that thou art a prophet. Well,
 it was our fathers' way to worship on this
 mountain, although you tell us that the
 place where men ought to worship is in
 21 Jerusalem. Believe me, woman, Jesus said
 to her, the time is coming when you will
 not go to this mountain, nor yet to Jeru-
 22 salem, to worship the Father. You worship
 you cannot tell what, we worship knowing
 what it is we worship; salvation, after all,
 23 is to come from the Jews; but the time is
 coming, nay, has already come, when true
 worshippers will worship the Father in
 spirit and in truth; such men as these the
 24 Father claims for his worshippers. God is
 a spirit, and those who worship him must
 25 worship him in spirit and in truth. Yes,
 said the woman, I know that Messias (that
 is, the Christ) is to come; and when he
 26 comes, he will tell us everything. Jesus
 said to her, I, who speak to thee, am the
 Christ.
 27 With that, his disciples came up, and
 were surprised to find him talking to a
 woman; but none of them asked, What
 meanest thou? or Why art thou talking to
 28 her? And so the woman put down her
 water-pot, and went back to the city, to tell
 29 the folk there, Come and have sight of a
 man who has told me all the story of my
 30 life; can this be the Christ? So they left the
 city, and came out to find him. Mean-
 31 while, his disciples were urging him, Mas-
 ter, take some food. But he told them,
 32 I have food to eat of which you know
 33 nothing. Whereupon his disciples said to
 one another, Can somebody have brought
 34 him food? But Jesus said to them, My
 meat is to do the will of him who sent me,
 35 and to accomplish the task he gave me. Is

it not a saying of yours, It is four whole
 months before harvest comes? Why, lift
 up your eyes, I tell you, and look at the
 fields, they are white with the promise of
 harvest already.¹ The wages paid to him
 3 who reaps this harvest, the crop he gathers
 in, is eternal life, in which sower and reaper
 are to rejoice together. And here the pro-
 3 verb fits, which is true enough, One man
 sows, and another reaps. The harvest I
 1 have sent you out to reap is one on which
 you bestowed no labour; others have la-
 boured, and it is their labours you have
 inherited. Many of the Samaritans from
 3 that city came to believe in him through
 the woman's testimony, He told me all the
 story of my life. And when they came out
 4 to him, the Samaritans urged him to stay
 with them, and he stayed two days there.
 Many more of them came to believe
 4 through his preaching; It is not through
 thy report, they told the woman, that we
 believe now; we have heard him for our-
 selves, and we recognize that he is indeed
 the Saviour of the world.

Then, after two days, he passed on and
 returned to Galilee. Jesus himself bore
 witness that it is in his own country a pro-
 2 phet goes unhonoured.² And now, when
 he came back into Galilee, the Galileans
 too made him welcome, because they had
 seen what he did in Jerusalem at the time
 of the feast; they had gone up to the feast
 like himself. And so he came once more to
 4 Cana of Galilee, where he had turned the
 water into wine. And a nobleman, whose
 son was lying sick at Capernaum, hearing
 4 that Jesus had come from Judaea to Gal-
 ilee, went to him and asked him to come
 down and heal his son, who was at the
 point of death. Jesus said to him, You
 4 must see signs and miracles happen, or you
 will not believe. Sir, the nobleman said to
 4 him, come down before my child dies. Go
 back home, Jesus told him; thy son is to
 live. And the man began his journey home,
 putting his trust in the words Jesus had
 spoken to him; and while he was still on
 his way down, his servants met him with
 the message that his son was still alive. So
 he asked what time it had been when he

¹ 'It is four whole months'; this may have been a proverb, meaning that there was no hurry, like our 'Rome was not built in a day'. Our Lord here rejects it (whereas he approves of another proverb in verse 37 below); it cannot be too soon to begin preaching his gospel. ² The bearing of this verse, which has been the subject of much dispute among commentators, is most simply explained if we understand it as meaning that our Lord had not yet won favour in his own country of Galilee (cf. 2. 23; 4. 41).

felt easier; and they told him, He recovered from his fever yesterday, at the seventh hour. The father recognized that it had happened at the very time when Jesus said to him, Thy son is to live; and he and all his household found faith. Thus for the second time Jesus did a miracle upon his return from Judaea to Galilee.

5 After this came a Jewish feast, for which Jesus went up to Jerusalem. There is a pool in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate, called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porches, under which a multitude of diseased folk used to lie, the blind, the lame, the disabled, waiting for a disturbance of the water. From time to time, an angel of the Lord came down upon the pool, and the water was stirred up; and the first man who stepped into the pool after the stirring of the water, recovered from whatever infirmity it was that oppressed him.¹ There was one man there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had waited a long time; Hast thou a mind, he asked, to recover thy strength? Sir, said the cripple, I have no one to let me down into the pool when the water is stirred; and while I am on my way, somebody else steps down before me. Jesus said to him, Rise up, take up thy bed, and walk. And all at once the man recovered his strength, and took up his bed, and walked. That day it was the sabbath: and the Jews said to the man who had been cured, It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, The man who gave me back my strength told me himself, Take up thy bed, and walk. So they asked him, Who is this man who told thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? The cripple who had been healed did not know who it was; Jesus had drawn aside from so crowded a place. But afterwards when Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, Behold, thou hast recovered thy strength; do not sin any more, for fear that worse should befall thee, the man went back and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had restored his strength.

The Jews took occasion to rouse ill-will against Jesus for doing such things on the sabbath. And Jesus answered them, My

Father has never ceased working, and I too must be at work. This made the Jews more determined than ever to make away with him, that he not only broke the sabbath, but spoke of God as his own Father, thereby treating himself as equal to God. And Jesus answered them thus: Believe me when I tell you this, The Son cannot do anything at his own pleasure, he can only do what he sees his Father doing; what the Father does is what the Son does in his turn. The Father loves the Son, and discloses to him all that he himself does. And he has greater doings yet to disclose to him, for your astonishment; just as the Father bids the dead rise up and gives them life, so the Son gives life to whomsoever he will. So it is with judgement; the Father, instead of passing judgement on any man himself, has left all judgement to the Son, so that all may reverence the Son just as they reverence the Father; to deny reverence to the Son is to deny reverence to the Father who has sent him.

Believe me when I tell you this, the man who listens to my words, and puts his trust in him who sent me, enjoys eternal life; he does not meet with rejection, he has passed over already from death to life. Believe me, the time is coming, nay, has already come, when the dead will listen to the voice of the Son of God, and those who listen to it will live. As the Father has within him the gift of life, so he has granted to the Son that he too should have within him the gift of life, and has also granted him power to execute judgement, since he is the Son of Man. Do not be surprised at that; the time is coming, when all those who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out of them; those whose actions have been good, rising to new life, and those whose doings have been evil, rising to meet their sentence. I cannot do anything on my own authority; I decide as I am bidden to decide, and my decision is never unjust, because I am consulting the will of him who sent me, not my own.

If I testify in my own behalf, that testimony of mine is worth nothing; there is another who testifies to me, and I know well that the testimony he bears me is worthy of trust.² You yourselves sent a

¹ This verse is omitted by some manuscripts. St John the Baptist, but it is more commonly interpreted as applying to the Father; cf. verse 37.

² 'There is another'; some understand this of

message to John, and he testified to the
 34 truth. (Not that I depend on human testi-
 35 mony; it is for your own welfare that I say
 this.) He, after all, was the lamp lit to shew
 you the way, and there was a time when
 36 you were willing enough to sun yourselves
 in his light. But the testimony I have is
 greater than John's; the actions which my
 Father has enabled me to achieve, those
 very actions which I perform, bear me
 witness that it is the Father who has sent
 37 me. Nay, the Father who sent me has
 himself borne witness to me. You have
 always been deaf to his voice, blind to the
 38 vision of him,¹ and his word is not
 continually present in your hearts; that is why
 you will not trust one whom he has sent.
 39 You pore over the scriptures, thinking to
 find eternal life in them (and indeed, it is
 of these I speak as bearing witness to me):²
 40 but you will not come to me, to find life.
 41 I do not mean that I look for honour from
 42 men, but that I can see you have no love of
 God in your hearts.
 43 I have come in my Father's name, and
 you give me no welcome, although you
 will welcome some other, if he comes in his
 44 own name. How should you learn to be-
 lieve, you who are content to receive
 honour from one another, and are not am-
 45 bitious for the honour which comes from
 him, who alone is God? Do not suppose
 that it will be for me to accuse you before
 my Father; your accusation will come from
 46 Moses, the very man in whom you put
 your trust. If you believed Moses, you
 would believe me; it was of me that he
 47 wrote. But if you give no credence to his
 writings, how should you give credence to
 my words?

6 After this, Jesus retired across the sea
 2 of Galilee, or Tiberias, and there was
 a great multitude following him; they had
 seen the miracles he performed over the
 3 sick. So Jesus went up on to the hill-side,
 4 and there sat down with his disciples. It
 was nearly the time of the Jews' great feast,
 5 the paschal feast. And now, lifting up his
 eyes and seeing that a great multitude had

gathered round him, Jesus said to Philip,
 Whence are we to buy bread for these folk
 to eat? In saying this, he was putting him
 to the test; he himself knew well enough
 what he meant to do. Philip answered him,
 Two hundred silver pieces would not buy
 enough bread for them, even to give each
 a little. One of his disciples (it was An-
 drew, Simon Peter's brother) said to him,
 There is a boy here, who has five barley
 loaves and two fishes; but what is that
 among so many? Then Jesus said, Make
 the men sit down. There was no lack of
 grass where they were; so the men sat
 down, about five thousand in number.
 And Jesus took the loaves, and gave thanks,
 and distributed them to the company, and
 a share of the fishes too, as much as they
 had a mind for. Then, when they had all
 had enough, he told his disciples, Gather
 up the broken pieces that are left over, so
 that nothing may be wasted. And when
 they gathered them up, they filled twelve
 baskets with the broken pieces left over by
 those who had eaten. When they saw the
 miracle Jesus had done, these men began
 to say, Beyond doubt, this is the prophet
 who is to come into the world.³

Knowing, then, that they meant to come
 and carry him off, so as to make a king of
 him, Jesus once again withdrew on to the
 hill-side all alone.⁴ His disciples, when
 evening came on, went down to the lake,
 and there, embarking on the boat, they
 began to cross the water to Capharnaum.
 Darkness had fallen, and Jesus had not yet
 come back to them. Meanwhile there was
 a strong wind blowing, and the sea was be-
 ginning to grow rough. And now they had
 rowed some twenty-five or thirty furlongs,
 when they saw Jesus walking on the sea,
 and already drawing near to the boat. They
 were terrified: but he said to them, It is
 I myself; do not be afraid. Then they took
 him on board willingly enough; and all at
 once their boat reached the land they were
 making for.⁵

Next morning, the multitude was still
 waiting on the opposite shore. They had
 seen that there was only one boat there,

¹ 'The vision of him'; if this is understood literally, it is hard to see how our Lord attaches any blame to the Jews for not seeing God (cf. 1. 18 above); it is perhaps better to suppose that our Lord is reproaching them with a spiritual blindness towards all God's manifestations of himself.

² 'You pore over the scriptures'; the phrase was generally taken by the older commentators as a command, 'pore over the scriptures'; but this seems less appropriate to the context.

³ Deut. 18. 15. ⁴ v. 1-15: Mt. 14. 13; Mk. 6. 30; Lk. 9. 10.

⁵ v. 16-21: Mt. 14. 22; Mk. 6. 45.

and that Jesus did not embark with his disciples on this boat, but left his disciples to go back alone. But now, since other boats were put in near the place where they ate the loaves when the Lord gave thanks over them, the multitude, finding neither Jesus nor his disciples there, embarked on these boats in their turn, and went back to Capharnaum to look for Jesus. And when they found that he had crossed the lake, they asked him, Master, when didst thou make thy way here? Jesus answered them, Believe me, if you are looking for me now, it is not because of the miracles you have seen; it is because you were fed with the loaves, and had your fill. You should not work to earn food which perishes in the using. Work to earn food which affords, continually, eternal life, such food as the Son of Man will give you; God, the Father, has authorized him. What shall we do, then, they asked him, so as to work in God's service? Jesus answered them, This is the service God asks of you, to believe in the Man whom he has sent.

So they said to him, Why then, what miracle canst thou do? We must see it before we trust thee; what canst thou effect? Our fathers had manna to eat in the desert; as the scripture says, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.¹ Jesus said to them, Believe me when I tell you this; the bread that comes from heaven is not what Moses gave you. The real bread from heaven is given only by my Father. God's gift of bread comes down from heaven and gives life to the whole world. Then, Lord, they said, give us this bread all the while. But Jesus told them, It is I who am the bread of life; he who comes to me will never be hungry, he who has faith in me will never know thirst. (But you, as I have told you, though you have seen me, do not believe in me.) All that the Father has entrusted to me will come to me, and him who comes to me I will never cast out. It is the will of him who sent me, not my own will, that I have come down from heaven to do; and he who sent me would have me keep without loss, and raise up at the last day, all he has entrusted to me.

Yes, this is the will of him who sent me, that all those who believe in the Son when they see him should enjoy eternal life; I am to raise them up at the last day.

The Jews were by now complaining of his saying, I am myself the bread which has come down from heaven. Is not this Jesus, they said, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother are well known to us? What does he mean by saying, I have come down from heaven?² Jesus answered them, Do not whisper thus to one another. Nobody can come to me without being attracted towards me by the Father who sent me, so that I can raise him up at the last day. It is written in the book of the prophets, And they shall all have the Lord for their teacher;³ everyone who listens to the Father and learns, comes to me. (Not that anyone has seen the Father, except him who comes from God; he alone has seen the Father.) Believe me when I tell you this; the man who has faith in me enjoys eternal life. It is I who am the bread of life. Your fathers, who ate manna in the desert, died none the less; the bread which comes down from heaven is such that he who eats of it never dies. I myself am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he shall live for ever. And now, what is this bread which I am to give? It is my flesh, given for the life of the world.

Then the Jews fell to disputing with one another, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Whereupon Jesus said to them, Believe me when I tell you this; you can have no life in yourselves, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood. The man who eats my flesh and drinks my blood enjoys eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. My flesh is real food, my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, lives continually in me, and I in him. As I live because of the Father, the living Father who has sent me, so he who eats me will live, in his turn, because of me. Such is the bread which has come down from heaven; it is not as it was with your fathers, who ate manna and died none the less; the man who eats this bread will live eternally.

¹ Cf. Mt. 16. 1. ² Ps. 77. 24. ³ Our Lord is perhaps thinking, not of his immediate audience, but of the Jewish people in general; cf. 5. 38 above.

⁴ Mt. 13. 55; Mk. 6. 3.

60 He said all this while he was teaching in
 61 the synagogue, at Capharnaum. And there
 were many of his disciples who said, when
 they heard it, This is strange talk, who can
 62 be expected to listen to it? But Jesus,
 inwardly aware that his disciples were
 complaining over it, said to them, Does
 63 this try your faith? What will you make of
 it, if you see the Son of Man ascending to
 64 the place where he was before? Only the
 spirit gives life; the flesh is of no avail; and
 the words I have been speaking to you are
 65 spirit, and life.¹ But there are some, even
 among you, who do not believe. Jesus
 knew from the first which were those who
 did not believe, and which of them was to
 66 betray him. And he went on to say, That
 is what I meant when I told you that no-
 body can come to me unless he has received
 67 the gift from my Father. After this, many
 of his disciples went back to their old ways,
 and walked no more in his company.
 68 Whereupon Jesus said to the twelve,
 69 Would you, too, go away? Simon Peter
 answered him, Lord, to whom should we
 go? Thy words are the words of eternal
 70 life; we have learned to believe, and are
 assured that thou art the Christ, the Son
 71 of God.² Jesus answered them, Have I not
 chosen all twelve of you? And one of you
 72 is a devil. He was speaking of Judas son
 of Simon, the Iscariot, who was one of the
 twelve, and was to betray him.

7 After this, Jesus went about in Ga-
 lilee; he would not go about in Judaea,
 because the Jews had designs on his life.
 2 And now one of the Jewish feasts, the feast
 3 of Tabernacles, was drawing near.³ And
 his brethren said to him, This is no place
 for thee; go to Judaea, so that thy disciples
 4 also may see thy doings.⁴ Nobody is con-

tent to act in secret, if he wishes to make
 himself known at large; if thou must needs
 act thus, shew thyself before the world.
 For even his brethren were without faith
 in him. Whereupon Jesus said to them, My
 opportunity has not come yet. Your oppor-
 tunity is always ready to hand; the world
 cannot be expected to hate you, but it does
 hate me, because I denounce it for its evil
 doings. It is for you to go up for the feast;
 I am not going up for the feast, because for
 me the time is not ripe yet.⁵ And, saying
 so much to them, he stayed behind in
 Galilee.

But afterwards, when his brethren had
 gone up for the feast, he too went up, not
 publicly, but as if he would keep himself
 hidden. The Jews were looking for him at
 the feast, and asked, Where can he be?
 Among the crowd, there was much whis-
 pering about him; some said, He is a good
 man; No, said others, he leads the multi-
 tude astray. But, for fear of the Jews, no-
 body dared to speak of him openly. And
 it was not till the feast was half over that
 Jesus went up into the temple, and began
 to teach there. The Jews were astonished;
 How does this man know how to read?
 they asked; he has never studied. Jesus
 answered, The learning which I impart is
 not my own, it comes from him who sent
 me. Anyone who is prepared to do his will,
 can tell for himself whether such learning
 comes from God, or whether I am deliv-
 ering a message of my own. The man who
 delivers a message of his own seeks to win
 credit for himself; when a man seeks to
 win credit for one who sent him, he tells
 the truth, there is no dishonesty in him.
 Moses, for example; was it not Moses that
 gave you the law? And yet none of you
 keeps the law. Why do you design to kill

¹ If we understand 'the flesh' as referring to our Lord's flesh, we must suppose him to mean 'the flesh without spirit, without life', condemning the folly of those hearers who imagined that he had been speaking of his dead body in all that he said above. But it is possible to understand 'the flesh' in a different sense altogether, the sense in which it is contrasted, throughout the New Testament, with 'the spirit'. In this sense it denotes the natural as opposed to the supernatural man, and especially human wisdom as opposed to divine revelation (cf. 8. 15 below). The sentence will then mean, that the mystery of the Holy Eucharist must be approached by faith, not by human reasoning. ² The best Greek manuscripts have 'the Holy One of God' (as in Mk. 1. 24) instead of 'the Christ, the Son of God'. ³ Lev. 23. 34.

⁴ For our Lord's 'brethren', see p. 13, note 2. (It is perhaps noteworthy that in 14. 22 St. Jude, who was one of them, raises exactly the same question which is raised by our Lord's brethren here.) Their suggestion that our Lord should go to Judaea in order to let his disciples see his miracles is difficult to understand, unless we suppose that they affected, perhaps in irony, to think that all his disciples in Galilee had deserted him (cf. 6. 67 above), and that he could only find followers now in Judaea.

⁵ There is only an apparent inconsistency here between our Lord's statement, 'I am not going up for the feast', and his decision to go up to Jerusalem in verse 10. 'To go up for a feast' is clearly a technical expression for going up on pilgrimage, usually in company with a large party of neighbours (Lk. 2. 44), whereas our Lord went to Jerusalem privately, and perhaps did not arrive till after the feast had begun.

me? The multitude answered, Thou art possessed; who has a design to kill thee?

21 Jesus answered them, There is one action of mine which has astounded you all.

22 Listen to this; because Moses prescribed circumcision for you (not that it comes from Moses, it comes from the patriarchs), you are ready to circumcise a man on the sabbath day;¹ and if a man receives circumcision on the sabbath, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, have you any right to be indignant with me, for restoring a man's whole strength to him on the sabbath? Be honest in your judgements, instead of judging by appearances.

25 At this, some of those who belonged to Jerusalem began to ask, Is not this the man they design to put to death? Yet here he is, speaking publicly, and they have nothing to say to him. Can the rulers have made up their minds in earnest, that this is the Christ? But then, we know this man's origins; when Christ appears, no one is to know whence he comes. Whereupon Jesus cried aloud as he taught in the temple, You know me, and you know whence I come; but I have not come on my own errand, I was sent by one who has a right to send; and him you do not know. I know him, because I come from him; it was he who sent me. And now they were ready to seize him; but none of them laid hands on him; his time had not yet come. And indeed, among the multitude there were many who learned to believe in him; they said, Can the Christ be expected to do more miracles at his coming than this man has done? The Pharisees were told of these whispers about him among the multitude; and both chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. Then Jesus said, For a little while I am still with you, and then I am to go back to him who sent me. You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me; you cannot reach the place where I am. Whereupon the Jews said among themselves, Where can he mean to journey, that we should not be able to find him? Will he go

to the Jews who are scattered about the Gentile world, and teach the Gentiles? What can it mean, this saying of his, You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me; you cannot reach the place where I am?

On the last and greatest day of the feast Jesus stood there and cried aloud, If any man is thirsty, let him come to me, and drink; yes, if a man believes in me, as the scripture says, Fountains of living water shall flow from his bosom.² He was speaking here of the Spirit, which was to be received by those who learned to believe in him; the Spirit which had not yet been given to men, because Jesus had not yet been raised to glory. Some of the multitude, on hearing these words, said, Beyond doubt, this is the prophet.³ Others said, This is the Christ; and others again, Is the Christ, then, to come from Galilee? Has not the scripture told us that Christ is to come from the family of David, and from the village of Bethlehem, where David lived?⁴ Thus there was a division of opinion about him among the multitude; some of them would have seized him by violence, but no one laid hands on him.

Meanwhile the officers had gone back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, Why have you not brought him here? The officers answered, Nobody has ever spoken as this man speaks. And the Pharisees answered, Have you, too, let yourselves be deceived? Have any of the rulers come to believe in him yet, or of the Pharisees? As for these common folk who have no knowledge of the law, a curse is on them. Here Nicodemus, the same man who came to Jesus by night, who was one of their number, asked, Is it the way of our law to judge a man without giving him a hearing first, and finding out what he is about? They answered him, Art thou, too, from Galilee? Look in the scriptures; thou wilt find that Galilee does not breed prophets. And they went back, each to his own home.

¹ 'Listen to this'; literally, 'on this account'. The connexion of thought is not clear, but it seems as if our Lord must be referring back to verses 18 and 19; the Jews recognize Moses as one who had a true mission from God, and on that account give the Mosaic rite of circumcision (Lev. 12. 3) precedence even over the Divine institution of the sabbath (Gen. 2. 3). Although indeed the rite of circumcision was older than Moses (Gen. 17. 10).

² 'His bosom'; it is not clear whether this refers to the believer, or to our Lord himself; the old commentators are not agreed. In either case, it is impossible to trace these exact words in any passage of scripture as we have it; cf. however Is. 44. 3, Zach. 13. 1. Some would punctuate differently, with a full stop, instead of a comma, after 'believes in me'.

³ Deut. 18. 15. ⁴ Mic. 5. 2.

8 Jesus meanwhile went to the mount
 2 of Olives. And at early morning he
 appeared again in the temple; all the com-
 mon folk came to him, and he sat down
 3 there and began to teach them. And now
 the scribes and Pharisees brought to him
 a woman who had been found committing
 adultery, and made her stand there in full
 4 view; Master, they said, this woman has
 been caught in the act of adultery. Moses,
 in his law, prescribed that such persons
 should be stoned to death; what of thee?
 6 What is thy sentence? They said this to
 put him to the test, hoping to find a charge
 to bring against him. But Jesus bent down,
 and began writing on the ground with his
 7 finger. When he found that they continued
 to question him, he looked up and said to
 them, Whichever of you is free from sin
 8 shall cast the first stone at her. Then he
 bent down again, and went on writing on
 9 the ground. And they began to go out one
 by one, beginning with the eldest, till Jesus
 was left alone with the woman, still stand-
 10 ing in full view. Then Jesus looked up, and
 asked her, Woman, where are thy ac-
 cusers? Has no one condemned thee? No
 11 one, Lord, she said. And Jesus said to her,
 I will not condemn thee either. Go, and
 do not sin again henceforward.²
 12 And now once more Jesus spoke to
 them, I am the light of the world, he said.
 He who follows me can never walk in dark-
 ness; he will possess the light which is life.
 13 Whereupon the Pharisees told him, Thou
 art testifying on thy own behalf, thy testi-
 14 mony is worth nothing. Jesus answered
 them, My testimony is trustworthy, even
 when I testify on my own behalf; I know
 whence I have come, and where I am
 going; you do not know whence I have
 come, you do not know where I am going.
 15 You set yourselves up to judge, after your
 earthly fashion; I do not set myself up to
 16 judge anybody. And what if I should
 judge? My judgement is judgement in-
 deed; it is not I alone, my Father who sent
 17 me is with me. Just so it is prescribed in
 your law, The testimony of two men is

trustworthy; well, one is myself, testifying
 in my own behalf, and my Father who sent
 me testifies in my behalf too. Hereupon
 they said to him, Where is this Father of
 thine? And Jesus answered, You have no
 knowledge, either of me or of my Father;
 had you knowledge of me, you would have
 knowledge of my Father as well. All this
 Jesus said at the Treasury, while he was
 teaching in the temple; and no one seized
 him, because his time had not yet come.

And he said to them again, I am going
 away, and you will look for me, but you
 will have to die with your sins upon you:
 where I am going is where you cannot
 come. At this, the Jews began to ask, Will
 he kill himself? Is that what he means by
 Where I am going is where you cannot
 come? But he went on to say, You belong
 to earth, I to heaven; you to this world, I to
 another. That is why I have been telling
 you that you will die with your sins upon
 you; you will die with your sins upon you
 unless you come to believe that it is myself
 you look for.³ Who art thou, then? they
 asked. Jesus said to them, What, that I
 should be speaking to you at all?⁴ There
 is much I could say of you, many judge-
 ments I could pass on you; but what I tell
 the world is only what I have learned from
 him who sent me, because he cannot de-
 ceive. And they could not understand that
 he was calling God his Father. Then Jesus
 said to them, When you have lifted up the
 Son of Man, you will recognize that it is
 myself you look for, and that I do not do
 anything on my own authority, but speak
 as my Father has instructed me to speak.
 And he who sent me is with me; he has not
 left me all alone, since what I do is always
 what pleases him. While he spoke thus,
 many of the Jews learned to believe in him.

And now Jesus said to those among the
 Jews who believed in him, If you continue
 faithful to my word, you are my disciples
 in earnest; so you will come to know the
 truth, and the truth will set you free. They
 answered him, We are of Abraham's breed,
 nobody ever enslaved us yet; what dost

¹ Lev. 20. 10.

² *gr.* 1-11: Many of the best Greek manuscripts omit this passage, together with verse 53 of ch. 7.

³ 'It is myself you look for'; literally, 'It is myself', that is, 'I am the Christ', as in Mk. 13. 6; but here the elliptical phrase is helped out by verse 21 above, where our Lord has told the Jews that after his death they will be looking for him, i.e. looking for a Messiah to deliver them.
⁴ 'What, that I should be speaking to you at all?'; or perhaps, 'Why am I speaking to you at all?', though this is a more doubtful rendering of the Greek. Several other interpretations have been proposed, but none of them throws much light on a very obscure passage. The old translation 'The beginning, who also speak to you', only agrees with a reading which is not that of the best Latin manuscripts.

thou mean by saying, You shall become
 34 free?¹ And Jesus answered them, Believe
 me when I tell you this; everyone who acts
 35 sinfully is the slave of sin, and the slave
 cannot make his home in the house for
 ever. To make his home in the house for
 36 ever, is for the Son. Why then, if it is the
 Son who makes you free men, you will
 have freedom in earnest. Yes, I know you
 37 are of Abraham's breed; yet you design to
 kill me, because my word does not find any
 38 place in you. My words are what I have
 learned in the house of my Father, and your
 actions, it seems, are what you have
 39 learned in the school of your father. Our
 father? they answered him; Abraham is
 our father. Jesus said to them, If you are
 Abraham's true children, it is for you to
 40 follow Abraham's example; as it is, you are
 designing to kill me, who tell you the truth
 as I have heard it from God; this was not
 41 Abraham's way. No, it is your father's
 example you follow. And now they said to
 him, We are no bastard children; God, and
 42 he only, is the Father we recognize. Jesus
 told them, If you were children of God,
 you would welcome me gladly; it was from
 God I took my origin, from him I have
 43 come. I did not come on my own errand,
 it was he who sent me. Why is it that you
 cannot understand the language I talk? It
 is because you have no ear for the message
 44 I bring. You belong to your father, that is,
 the devil, and are eager to gratify the appetites
 which are your father's. He, from the first,
 he has never taken his stand upon that;
 there is no truth in him. When he utters
 falsehood, he is only uttering what is natural
 to him; he is all false, and it was he
 45 who gave falsehood its birth. And if you do
 not believe me, it is precisely because
 46 I am speaking the truth. Can any of you
 convict me of sin? If not, why is it that
 you do not believe me when I tell you the
 47 truth? The man who belongs to God
 listens to God's words; it is because you
 do not belong to God that you will not
 listen to me.

Hereupon the Jews answered him, We
 48 are right, surely, in saying that thou art a
 Samaritan, and art possessed? I am not
 49 possessed, Jesus answered; it is because
 I reverence my Father that you have
 no reverence for me. Not that I am
 50 looking to my own reputation; there is
 another who will look to it, and be the
 judge.

Believe me when I tell you this; if a man
 51 is true to my word, to all eternity he will
 never see death. And the Jews said to him,
 52 Now we are certain that thou art possessed.
 What of Abraham and the prophets? They
 are dead; and thou sayest that a man will
 never taste death to all eternity, if he is
 true to thy word. Art thou greater than
 53 our father Abraham? He is dead, and the
 prophets are dead. What dost thou claim
 to be? If I should speak in my own honour,
 54 Jesus answered, such honour goes for nothing.
 Honour must come to me from my
 Father, from him whom you claim as your
 God; although you cannot recognize him.
 55 But I have knowledge of him; if I should
 say I have not, I should be what you are,
 a liar. Yes, I have knowledge of him, and
 I am true to his word. As for your father
 56 Abraham, his heart was proud to see the
 day of my coming; he saw, and rejoiced to
 see it.² Then the Jews asked him, Hast
 57 thou seen Abraham, thou, who art not yet
 fifty years old? And Jesus said to them,
 58 Believe me, before ever Abraham came to
 be, I am.³ Whereupon they took up stones
 59 to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself, and
 went out of the temple.

9 And Jesus saw, as he passed on his
 way, a man who had been blind from
 his birth. Whereupon his disciples asked
 2 him, Master, was this man guilty of sin, or
 was it his parents, that he should have been
 born blind?⁴ Neither he nor his parents
 3 were guilty, Jesus answered; it was so that
 God's action might declare itself in him.
 While daylight lasts, I must work in the
 4 service of him who sent me; the night is
 coming, when there is no working any

¹ They answered; some have understood this of the Jews who had come to believe in him (verse 31), but this seems contradicted by verses 45, 46 below, and it is therefore best to understand the word 'they' of our Lord's Jewish audience in general. ² It is uncertain whether our Lord means that Abraham 'saw' the coming of Christ merely in the sense that it was foretold to him (Gen. 22. 18), or whether we are to suppose that he was granted some actual vision of the event, either in his life-time or after death. ³ I am; here our Lord seems explicitly to claim a divine title, cf. Ex. 3. 14. ⁴ The disciples may not have known that the man was born blind; and the Greek may be interpreted as meaning, 'Did this man sin (and go blind)? or did his parents commit some sin, with the consequence that he was born blind?'

5 more.¹ As long as I am in the world, I am
 6 the world's light. With that, he spat on the
 ground, and made clay with the spittle;
 7 then he spread the clay on the man's eyes,
 and said to him, Away with thee, and wash
 in the pool of Siloe (a word which means,
 Sent out). So he went and washed there,
 8 and came back with his sight restored. And
 now the neighbours, and those who had
 been accustomed to see him begging, be-
 gan to say, Is not this the man who used to
 9 sit here and beg? Some said, This is the
 man; and others, No, but he looks like
 him. And he told them, Yes, I am the man.
 10 How is it, then, they asked him, that thy
 11 eyes have been opened? He answered,
 A man called Jesus made clay, and anointed
 my eyes with it, and said to me, Away with
 thee to the pool of Siloe and wash there.
 So I went there, and washed, and re-
 12 covered my sight. Where is he? they asked;
 and he said, I cannot tell.

13 And they brought him before the Phari-
 sees, this man who had once been blind.
 14 It was a sabbath day, you must know, when
 15 Jesus made clay and opened his eyes. And
 so the Pharisees in their turn asked him
 how he had recovered his sight. Why, he
 said, he put clay on my eyes; and then I
 16 washed, and now I can see. Whereupon
 some of the Pharisees said, This man can
 be no messenger from God; he does not
 observe the sabbath. Others asked, How
 can a man do miracles like this, and be a
 sinner? Thus there was a division of
 17 opinion among them. And now they ques-
 tioned the blind man again, What account
 dost thou give of him, that he should thus
 have opened thy eyes? Why, he said, he
 18 must be a prophet. The Jews must send for
 the parents of the man who had recovered
 his sight, before they would believe his
 story that he had been blind, and that he
 19 had had his sight restored to him. And
 they questioned them, Is this your son,
 who, you say, was born blind? How comes
 20 it, then, that he is now able to see? His
 parents answered them, We can tell you
 that this is our son, and that he was blind
 21 when he was born; we cannot tell how he
 is able to see now; we have no means of

knowing who opened his eyes for him.
 Ask the man himself; he is of age; let him
 tell you his own story. It was fear of the
 Jews that made his parents talk in this
 way; the Jews had by now come to an
 agreement that anyone who acknowledged
 Jesus as the Christ should be forbidden
 the synagogue; that was why his parents
 said, He is of age, ask him himself.

So once more they summoned the man
 who had been blind. Give God the praise,
 they said; this man, to our knowledge, is
 a sinner. Sinner or not, said the other, I
 cannot tell; all I know is that once I was
 blind, and now I can see. Then they asked
 him over again, What was it he did to thee?
 By what means did he open thy eyes? And
 he answered them, I have told you already,
 and you would not listen to me. Why must
 you hear it over again? Would you too
 become his disciples? Upon this, they
 covered him with abuse; Keep his disci-
 pleship for thyself, we are disciples of
 Moses. We know for certain that God
 spoke to Moses; we know nothing of this
 man, or whence he comes. Why, the man
 answered, here is matter for astonishment;
 here is a man that comes you cannot tell
 whence, and he has opened my eyes. And
 yet we know for certain that God does not
 answer the prayers of sinners, it is only
 when a man is devout and does his will,
 that his prayer is answered. That a man
 should open the eyes of one born blind is
 something unheard of since the world be-
 gan. No, if this man did not come from
 God, he would have no powers at all.
 What, they answered, are we to have les-
 sons from thee, all steeped in sin from thy
 birth? And they cast him out from their
 presence.

When Jesus heard that they had so cast
 him out, he went to find him, and asked
 him, Dost thou believe in the Son of God?²
 Tell me who he is, Lord, he answered, so
 that I can believe in him. He is one whom
 thou hast seen, Jesus told him. It is he who
 is speaking to thee. Then he said, I do
 believe, Lord, and fell down to worship
 him. Hereupon Jesus said, I have come
 into this world so that a sentence may fall

¹ The best Greek manuscripts read, 'we must work', not 'I must work'. If this reading is genuine, we must suppose that our Lord here associates his disciples with his own ministry; and indeed, he told them that they were the light of the world (Mt. 5: 14).
² 'The Son of God'; some Greek manuscripts read, 'The Son of Man', but it is clear from the context that, whichever title he used, our Lord was here identifying himself as the Christ.

upon it, that those who are blind should see, and those who see should become blind.¹ Some of the Pharisees heard this, such as were in his company, and they asked him, Are we blind too? If you were blind, Jesus told them, you would not be guilty. It is because you protest, We can see clearly, that you cannot be rid of your guilt.

10 Believe me when I tell you this; the man who climbs into the sheep-fold by some other way, instead of entering by the door, comes to steal and to plunder: it is the shepherd, who tends the sheep, that comes in by the door. At his coming the keeper of the door throws it open, and the sheep are attentive to his voice; and so he calls by name the sheep which belong to him, and leads them out with him. When he has brought out all the sheep which belong to him, he walks in front of them, and the sheep follow him, recognizing his voice. If a stranger comes, they run away from him instead of following him; they cannot recognize the voice of a stranger. This was a parable which Jesus told them; and they could not understand what he meant to say to them. So Jesus spoke to them again; Believe me, he said, it is I who am the door of the sheep-fold. Those others who have found their way in are all thieves and robbers; to these, the sheep paid no attention.² I am the door; a man will find salvation if he makes his way in through me; he will come and go at will, and find pasture. The thief only comes to steal, to slaughter, to destroy; I have come so that they may have life, and have it more abundantly.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep, whereas the hireling, who is no shepherd, and does not claim the sheep as his own, abandons the sheep and takes to flight as soon as he sees the wolf coming, and so the

wolf harries the sheep and scatters them. The hireling, then, takes to flight because he is only a hireling, because he has no concern over the sheep. I am the good shepherd; my sheep are known to me and know me; just as I am known to my Father, and know him.³ And for these sheep I am laying down my life. I have other sheep too, which do not belong to this fold; I must bring them in too; they will listen to my voice; so there will be one fold, and one shepherd.⁴ This my Father loves in me, that I am laying down my life, to take it up again afterwards. Nobody can rob me of it; I lay it down of my own accord. I am free to lay it down, free to take it up again; that is the charge which my Father has given me.

These words of his led to a fresh division of opinion among the Jews. Many of them said, He must be possessed; he is a madman; why do you listen to him? While others said, This is not the language of a man who is possessed by a devil. Has a devil power to open blind men's eyes? And now the Dedication feast was taking place at Jerusalem, and it was winter;⁵ and Jesus was walking about in the temple, in Solomon's porch.⁶ So the Jews gathered round him, and said to him, How long wilt thou go on keeping us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us openly. Jesus answered them, I have told you, but you will not believe me. All that I do in my Father's name bears me testimony, and still you will not believe me; that is because you are no sheep of mine. My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them everlasting life, so that to all eternity they can never be lost; no one can tear them away from my hand. This trust which my Father has committed to me is more precious than all else; no one can tear them away from the hand of my Father.⁷ My Father and I are one.

At this, the Jews once again took up

¹ Our Lord's meaning (if we interpret it by verse 41 below) seems to be, that his coming into the world has the effect of enlightening those humble souls which are conscious of their own ignorance, and at the same time of involving those who think themselves wise and prudent (Mt. 11. 25) in worse blindness than ever. Cf. Apoc. 3. 17, 18.

² 'Those others' must not be taken as referring to the old prophets; our Lord says these are, not were, robbers, which shews he was thinking of religious leaders in his own time. These, he says, entered the sheep-fold unauthorized, instead of waiting until Christ, the Good Shepherd, should have opened that Door, which is also Christ.

³ Some would translate, 'Just as I am known to my Father, so I know him', but this rendering seems less well suited to the context.

⁴ 'One fold'; the Greek here is more accurately rendered 'One flock'. Our Lord evidently refers to the Gentiles who would believe in him.

⁵ I Mac. 4. 56.

⁶ III Kg. 6. 3.

⁷ Some Greek manuscripts read here 'My Father, who has committed this trust to me, is greater than all else'.

32 stones, to stone him with. Jesus answered them, My Father has enabled me to do many deeds of mercy in your presence; for
 33 which of these are you stoning me? It is not for any deed of mercy we are stoning thee, answered the Jews; it is for blasphemy; it is because thou, who art a man, dost pretend to be God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I have
 34 said, You are gods?¹ He gave the title of gods to those who had God's message sent to them; and we know that the words of
 35 scripture have binding force. Why then, what of him whom God has sanctified and sent into the world? Will you call me a blasphemer, because I have told you I am
 36 the Son of God? If you find that I do not act like the son of my Father, then put no
 37 trust in me; but if I do, then let my actions convince you where I cannot; so you will recognize and learn to believe that the
 38 Father is in me, and I in him. Thereupon once again they had a mind to seize him;
 39 but he escaped from their hands, and went back to the other side of Jordan, to the place where John was when he first baptized.
 40 There he waited, while many came out to see him. John, they said, never did
 41 a miracle, but all John told us about this man has proved true. And many found faith in him there.

11 There was a man called Lazarus, of Bethany, who had fallen sick. Bethany was the name of the village where
 2 Mary lived, with her sister Martha; and this Mary, whose brother Lazarus had now fallen sick, was the woman who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet
 3 with her hair.² The sisters sent a message to him, to say, Lord, he whom thou lovest
 4 lies here sick. And Jesus said, on hearing it, The end of this sickness is not death; it is meant for God's honour, to bring
 5 honour to the Son of God. Jesus loved
 6 Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. At the time, then, after hearing the news, he waited for two days in the place where he

was; and then, after that interval, he said to his disciples, Let us go back into Judaea. Master, his disciples said to him, the Jews were but now threatening to stone thee; art thou for Judaea again? Jesus answered, Are there not just twelve hours of daylight? A man can walk in the day-time without stumbling, with this world's light to see by; ³ he only stumbles if he walks by night, because then the light cannot reach him. So much he said, and then he told them, Our friend Lazarus is at rest now; I am going there to awake him. But, Lord, the disciples said to him, if he is rested, his life will be saved. Jesus had been telling them of his death; but they supposed he meant the rest which comes with sleep. So now Jesus told them openly, Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I am glad I was not there; it will help you to believe. But come, let us make our way to him. Thereupon Thomas, who is also called Didymus, said to his fellow-disciples, Let us go too, and be killed along with him.

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been four days in the grave. Since Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs away, many of the Jews had gone out there to comfort Martha and Mary over the loss of their brother. Martha, when she heard that Jesus had come, went out to meet him, while Mary sat on in the house. Lord, said Martha to Jesus, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died; and I know well that even now God will grant whatever thou wilt ask of him. Thy brother, Jesus said to her, will rise again. Martha said to him, I know well enough that he will rise again at the resurrection, when the last day comes. Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and life; he who believes in me, though he is dead, will live on, and whoever has life, and has faith in me, to all eternity cannot die. Dost thou believe this? Yes, Lord, she told him, I have learned to believe that thou art the Christ; thou art the Son of the living God; it is for

¹ Ps. 81. 6. The judges of God's people are there called 'sons of God' and even 'gods'; which fact our Lord adduces as proof that 'Son of God' is not in itself a blasphemous title to adopt. But he shews that he claims it in a different sense, by insisting immediately afterwards that it is *more* applicable to the Word of God, than to those to whom the word of God was sent. ² Since St John only mentions this incident in the chapter which follows, this verse perhaps implies that he assumed his readers to be familiar with the other gospels (Mt. 26. 6; Mk. 14. 3). Cf also Lk. 7. 36 sqq. ³ The most probable explanation of this allegory is that our Lord compares the predestined length of his own life-time with the hours of daylight; there is no danger for him in Judaea yet, because the hour of darkness (Lk. 22. 53) has not yet come. Cf. 9. 4 above.

28 thy coming the world has waited. And with that she went back and called her sister Mary aside; The Master is here, she said, and bids thee come. She rose up at
29 once on hearing it, and went to him. (Jesus had not yet reached the village; he was still at the place where Martha had gone out to
30 meet him.) And so the Jews who were in the house with Mary, comforting her, when they saw how quickly she rose up and went out, followed her; She has gone to the grave, they said, to weep there.

31 So Mary reached the place where Jesus was; and when she saw him, she fell at his feet; Lord, she said, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died.
32 And Jesus, when he saw her in tears, and the tears of the Jews who accompanied her, sighed deeply, and distressed himself over it; Where have you buried him? he asked. Lord, they said to him, come and see.
33 Then Jesus wept. See, said the Jews, how he loved him; and some of them asked, Could not he, who opened the blind man's eyes, have prevented this man's death? So Jesus, once more sighing to himself, came to the tomb; it was a cave, and a stone had been put over the mouth of it. Take away the stone, Jesus told them. And Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, Lord, the air is foul by now; he has been four days dead. Why, Jesus said to her, have I not told thee that if thou hast faith, thou wilt see God glorified? So they took the stone away; and Jesus lifted his eyes to heaven, Father, he said, I thank thee for hearing my prayer. For myself, I know that thou hearest me at all times, but I say this for the sake of the multitude which is standing round, that they may learn to believe it is thou who hast sent me. And with that he cried in a loud voice, Come out, Lazarus, to my side. Whereupon the dead man came out, his feet and hands tied with linen strips, and his face muffled in a veil. Loose him, said Jesus, and let him go free.
34 Many of these Jews who had visited Martha and Mary, and seen what Jesus did, learned to believe in him, but some went off to the Pharisees, and reported to them all Jesus had done. So the chief

priests and Pharisees summoned a council; What are we about? they said. This man is performing many miracles, and if we leave him to his own devices, he will find credit everywhere. Then the Romans will come, and make an end of our city and our race. And one of them, Caiphas, who held the high priesthood in that year,¹ said to them, You have no perception at all; you do not reflect that it is best for us if one man is put to death for the sake of the people, to save a whole nation from destruction. It was not of his own impulse that he said this; holding the high priesthood as he did in that year, he was able to prophesy that Jesus was to die for the sake of the nation; and not only for that nation's sake, but so as to bring together into one all God's children, scattered far and wide. From that day forward, then, they plotted his death; and Jesus no longer went about openly among the Jews, but retired to a city called Ephrem, in the country which borders on the desert, and waited there with his disciples. The paschal feast which the Jews keep was now close at hand, and there were many from the country who went up to Jerusalem to purify themselves before paschal time began; so they looked out for Jesus, and said to one another as they stood there in the temple, What is your way of it? Will he come up to the feast? And the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where he was should report it to them, so that they could arrest him.

12 Six days before the paschal feast, Jesus went to Bethany. Bethany was the home of Lazarus, the dead man whom Jesus raised to life. And a feast was made for him there, at which Martha was waiting at table, while Lazarus was one of his fellow guests. And now Mary brought in a pound of pure spikenard ointment, which was very precious, and poured it over Jesus' feet, wiping his feet with her hair; the whole house was scented with the ointment. One of his disciples, the same Judas Iscariot who was to betray him, said when he saw it, Why should not this

¹ The Jewish high priests were not elected annually, but held the office for life. The Romans were continually interfering to make changes in the high-priestly succession, and St John may be thinking of a slightly later period. He may, however, mean that Caiphas was high priest in that all-important year which witnessed the world's redemption; or possibly that in this year Caiphas still held the office, from which he was in fact deposed by the Romans not many years afterwards.

ointment have been sold? It would have fetched three hundred silver pieces, and alms might have been given to the poor.

6 He said this, not from any concern for the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse, and took what was put into it. And Jesus said, Let her alone; enough that she should keep it for the day

8 when my body is prepared for burial. You have the poor among you always; I am not always among you.¹

9 A great number of the Jews heard that he was there and went out there, not only on account of Jesus, but so as to have sight of Lazarus, whom he raised from the dead;

10 and the chief priests made a plot against Lazarus' life too, because so many of the Jews, on his account, were beginning to go

12 off and find faith in Jesus. Next day, a great multitude of those who had come up for the feast, hearing that Jesus was coming

13 into Jerusalem, took palm branches with them and went out to meet him, crying aloud, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, blessed is the king

14 of Israel. And Jesus took an ass's foal, and mounted on it; so it is written, Do not be afraid, daughter of Sion; behold, thy king is coming to thee, riding on an ass's colt.²

16 The disciples did not understand all this at the time: only after Jesus had attained his glory did they remember what they had

17 done, and how it fulfilled the words written of him.³ There were many who had been with him, when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him to life, and these

18 too bore witness of him. Indeed, that was why the multitude went out to meet him, because they had heard of his performing

19 this miracle. And the Pharisees said to one another, Do you see how vain are our efforts? Look, the whole world has turned aside to follow him.

20 And there were certain Gentiles, among those that had come up to worship at the

21 feast, who approached Philip, the man from Bethsaida in Galilee, and made a request of him; Sir, they said, we desire to see Jesus. Philip came and told Andrew, and together Andrew and Philip went and

22 told Jesus. And Jesus answered them thus, The time has come now for the Son of Man

to achieve his glory. Believe me when I tell you this; a grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or else it remains nothing more than a grain of wheat; but if it dies, then it yields rich fruit. He who loves his life will lose it; he who is an enemy to his own life in this world will keep it, so as to live eternally. If anyone is to be my servant, he must follow my way; so shall my servant too be where I am. If anyone serves me, my Father will do him honour.

And now my soul is distressed. What am I to say? I will say,⁴ Father, save me from undergoing this hour of trial; and yet, I have only reached this hour of trial that I might undergo it. Father, make thy name known. And at this, a voice came from heaven, I have made it known, and will yet make it known. Thereupon the multitude which stood listening declared that it had thundered; but some of them said, An angel has spoken to him. Jesus answered, It was for your sake, not for mine, that this utterance was made. Sentence is now being passed on this world; now is the time when the prince of this world is to be cast out. Yes, if only I am lifted up from the earth, I will attract all men to myself. (In saying this, he prophesied the death he was to die.)

The multitude answered him, We have been told, out of the law, that Christ is to remain undisturbed for ever;⁵ what dost thou mean by saying that the Son of Man must be lifted up? What Son of Man is this? And Jesus said to them, The light is among you still, but only for a short time. Finish your journey while you still have the light, for fear darkness should overtake you; he who journeys in darkness cannot tell which way he is going. While you still have the light, have faith in the light, that so you may become children of the light. So much Jesus told them, and then went away, and was lost to their view.

Such great miracles he did in their presence, and still they did not believe in him; this was in fulfilment of the words spoken by the prophet Isaias, Lord, is there anyone who has believed our message, to whom the power of God has been made known?⁶ So it was that they could not

¹ *vv.* 1-8: Mt. 26. 6; Mk. 14. 3.

² *Zach.* 9. 9.

³ *vv.* 12-16: Mt. 21. 1; Mk. 11. 1; Lk.

19. 29.

⁴ 'I will say'; some understand this as a question, 'Shall I say?'

⁵ Dan. 7. 14.

⁶ Is. 53. 1. 'The power'; literally, 'the arm' of the Lord.

believe; and indeed, Isaias has said elsewhere: He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, so that they could not see with those eyes, and understand with that heart, and turn back to me, and win healing from me.¹ Isaias said this, as one who had seen his glory; it was of him that he spoke. There were, for all that, many of the rulers who had learned to believe in him; but they would not profess it because of the Pharisees, afraid of being forbidden the synagogue. They valued their credit with men higher than their credit with God.

And Jesus cried out, If a man believes in me, it is in him who sent me, not in me, that he believes; to see me is to see him who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that all those who believe in me may continue no longer in darkness. If a man hears my words, and does not keep true to them, I do not pass sentence on him; I have come to save the world, not to pass sentence on the world. The man who makes me of no account, and does not accept my words, has a judge appointed to try him; it is the message I have uttered that will be his judge at the last day. And this, because it is not on my own authority that I have spoken; it was my Father, who sent me, that commanded me what words I was to say, what message I was to utter. And I know well that what he commands is eternal life; everything then, which I utter, I utter as my Father has bidden me.

13 Before the paschal feast began, Jesus already knew that the time had come for his passage from this world to the Father. He still loved those who were his own, whom he was leaving in the world, and he would give them the uttermost proof of his love. Supper was over, and the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, son of Simon, the Iscariot, to betray him. Jesus knew well that the Father had left everything in his hands; knew it was from God that he came, and

to God that he went. And now, rising from supper, he laid his garments aside, took a towel, and put it about him; and then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the feet of his disciples, wiping them with the towel that girded him. So, when he came to Simon Peter, Peter asked him, Lord, is it for thee to wash my feet? Jesus answered him, It is not for thee to know, now, what I am doing; but thou wilt understand it afterwards. Peter said to him, I will never let thee wash my feet; and Jesus answered him, If I do not wash thee, it means thou hast no companionship with me. Then, Lord, said Peter, wash my hands and my head too, not only my feet. But Jesus told him, A man who has bathed does not need to do more than wash the stains from his feet; he is clean all over. And you are clean now; only, not all of you.² He knew who his betrayer was; that is why he said, You are not all clean.

Then, when he had finished washing their feet and put on his garments, he sat down again, and said to them, Do you understand what it is I have done to you? You hail me as the Master, and the Lord; and you are right, it is what I am. Why then, if I have washed your feet, I who am the Master and the Lord, you in your turn ought to wash each other's feet; I have been setting you an example, which will teach you in your turn to do what I have done for you. Believe me, no slave can be greater than his master, no apostle greater than he by whom he was sent. Now that you know this, blessed are you if you perform it. I am not thinking of all of you when I say this, I know who are the men I have chosen; well, it remains for the passage in scripture to be fulfilled, The man who shared my bread has lifted his heel to trip me up.³ I am telling you this now, before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe it was written of me.⁴

Believe me when I tell you this; the man who welcomes one whom I send, welcomes

¹ Is. 6. 9. ² The best interpretation of this passage seems to be that of St Cyprian, that the washing of feet symbolizes sacramental absolution. He who has once been baptized can need no second baptism, but he may need absolution from post-baptismal sin, which is compared here to the incidental stains of travel. Since Judas had been baptized, and had his feet washed, he remains 'unclean' because in his case the washing of feet has taken no effect.

³ Ps. 40. 10. ⁴ 'You may believe it was written of me'; literally, 'you may believe that it is myself', as in 8. 24 above. Here, as there, the sense is plainly, 'that I am the Christ'; but it has to be inferred, here as there, from the context, and the context seems to imply that our Lord is the Christ inasmuch as he is the person in whom David's prophecy is fulfilled.

me; and the man who welcomes me, welcomes him who sent me.

- 21 After saying so much, Jesus bore witness to the distress he felt in his heart; Believe me, he said, believe me, one of you is to betray me. And the disciples looked at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. Jesus had one disciple, whom he loved, who was now sitting with his head against Jesus' breast;¹ to him, therefore, Simon Peter made a sign, and asked him, 22 Who is it he means? And he, leaning his head back upon Jesus' breast, asked him, 23 Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, It is the man to whom I give this piece of bread which I am dipping in the dish. Then he dipped the bread, and gave it to Judas the son of Simon, the Iscariot. The morsel once given, Satan entered into him; and Jesus said to him, Be quick on thy errand. 24 None of those who sat there could understand the drift of what he said; some of them thought, since Judas kept the common purse, that Jesus was saying to him, Go and buy what we need for the feast, or bidding him give some alms to the poor. 25 He, as soon as he received the morsel, had gone out; and now it was night.² 26 When he had gone out, Jesus said, Now the Son of Man has achieved his glory, and in his glory God is exalted. Since, in his glory, God is exalted, it is for God to exalt him in his own glory, and exalt him without delay. It is only for a short time that I am with you, my children. You will look for me, and now I have to tell you what I once told the Jews, you cannot reach the place where I am.³ I have a new commandment to give you, that you are to love one another; that your love for one another is to be like the love I have borne you. The mark by which all men will know you for my disciples will be the love you bear one another. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, where art thou going? Jesus answered him, I am going where thou canst not fol-

low me now, but shalt follow me afterwards. Lord, Peter said to him, why cannot I follow thee now? I am ready to lay down my life for thy sake. Thou art ready, answered Jesus, to lay down thy life for my sake? Believe me, by cock-crow thou wilt thrice disown me.

14 Do not let your heart be distressed; as you have faith in God, have faith in me. There are many dwelling-places in my Father's house; otherwise, should I have said to you, I am going away to prepare a home for you?⁴ And though I do go away, to prepare you a home, I am coming back; and then I will take you to myself, so that you too may be where I am. And now you know where it is I am going; and you know the way there. Thomas said to him, But, Lord, we do not know where thou art going; how are we to know the way there? Jesus said to him, I am the way; I am truth and life; nobody can come to the Father, except through me. If you had learned to recognize me, you would have learned to recognize my Father too. From now onwards you are to recognize him; you have seen him. At this, Philip said to him, Lord, let us see the Father; that is all we ask. What, Philip, Jesus said to him, here am I, who have been all this while in your company; hast thou not learned to recognize me yet? Whoever has seen me, has seen the Father; what dost thou mean by saying, Let us see the Father? Do you not believe⁵ that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words I speak to you are not my own words; and the Father, who dwells continually in me, achieves in me his own acts of power. If you cannot trust my word, when I tell you that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, let these powerful acts themselves be my warrant. Believe me when I tell you this; the man who has learned to believe in me will be able to do

¹ The ancients did not sit as we do over meals, but reclined, leaning on the left elbow. In this verse, we are simply told that St John, lying at our Lord's right, found his head nearly at a level with his breast; in verse 25 he leans back to speak to him, with his head actually resting upon it. That St Peter should have had to communicate by signs probably means that he was sitting on the further side of our Lord, that is, in the place of honour at his left. ² *v.* 21-30: *Mt.* 26, 21; *Mk.* 14, 18. ³ *Cf.* 7, 34; 8, 21 above.

⁴ 'Should I have said to you'; *cf.* 12, 27 above. Some commentators take the words as a statement, 'I would have said to you', which is difficult to reconcile with the verse which immediately follows; others would translate, 'I would have told you, because'; but this is a doubtful rendering of the Greek, and seems wanting in relevance. Our Lord's thought appears to be, 'there are places waiting in heaven for others besides myself, as you may infer from my saying that I am going to prepare a home for you'. ⁵ The Greek manuscripts here have 'Dost thou not believe'.

what I do; nay, he will be able to do greater things yet. It is to my Father I am going; and whatever request you make of the Father¹ in my name, I will grant, so that through the Son the Father may be glorified; every request you make of me in my own name, I myself will grant it to you.²

If you have any love for me, you must keep the commandments which I give you; and then I will ask the Father, and he will give you another to befriend you, one who is to dwell continually with you for ever.³

It is the truth-giving Spirit, for whom the world can find no room, because it cannot see him, cannot recognize him. But you are to recognize him; he will be continually at your side, nay, he will be in you. I will not leave you friendless; I am coming to you. It is only a little while now, before the world is to see me no more; but you can see me, because I live on, and you too will have life. When that day comes, you will learn for yourselves that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. The man who loves me is the man who keeps the commandments he has from me; and he who loves me will win my Father's love, and I too will love him, and will reveal myself to him. Here Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him, Lord, how comes it that thou wilt only reveal thyself to us, and not to the world? Jesus answered him, If a man has any love for me, he will be true to my word; and then he will win my Father's love, and we will both come to him, and make our continual abode with him; whereas the man who has no love for me, lets my sayings pass him by. And this word, which you have been hearing from me, comes not from me, but from my Father who sent me.

So much converse I have held with you, still at your side. He who is to befriend you, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send on my account, will in his turn make everything plain, and recall to your minds everything I have said to you.

Peace is my bequest to you, and the peace which I will give you is mine to give;

¹ The words 'of the Father' are not found in the Greek manuscripts. ² Some Greek manuscripts omit 'of me'. ³ 'To befriend you'; the Greek word here used is 'the Paraclete', which means, properly, an advocate called in to defend one who is involved in an action at law. It is clear from Mt. 10. 20 that this office is fulfilled by the Holy Spirit; but the references in this and the following chapters suggest that the title indicates a more general manner of assistance. ⁴ 'One... who has power'; that is, the devil; cf. 12. 31 above. ⁵ Some think that after announcing his departure our Lord still lingered talking to the apostles; others, that they left the Cenacle at this point, and that the words recorded in the three chapters which follow were spoken on the way to Gethsemani.

I do not give peace as the world gives it. Do not let your heart be distressed, or play the coward. You have heard me say that I am going away and coming back to you. If you really loved me, you would be glad to hear that I am on my way to my Father; my Father has greater power than I. I have told you of this before it happens, so that when it happens you may learn to believe. I have no longer much time for converse with you; one is coming, who has power over the world, but no hold over me.⁴ No, but the world must be convinced that I love the Father, and act only as the Father has commanded me to act. Rise up, we must be going on our way.⁵

15 I am the true vine, and it is my Father who tends it. The branch that yields no fruit in me, he cuts away; the branch that does yield fruit, he trims clean, so that it may yield more fruit. You, through the message I have preached to you, are clean already; you have only to live on in me, and I will live on in you. The branch that does not live on in the vine can yield no fruit of itself; no more can you, if you do not live on in me. I am the vine, you are its branches; if a man lives on in me, and I in him, then he will yield abundant fruit; separated from me, you have no power to do anything. If a man does not live on in me, he can only be like the branch that is cast off and withers away; such a branch is picked up and thrown into the fire, to burn there. As long as you live on in me, and my words live on in you, you will be able to make what request you will, and have it granted. My Father's name has been glorified, if you yield abundant fruit, and prove yourselves my disciples. I have bestowed my love upon you, just as my Father has bestowed his love upon me; live on, then, in my love. You will live on in my love, if you keep my commandments, just as it is by keeping my Father's commandments that I live on in his love.

All this I have told you, so that my joy may be yours, and the measure of your joy

12 may be filled up. This is my commandment, that you should love one another, as
 13 I have loved you. This is the greatest love a man can shew, that he should lay down
 14 his life for his friends; and you, if you do all that I command you, are my friends.
 15 I do not speak of you any more as my servants; a servant is one who does not understand what his master is about, whereas I have made known to you all that my Father has told me; and so I have called you my
 16 friends. It was not you that chose me, it was I that chose you. The task I have appointed you is to go out and bear fruit, fruit which will endure; so that every request you make of the Father in my name may be
 17 granted you. These are the directions I give you, that you should love one another.¹
 18 If the world hates you, be sure that it
 19 hated me before it learned to hate you. If you belonged to the world, the world would know you for its own and love you; it is because you do not belong to the world, because I have singled you out from the midst of the world, that the world hates
 20 you. Do not forget what I said to you, No servant can be greater than his master. They will persecute you just as they have persecuted me; they will pay the same attention to your words as to mine.² And they will treat you thus because you bear my name; they have no knowledge of him
 22 who sent me. If I had not come and given them my message, they would not have been in fault; as it is, their fault can find no
 23 excuse. To hate me is to hate my Father too. If I had not done what no one else ever did in their midst they would not have been in fault; as it is, they have hated, with
 24 open eyes, both me and my Father. And all this, in fulfilment of the saying which is written in their law, They hated me without cause.³ Well, when the truth-giving Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, has come to befriend you, he whom I will send to you from the Father's side, he will bear

witness of what I was; and you too are to be my witnesses, you who from the first have been in my company.

16 I have told you this, so that your faith may not be taken unawares. They will forbid you the synagogue; nay, the time is coming when anyone who puts you to death will claim that he is performing an act of worship to God; such things they will do to you, because they have no knowledge of the Father, or of me. And I have told you this, so that when the time comes for it to happen, you may remember that I told you of it. If I did not tell you of it from the first, it was because I was to be still in your company. Now, I am going back to him who sent me. None of you is asking me, Where is it thou art going?⁴ so full are your hearts with sorrow at my telling you this. And yet I can say truly that it is better for you I should go away; he who is to befriend you will not come to you unless I do go, but if only I make my way there, I will send him to you. He will come, and it will be for him to prove the world wrong, about sin, and about rightness of heart, and about judging. About sin; they have not found belief in me. About rightness of heart; I am going back to my Father, and you are not to see me any more. About judging; he who rules this world has had sentence passed on him already.⁵ I have still much to say to you, but it is beyond your reach as yet. It will be for him, the truth-giving Spirit, when he comes, to guide you into all truth. He will not utter a message of his own; he will utter the message that has been given to him; and he will make plain to you what is still to come. And he will bring honour to me, because it is from me that he will derive what he makes plain to you. I say that he will derive from me what he makes plain to you, because all that belongs to the Father belongs to me.⁶

¹ Our Lord seems to refer to his one commandment of love as if it were in itself a series of commandments, in place of those given on Sinai. Some, however, would translate, 'I am giving you all these directions (contained in the foregoing verses) in order that you may learn to love one another'.

² 'They will pay the same attention'; that is, none. Some would render 'they will keep a watch upon your words' (cf. Lk. 11. 53, 54); but this would be contrary to St John's use of language. ³ Ps. 34. 19.

⁴ 'None of you is asking me'; that is, any longer; St Peter had asked this question (13. 36), but now it would appear that the disciples have lost their interest in our Lord's movements, and given themselves up to useless sorrowing over his departure. ⁵ 'He who rules'; that is, the devil, as in 14. 30.

⁶ vv. 13-15: The teaching office of the Holy Spirit does not consist in imparting to the Church the knowledge of hitherto unknown doctrines, in addition to the deposit of faith, but in making our knowledge of doctrines already revealed fuller and more precise.

16 After a little while, you will see me no longer; and again after a little while you will have sight of me, because I am going
17 back to the Father. Upon this, some of his disciples said to one another, What does this mean, that he is saying to us, After a little while, you will see me no longer, and again after a little while you will have sight of me? And then, Because I am going back to my Father? What is this little while he speaks of? they asked. We cannot understand what he means by it. Jesus, knowing that they were eager to question him, said to them, You are wondering among yourselves over what I have been saying, After a little while you will see me no longer, and again after a little while you will have sight of me.¹ Believe me when I tell you this, you will weep and lament while the world rejoices; you will be distressed, but your distress shall be turned into joy. A woman in childbirth feels distress, because now her time has come; but when she has borne her child, she does not remember the distress any longer, so glad is she that a man has been born into the world. So it is with you, you are distressed now; but one day I will see you again, and then your hearts will be glad; and your gladness will be one which nobody can take away from you.
23 When that day comes, you will not need to ask anything of me. Believe me, you have only to make any request of the Father in my name, and he will grant it to you.²
24 Until now, you have not been making any requests³ in my name; make them, and they will be granted, to bring you gladness in full measure.
25 I have been telling you this in parables; now comes the hour when I will talk to you in parables no longer, but tell you openly
26 about the Father. At the time I speak of, you will make your requests in my name; and there is no need for me to tell you that I will ask the Father to grant them to you,
27 because the Father himself is your friend, since you have become my friends, and have learned to believe that I came from
28 God. It was from the Father I came out,

when I entered the world, and now I am leaving the world, and going on my way to the Father. Hereupon his disciples said to
29 him, Why, now thou art speaking openly enough; this is no parable thou art uttering. Now we can be sure that thou knowest
30 all things, not needing to wait till thou art asked; this gives us faith that thou wast sent by God. You have faith now? Jesus
31 answered. Behold, the time is coming,
32 nay, has already come, when you are to be scattered,³ each of you taking his own path, and to leave me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have said this to you, so that in me you
33 may find peace. In the world, you will only find tribulation; but take courage, I have overcome the world.

17 Thus Jesus spoke to them, and then, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Father, the time has come; give glory now to thy Son, that thy Son may give the glory to thee. Thou hast put him
2 in authority over all mankind, to bring eternal life to all those thou hast entrusted to him. Eternal life is knowing thee, who
3 art the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have exalted thy
4 glory on earth, by achieving the task which thou gavest me to do; now, Father, do thou
5 exalt me at thy own side, in that glory which I had with thee before the world began. I have made thy name known to
6 the men whom thou hast entrusted to me, chosen out of the world. They belonged to thee, and have become mine through thy gift, and they have kept true to thy word. Now they have learned to recognize all the
7 gifts thou gavest me as coming from thee; I have given them the message which thou
8 gavest to me, and they, receiving it, recognized it for truth that I came from thee, and found faith to believe that it was thou who
9 didst send me. It is for these I pray; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom thou hast entrusted to me; they belong to thee; as all I have is thine, and all thou hast
10 is mine; and in them my glory is achieved.

¹ vs. 16-19: 'You will see me no longer'; according to most commentators, this refers to the Ascension. 'You will have sight of me'; there is less agreement about the reference here, which is variously attributed to the time of the Holy Spirit's coming, that of the apostles' death, and that of the general Resurrection. The first of these interpretations would seem to fit in best with the context. ² 'To ask anything'; the Greek word here used may mean either to ask a question, or to ask a favour. The Latin seems to give it the latter meaning here, as in verse 26 below; in verse 30 below, according to the Latin, it means 'to ask a question', as in verse 19 above. ³ Cf. III Kg. 22. 17; Is. 53. 6; Mt. 26. 31.

11 I am remaining in the world no longer, but they remain in the world, while I am on my way to thee. Holy Father, keep them true to thy name, thy gift to me, that they may be one, as we are one.¹ As long as I was with them, it was for me to keep them true to thy name, thy gift to me; and I have watched over them, so that only one has been lost, he whom perdition claims for its own, in fulfilment of the scripture.² But now I am coming to thee; and while I am still in the world I am telling them this, so that my joy may be theirs, and reach its full measure in them. I have given them thy message, and the world has nothing but hatred for them, because they do not belong to the world, as I, too, do not belong to the world. I am not asking that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them clear of what is evil.

16 They do not belong to the world, as I, too, do not belong to the world; keep them holy, then, through the truth; it is thy word that is truth. Thou hast sent me into the world on thy errand, and I have sent them into the world on my errand; and I dedicate myself for their sakes, that they too may be dedicated through the truth.

20 It is not only for them that I pray; I pray for those who are to find faith in me through their word; that they may all be one; that they too may be one in us, as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee; so that the world may come to believe that it is thou who hast sent me. And I have given them the privilege which thou gavest to me, that they should all be one, as we are one; that while thou art in me, I may be in them, and so they may be perfectly made one. So let the world know that it is thou who hast sent me, and that thou hast bestowed thy love upon them, as thou hast bestowed it upon me. This, Father, is my desire, that all those whom thou hast entrusted to me may be with me where I am, so as to see my glory, thy gift made to me, in that love which thou didst bestow upon me before the foundation of the world. Father, thou art just; the world has never acknowledged thee, but I have acknowledged thee, and these men have acknowledged that thou

didst send me. I have revealed, and will reveal, thy name to them; so that the love thou hast bestowed upon me may dwell in them, and I, too, may dwell in them.

18 All this Jesus said, and now, with his disciples, he went out across the Cedron valley. Here there was a garden, into which he and his disciples went. Judas, his betrayer, knew the place well; Jesus and his disciples had often for-gathered in it. There, then, Judas came, accompanied by the guard, and officers sent by the chief priests and Pharisees, with lanterns and torches and weapons. So Jesus, knowing well what was to befall him, went out to meet them; Who is it, he asked, you are looking for? Jesus of Nazareth, they answered; and he told them, I am Jesus of Nazareth. And there was Judas, his betrayer, standing in their company. When he said to them, I am Jesus of Nazareth, they all shrank back, and fell to the ground. So, once more, Jesus asked them, Who is it you are looking for? and when they said, Jesus of Nazareth, he answered, I have told you already that I am Jesus. If I am the man you are looking for, let these others go free. Thus he would make good the words he had spoken to them, I have not lost any of those whom thou hast entrusted to me.³ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear; Malchus was the name of the servant. Whereupon Jesus said to Peter, Put thy sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink that cup which my Father himself has appointed for me?

And now the guard, with their captain, and the Jewish officers arrested Jesus and pinioned him. They led him off, in the first instance, to Annas, father-in-law of Cai-phas, who held the high priesthood in that year. (It was this Cai-phas who had given it as his advice to the Jews, that it was best to put one man to death for the sake of the people.) Simon Peter followed Jesus, with another disciple; this disciple was acquainted with the high priest, and went into the high priest's court with Jesus.⁴

¹ 'Thy gift to me'; some of the Greek manuscripts refer this to the Father's name, some to the apostles.

² The reference is perhaps to Ps. 108. 8, as in Ac. 1. 20.

³ See 17. 12 above.

⁴ Some Greek manuscripts read 'the other disciple'; which has given rise to the conjecture that St John is referring to himself. But St Augustine warns us that we should assert nothing rashly on this point.

16 while Peter stood at the door without. Afterwards the other disciple, who was the high priest's acquaintance, went out and spoke to the door-keeper, and so brought
17 Peter in. This maid-servant who kept the door asked Peter, Art thou another of this man's disciples? and he said, Not I.¹ It was cold, and the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, and stood there warming themselves; there Peter stood too, warming himself with the rest.

19 And now the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples, and about his teaching. Jesus answered, I have spoken openly before the world; my teaching has been given in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews forgather; nothing that I have said was said in secret.
21 Why dost thou question me? Ask those who listened to me what my words were; they know well enough what I said. When he spoke thus, one of the officers, who was standing by, struck Jesus on the cheek; Is this, he said, how thou makest answer to the high priest? If there was harm in what I said, Jesus answered, tell us what was harmful in it; if not, why dost thou strike me? Annas, you must know, had sent him on, still bound, to the high priest Caiphas.²

25 Meanwhile Simon Peter stood there, and warmed himself. So they asked him, Art thou, too, one of his disciples? And he denied it; Not I, he said. Why, said one of the high priest's servants, a kinsman of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, did I not see thee with him in the garden? Whereupon Peter denied again; and immediately the cock crew.³

28 And now they led Jesus away from the house of Caiphas to the governor's palace. It was morning, and they would not enter the palace themselves; there was the paschal meal to be eaten, and they must not incur defilement. And so Pilate went to meet them without; What charge, he asked, do you bring against this man?
30 They answered, We would not have given him up to thee, if he had not been a malefactor. Take him yourselves, Pilate said to

them, and judge him according to your own law. Whereupon the Jews said to him, We have no power to put any man to death. (This was in fulfilment of the words Jesus had spoken when he prophesied what death he was to die.⁴) So Pilate went back into the palace, and summoned Jesus; Art thou the king of the Jews? he asked. Dost thou say this of thy own accord, Jesus answered, or is it what others have told thee of me? And Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? It is thy own nation, and its chief priests, who have given thee up to me. What offence hast thou committed? My kingdom, said Jesus, does not belong to this world. If my kingdom were one which belonged to this world, my servants would be fighting, to prevent my falling into the hands of the Jews; but no, my kingdom does not take its origin here. Thou art a king, then? Pilate asked. And Jesus answered, It is thy own lips that have called me a king. What I was born for, what I came into the world for, is to bear witness of the truth. Whoever belongs to the truth, listens to my voice. Pilate said to him, What is truth? And with that he went back to the Jews again, and told them, I can find no fault in him. You have a custom of demanding that I should release one prisoner at paschal time; would you have me release the king of the Jews? Whereupon they all made a fresh outcry; Barabbas, they said, not this man. Barabbas was a robber.⁵

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers put on his head a crown which they had woven out of thorns, and dressed him in a scarlet cloak; they would come up to him and say, Hail, king of the Jews, and then strike him on the face. And now Pilate went out again, and said, See, I am bringing him out to you, to shew that I cannot find any fault in him. Then, as Jesus came out, still wearing the crown of thorns and the scarlet cloak, he said to them, See, here is the man. When the chief priests and their officers

¹ This interview with the maid-servant upon St Peter's first admission to the palace is not reckoned by the other Evangelists among his three denials. See p. 82, note 4.

² It is evident that verses 15-23 refer to what happened when our Lord was arraigned before Caiphas, not before Annas. A very few among the early authorities consequently put verse 24 immediately after verse 13. But it is more likely that verse 24 is simply a delayed foot-note. St John, who wrote his gospel as a very old man, often gives details about names, times and places as a kind of afterthought; cf. 1. 24, 40; 4. 8; 5. 10; 6. 23; 7. 45; 9. 14; 11. 5; and verse 5 above.

³ vv. 1-27: Mt. 26. 36; Mk. 14. 32; Lk. 22. 39.

⁴ See Mt. 20. 19

⁵ vv. 28-40: Mt. 27. 1; Mk. 15. 1; Lk. 23. 1.

saw him, they cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. Take him yourselves, said Pilate, and crucify him; I cannot find any fault in him. The Jews answered, We have our own law, and by our law he ought to die, for pretending to be the Son of God. When Pilate heard this said, he was more afraid than ever; going back into the palace, he asked Jesus, Whence hast thou come? but Jesus gave him no answer. What, said Pilate, hast thou no word for me? Dost thou not know that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou wouldst not have any power over me at all, if it had not been given thee from above. That is why the man who gave me up to thee is more guilty yet.¹ After this, Pilate was for releasing him, but the Jews went on crying out, Thou art no friend of Caesar, if thou dost release him; the man who pretends to be a king is Caesar's rival. When Pilate heard them speak thus, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgement seat, in a place which is called Lithostrotos; its Hebrew name is Gabbatha.² It was now about the sixth hour, on the eve of the paschal feast. See, he said to the Jews, here is your king.³ But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. What, Pilate said to them, shall I crucify your king? We have no king, the chief priests answered, except Caesar. Thereupon he gave Jesus up into their hands, to be crucified: and they, once he was in their hands, led him away.

So Jesus went out, carrying his own cross, to the place named after a skull; its Hebrew name is Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on each side with Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote out a proclamation, which he put on the cross; it ran, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. This proclamation was read by many of the Jews, since the place where Jesus was crucified was close to the city; it was written in

Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. And the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate, Thou shouldst not write, The king of the Jews; thou shouldst write, This man said, I am the king of the Jews. Pilate's answer was, What I have written, I have written. The soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took up his garments, which they divided into four shares, one share for each soldier. They took up his cloak, too, which was without seam, woven from the top throughout; so they said to one another, Better not to tear it; let us cast lots to decide whose it shall be. This was in fulfilment of the passage in scripture which says, They divide my spoils among them; cast lots for my clothing.⁴ So it was, then, that the soldiers occupied themselves; and meanwhile his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen, had taken their stand beside the cross of Jesus.⁵ And Jesus, seeing his mother there, and the disciple, too, whom he loved, standing by, said to his mother, Woman, this is thy son. Then he said to the disciple, This is thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her into his own keeping.

And now Jesus knew well that all was achieved which the scripture demanded for its accomplishment; and he said, I am thirsty.⁶ There was a jar there full of vinegar; so they filled a sponge with the vinegar and put it on a stick of hyssop, and brought it close to his mouth. Jesus drank the vinegar, and said, It is achieved. Then he bowed his head, and yielded up his spirit.

The Jews would not let the bodies remain crucified on the sabbath, because that sabbath day was a solemn one; and since it was now the eve, they asked Pilate that they might have their legs broken, and be taken away. And so the soldiers came and broke the legs both of the one and of the other that were crucified with him; but

¹ St Augustine seems to give the clearest account of the meaning here; namely that Pilate exercised, as the delegate of Caesar, an authority given him from above, and consented to a miscarriage of justice only through fear of offending that authority (cf. verse 12). He is therefore less guilty than the man who handed our Lord over to him; this may mean either Judas or Caiaphas. ² Lithostrotos, in Greek, means paved with stone; the meaning of Gabbatha is uncertain. ³ 'About the sixth hour'; that is to say, getting on towards noon; see p. 51, note 1. ⁴ Ps. 21. 19. ⁵ It is not clear here whether three women are alluded to, or four. It seems unlikely that our Lady should have had a sister of the same name, but it is possible that she was in fact a cousin or sister-in-law. Mary of Cleophas is probably the same as Mary the mother of James and Joseph (Mt. 27. 56). ⁶ This verse may also be construed, 'Jesus knew well that all was achieved, and he said, I am thirsty, in order that the scripture might be accomplished'. In that case, the reference is to Ps. 68. 22.

when they came to Jesus, and found him already dead, they did not break his legs, 34 but one of the soldiers opened his side with a spear; and immediately blood and water 35 flowed out. He who saw it has borne his witness; and his witness is worthy of trust. He tells what he knows to be the truth, that you, like him, may learn to believe. 36 This was so ordained to fulfil what is written, You shall not break a single bone of his.¹ And again, another passage in scripture says, They will look upon the man whom they have pierced.²

38 After this Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but in secret, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him leave; 39 so he came and took Jesus' body away; and with him was Nicodemus, the same who made his first visit to Jesus by night; he brought with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes, of about a hundred pounds' weight. 40 They took Jesus' body, then, and wrapped it in winding-cloths with the spices; that is how the Jews prepare a body for burial. 41 In the same quarter where he was crucified there was a garden, with a new tomb in it, one in which no man had ever yet been buried. Here, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus, because of the Jewish feast on the morrow.³

20 Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalen went to the tomb, and found the stone moved away from the tomb door.⁴ So she came running to Simon Peter, and that other disciple, whom Jesus loved; They have carried the Lord away from the tomb, she said to them, and we cannot tell where they have taken him. Upon this, Peter and the other disciple both set out, and made their way 4 to the tomb; they began running side by side, but the other disciple outran Peter, and reached the tomb first. He looked in and saw the linen cloths lying there, but

he did not go in. Simon Peter, coming up 6 after him, went into the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there, and also the veil which had been put over Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but still wrapped round and round in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had 8 reached the tomb first, also went in, and saw this, and learned to believe. They had 9 not yet mastered what was written of him, that he was to rise from the dead. The disciples went back home; but Mary stood 10 without before the tomb, weeping. And she bent down, still weeping, and looked into the tomb; and saw two angels clothed 12 in white sitting there, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They said to her, Woman, why art thou weeping? Because they have carried away my Lord, she said, and I cannot tell where they have taken him. Saying 14 this, she turned round, and saw Jesus standing there, without knowing that it was Jesus.⁵ Woman, Jesus said to her, why 15 art thou weeping? For whom art thou searching? She supposed that it must be the gardener, and said to him, If it is thou, Sir, that hast carried him off, tell me where thou hast put him, and I will take him away. Jesus said to her, Mary. And she 16 turned and said to him, Rabboni (which is the Hebrew for Master). Then Jesus said, 17 Do not cling to me thus; I have not yet gone up to my Father's side. Return to my brethren, and tell them this; I am going up to him who is my Father and your Father, who is my God and your God.

So Mary Magdalen brought news to the 18 disciples, of how she had seen the Lord, and he had spoken thus to her. And now 19 it was evening on the same day, the first day of the week; for fear of the Jews, the disciples had locked the doors of the room in which they had assembled; and Jesus came, and stood there in their midst; Peace be upon you, he said. And with that, he 20 shewed them his hands and his side. Thus

¹ Ex. 12. 46; Ps. 33. 21.

² Zach. 12. 10.

³ vv. 1-42: Mt. 27. 27; Mk. 15. 16; Lk. 23. 20.

v. 42: 'Because of the Jewish feast'; St John seems to imply that the burial was only provisional, allowing for the possibility of a reinterment later on.

⁴ This seems to be the same visit as that recorded in Mt. 28. 1; Mk. 16. 1; Lk. 24. 1; that Mary Magdalen was not alone, is implied by the words 'we cannot tell' in verse 2. St Mark tells us that the women came to the tomb at sunrise; it seems therefore that St John must have dated their visit from the moment, some time earlier, when they began their preparations for the journey.

⁵ vv. 11-14: This appearance of the angels cannot be the same as that recorded by the other Evangelists. On the other hand, the appearance of our Lord to St Mary Magdalen may be the same as that recorded in Mt. 28. 9; or the other women may have seen our Lord somewhat later. St Mark records the appearance to St Mary Magdalen, 16. 9.

the disciples saw the Lord, and were glad.
 21 Once more Jesus said to them, Peace be upon you; I came upon an errand from my Father, and now I am sending you out in my turn. With that, he breathed on them, and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit; 22 when you forgive men's sins, they are forgiven, when you hold them bound, they are held bound.¹
 24 There was one of the twelve, Thomas, who is also called Didymus, who was not with them when Jesus came. And when the other disciples told him, We have seen the Lord, he said to them, Until I have seen the mark of the nails on his hands, until I have put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, 26 you will never make me believe. So, eight days afterwards, once more the disciples were within, and Thomas was with them; and the doors were locked. Jesus came and stood there in their midst; Peace be upon 27 you, he said. Then he said to Thomas, Let me have thy finger; see, here are my hands. Let me have thy hand; put it into my side. 28 Cease thy doubting, and believe. Thomas answered, Thou art my Lord and my God. 29 And Jesus said to him, Thou hast learned to believe, Thomas, because thou hast seen me. Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have learned to believe.
 30 There are many other miracles Jesus did in the presence of his disciples, which are 31 not written down in this book; so much has been written down, that you may learn to believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so believing find life through his name.

21 Jesus appeared to his disciples again afterwards, at the sea of Tiberias, and this is how he appeared to them. Simon Peter was there, and with him were Thomas, who is also called Didymus, and Nathanael, from Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two more of his disciples. Simon Peter told them, I am going out fishing; and they said, We, too, will go with thee. So they

went out and embarked on the boat, and all that night they caught nothing. But when morning came, there was Jesus standing on the shore; only the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Have you caught anything, friends, Jesus asked them, to season your bread with? And when they answered No, he said to them, Cast to the right of the boat, and you will have a catch. So they cast the net, and found before long they had no strength to haul it in, such a shoal of fish was in it. Whereupon the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord. And Simon Peter, hearing him say that it was the Lord, girded up the fisherman's coat, which was all he wore, and sprang into the sea. The other disciples followed in the boat (they were not far from land, only some hundred yards away), dragging their catch in the net behind them. So they went ashore, and found a charcoal fire made there, with fish and bread cooking on it. Bring some of the fish you have just caught, Jesus said to them: and Simon Peter, going on board, hauled in the net to land. It was loaded with great fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and with all that number the net had not broken. When Jesus said to them, Come and break your fast, none of the disciples ventured to ask him, Who art thou? knowing well that it was the Lord.² So Jesus came up and took bread, which he gave to them, and fish as well. Thus Jesus appeared to his disciples a third time after his rising from the dead.

And when they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, dost thou care for me more than these others? Yes, Lord, he told him, thou knowest well that I love thee. And he said to him, Feed my lambs. And again, a second time, he asked him, Simon, son of John, dost thou care for me? Yes, Lord, he told him, thou knowest well that I love thee. He said to him, Tend my shearlings.³ Then he asked him a third question, Simon, son of John, dost thou love me? Peter was deeply moved when he was asked a third time.

¹ *vv.* 19-23; *Mk.* 16. 14; *Lk.* 24. 36.

² It would seem that our Lord made himself strange to his apostles here, as he did to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (*Lk.* 24. 16; *Mk.* 16. 12); yet the miracle, or something else about his manner of action, convinced them from the first that it was he and no other. We are perhaps meant to understand that they 'recognized him when he broke bread', as in *Lk.* 24. 35.

³ Some of the Greek manuscripts here have 'my sheep', others 'my little sheep'; it would seem that the second reading was accepted by the Latin, which translates 'lambs', here as in verse 15. Probably our Lord meant yearling sheep, which would need to be *tended*, that is, led out to pasture, with greater care than the others.

Dost thou love me? and said to him, Lord,
thou knowest all things; thou canst tell that
I love thee. Jesus said to him, Feed my
18 sheep. Believe me when I tell thee this;
as a young man, thou wouldst gird thy-
self and walk where thou hadst the will
to go, but when thou hast grown old, thou
wilt stretch out thy hands, and another
shall gird thee, and carry thee where thou
19 goest, not of thy own will. So much he told
him, prophesying the death by which he
was to glorify God; and with that he said
20 to him, Follow me. Peter turned, and saw
the disciple whom Jesus loved following
him; the same who leaned back on his
breast at supper, and asked, Who is it that

is to betray thee? Seeing him, Peter asked 21
Jesus, And what of this man, Lord? Jesus 22
said to him, If it is my will that he should
wait till I come, what is it to thee? Do thou
follow me. That was why the story went 23
round among the brethren that this dis-
ciple was not to die. But Jesus did not say,
He is not to die; he said, If it is my will that
he should wait till I come, what is it to
thee? It is the same disciple that bears 24
witness of all this and has written the story
of it; and we know well that his witness is
truthful. There is much else besides that 25
Jesus did; if all of it were put in writing, I
do not think the world itself would contain
the books which would have to be written.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

THE first book which I wrote, Theophilus, was concerned with all that Jesus set out to do and teach,¹ until the day came when he was taken up into heaven. He then laid a charge, by the power of the Holy Spirit, on the apostles whom he had chosen. He had shewn them by many proofs that he was still alive, after his passion; throughout the course of forty days he had been appearing to them, and telling them about the kingdom of God; and now he gave them orders, as he shared a meal with them, not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the fulfilment of the Father's promise. You have heard it, he said, from my own lips; John's baptism, I told you, was with water, but there is a baptism with the Holy Spirit which you are to receive, not many days from this.

And his companions asked him, Lord, dost thou mean to restore the dominion to Israel here and now? But he told them, It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. Enough for you, that the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and you will receive strength from him; you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem and throughout Judaea, in Samaria, yes, and to the ends of the earth. When he had said this, they saw him lifted up, and a cloud caught him away from their sight.² And as they strained their eyes towards heaven, to watch his journey, all at once two men in white garments were standing at their side. Men of Galilee, they said, why do you stand here looking heavenwards? He who has been taken from you into heaven, this same Jesus, will come back in the same fashion, just as you have watched him going into heaven. Then, from the mountain which is called Oliver, they went back to Jeru-

salem; the distance from Jerusalem is not great, a sabbath day's journey. Coming in, they went up into the upper room where they dwelt, Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the brother of James. All these, with one mind, gave themselves up to prayer, together with Mary the mother of Jesus, and the rest of the women and his brethren.³

At this time, Peter stood up and spoke before all the brethren; a company of about a hundred and twenty were gathered there. Brethren, he said, there is a prophecy in scripture that must needs be fulfilled; that which the Holy Spirit made, by the lips of David, about Judas, who shewed the way to the men that arrested Jesus. Judas was counted among our number, and had been given a share in this ministry of ours. (With the price of his treachery, this man came into possession of a field; and afterwards, when he fell from a height, and his belly burst open, so that he was disembowelled, all Jerusalem heard of it, and the field came to be called, in their language, Haceldama, that is, the Field of Blood.)⁴ Well, in the book of Psalms the words are written, Let their camping-place be deserted, and let no man be found to dwell in it. And again, Let another take over his office.⁵ There are men who have walked in our company all through the time when the Lord Jesus came and went among us, from the time when John used to baptize to the day when he, Jesus, was taken from us. One of these ought to be added to our number as a witness of his resurrection. So they named two of them, Joseph called Barsabas, who had been given the fresh name of Justus, and

¹ St Luke says 'the first', not 'the former', which has made some commentators think that he intended to write three books altogether, but this inference is uncertain. ² *vv.* 6-9; Mk. 16. 19; Lk. 24. 50.

³ See p. 52, note 1. ⁴ *vv.* 18-19: These words may be part of St Peter's speech, but are more easily understood as a note by the author. From a comparison of them with Mt. 27. 5 and following, it must be inferred that Judas attempted to hang himself by jumping over the edge of a precipice, and that the rope broke or slipped with the result here described. ⁵ Ps. 68. 26; 108. 8.

24 Matthias. And they offered this prayer,
 Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men,
 25 shew us which of these two thou hast chosen
 to take his place in this work of apostleship,
 from which Judas has fallen away, and gone
 26 to the place which belonged to him. They
 gave them lots; and the lot fell upon
 Matthias, and he took rank with the eleven
 apostles.

2 When the day of Pentecost came
 round, while they were all gathered
 together in unity of purpose, all at once a
 sound came from heaven like that of a
 strong wind blowing, and filled the whole
 3 house where they were sitting. Then ap-
 peared to them what seemed to be tongues
 of fire, which parted and came to rest on
 4 each of them; and they were all filled with
 the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in
 strange languages, as the Spirit gave utter-
 5 ance to each.¹ Among those who were
 dwelling in Jerusalem at this time were
 devout Jews from every country under
 6 heaven;² so, when the noise of this went
 abroad, the crowd which gathered was in
 bewilderment; each man severally heard
 7 them speak in his own language. And they
 were all beside themselves with astonish-
 ment; Are they not all Galileans speaking?
 8 they asked. How is it that each of us hears
 9 them talking his own native tongue? There
 are Parthians among us, and Medes, and
 Elamites; our homes are in Mesopotamia,
 or Judaea,³ or Cappadocia, in Pontus or
 10 Asia, Phrygia or Pamphylia, Egypt or
 the parts of Libya round Cyrene; some of us
 11 are visitors from Rome, some of us are
 Jews and others proselytes; there are
 Cretans among us too, and Arabians; and
 each has been hearing them tell of God's
 12 wonders in his own language. So they
 were all beside themselves with per-
 plexity, and asked one another, What can
 13 this mean? There were others who said,
 mockingly, They have had their fill of new
 wine.

14 But Peter, with the eleven apostles at his
 side, stood there and raised his voice to

15 speak to them; Men of Judaea, he said, and
 all you who are dwelling in Jerusalem, I
 must tell you this; listen to what I have to
 say. These men are not drunk, as you sup-
 pose; it is only the third hour of the day.
 16 This is what was foretold by the prophet
 Joel: In the last times, God says, I will
 17 pour out my spirit upon all mankind, and
 your sons and daughters will be prophets.
 Your young men shall see visions, and your
 old men shall dream dreams; and I will
 18 pour out my spirit in those days upon my
 servants and hand-maids, so that they will
 prophesy. I will shew wonders in heaven
 19 above, and signs on the earth beneath,
 blood and fire and whirling smoke; the sun
 will be turned into darkness and the moon
 into blood, before the day of the Lord
 comes, great and glorious. And then
 20 everyone who calls on the name of the
 Lord shall be saved.⁴ Men of Israel, listen
 21 to this. Jesus of Nazareth was a man duly
 accredited to you from God; such were the
 miracles and wonders and signs which God
 did through him in your midst, as you
 yourselves well know. This man you have
 22 put to death; by God's fixed design and
 foreknowledge, he was betrayed to you,
 and you, through the hands of sinful men,
 have cruelly murdered him. But God
 23 raised him up again, releasing him from
 the pangs of death; it was impossible that
 death should have the mastery over him.
 It is in his person that David says, Always
 24 I can keep the Lord within sight; always
 he is at my right hand, to make me stand
 firm. So there is gladness in my heart, and
 25 rejoicing on my lips; my body, too, shall
 rest in confidence that thou wilt not leave
 26 my soul in the place of death, or allow thy
 faithful servant to see corruption. Thou
 27 hast shewn me the way of life; thou wilt
 make me full of gladness in thy presence.⁵
 My brethren, I can say this to you about
 28 the patriarch David without fear of con-
 tradiction, that he did die, and was buried,
 and his tomb is among us to this day. But
 29 he was a prophet, and he knew God had
 promised him on oath that he would set the

¹ 'Strange', or, according to some Latin manuscripts, 'various' languages. ² It is not clear whether the people here mentioned were Jews who had been born abroad but now lived in Jerusalem, or Jews from abroad who were staying in Jerusalem for the feast. They were in any case bilingual, being conversant with the native speech, or perhaps with the various Greek dialects, spoken in the countries to which they belonged. ³ It is not certain in what sense the word 'Judaea' is here used; some have thought that it was written by an early copyist in mistake for 'Lydia', or some other distant province.

⁴ Jl. 2. 28. v. 20. The Hebrew has 'terrible' instead of 'glorious'. ⁵ Ps. 15. 8.

31 sons of his body upon his throne; it was of the Christ he said, foreseeing his resurrection, that he was not left in the place of death, and that his body did not see corruption. God, then, has raised up this man, Jesus, from the dead; we are all witnesses of it. And now, exalted at God's right hand, he has claimed from his Father his promise to bestow the Holy Spirit; and he has poured out that Spirit, as you can see and hear for yourselves. David never went up to heaven, and yet David has told us, The Lord said to my Master, Sit on my right hand, while I make thy enemies a footstool under thy feet.¹ Let it be known, then, beyond doubt, to all the house of Israel, that God has made him Master and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

37 When they heard this, their consciences were stung; and they asked Peter and his fellow apostles, Brethren, what must we do? Repent, Peter said to them, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to have your sins forgiven; then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is for you and for your children, and for all those, however far away, whom the Lord our God calls to himself. And he used many more words besides, urgently appealing to them; Save yourselves, he said, from this false-minded generation. So all those who had taken his words to heart were baptized, and about three thousand souls were won for the Lord that day. These occupied themselves continually with the apostles' teaching, their fellowship in the breaking of bread, and the fixed times of prayer,² and every soul was struck with awe, so many were the wonders and signs performed by the apostles in Jerusalem. All the faithful held together, and shared all they had, selling their possessions and their means of livelihood, so as to distribute to all, as each had need. They persevered with one accord, day by day, in the temple worship, and, as they broke bread in this house or that, took their share of food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God, and winning favour with all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship others that were to be saved.

3 Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, which is an hour of prayer, when a man was carried by who had been lame from birth. Every day he was put down at what is called the Beautiful Gate of the temple, so that he could beg alms from the temple visitors. And he asked Peter and John, as he saw them on their way into the temple, if he might have alms from them. Peter fastened his eyes on him, as John did too, and said, Turn towards us; and he looked at them attentively, hoping that something would be given him. Then Peter said to him, Silver and gold are not mine to give, I give thee what I can. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. So, taking him by his right hand, he lifted him up; and with that, strength came to his feet and ankles; he sprang up, and began walking, and went into the temple with them, walking, and leaping, and giving praise to God. All the people, as they saw him walking and praising God, recognized him for the man who used to sit begging at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and were full of wonder and bewilderment at what had befallen him. And he would not let go of Peter and John, so that all the crowd gathered about them in what is called Solomon's Porch, beside themselves with wonder.

Peter, when he saw it, addressed himself to the people; Men of Israel, he said, why does this astonish you? Why do you fasten your eyes on us, as if we had enabled him to walk through some power or virtue of our own? It is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our forefathers, who has thus brought honour to his Son Jesus. You gave him up, and disowned him in the presence of Pilate, when Pilate's voice was for setting him free. You disowned the holy, the just, and asked for the pardon of a murderer, while you killed the author of life. But God has raised him up again from the dead, and we are here to bear witness of it. Here is a man you all know by sight, who has put his faith in that name, and that name has brought him strength; it is the faith which comes through Jesus that has restored him to full health in the sight of you all. Come then,

¹ Ps. 109. 1.² The Greek has 'the apostles' teaching and fellowship, and the breaking of the bread, and (the) prayers'.

brethren, I know that you, like your rulers, acted in ignorance; but God has fulfilled in this way what was foretold by all the prophets about the sufferings of his Christ. Repent, then, and turn back to him, to have your sins effaced, against the day when the Lord sees fit to refresh our hearts. Then he will send out Jesus Christ, who has now been made known to you, but must have his dwelling-place in heaven until the time when all is restored anew,¹ the time which God has spoken of by his holy prophets from the beginning. Thus, Moses said, The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among your own brethren; to him, to every word of his, you must listen. It is ordained that everyone who will not listen to the voice of that prophet shall be lost to his people.² And all the prophets who spoke to you, from Samuel onwards, have foretold those days. You are the heirs of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, when he said to Abraham, Every race on earth shall receive a blessing through thy posterity. It is to you first of all that God has sent his Son, whom he raised up from the dead to bring you a blessing, to turn away every one of you from his sins.

4 Before they had finished speaking to the crowd, they were interrupted by the chief priests, the temple superintendent, and the Sadducees. These, indignant at their teaching the multitude and proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, laid hands on them, and put them in prison (for it was already evening) until the next day. (Meanwhile, many of those who had listened to their preaching had joined the believers, so that their numbers had now risen to five thousand men.) On the next day, there was a gathering of the rulers and elders and scribes in Jerusalem; the high priest Annas was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all those who belonged to the high-priestly family.³ And they had Peter and John

brought into their presence, and asked them, By what power, in whose name, have such men as you done this? Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, and said to them, Rulers of the people, elders of Israel, listen to me.⁴ If it is over kindness done to a cripple, and the means by which he has been restored, that we are called in question, here is news for you and for the whole people of Israel. You crucified Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, and God raised him from the dead; it is through his name that this man stands before you restored. He is that stone, rejected by you, the builders, that has become the chief stone at the corner.⁵ Salvation is not to be found elsewhere; this alone of all the names under heaven has been appointed to men as the one by which we must needs be saved.

Seeing the boldness of Peter and John, and discovering that they were simple men, without learning, they were astonished, and recognized them now as having been in Jesus' company. They could find no answer to make, with the man who had been healed standing there beside them; so they ordered them out of the council-chamber, and conferred together. What are we to do with these men? they asked. It is commonly known among all the people of Jerusalem that a notable miracle has been done by their means, and we are powerless to deny it. But the news must not spread any further; we must deter them by threats from preaching to anybody in this man's name again. So they called them in, and warned them not to utter a word or give any teaching in the name of Jesus. At this, Peter and John answered them, Judge for yourselves whether it would be right for us, in the sight of God, to listen to your voice instead of God's. It is impossible for us to refrain from speaking of what we have seen and heard. And they, after threatening them further, let them go; they could find no means of punishing them, because all the people were exclaiming at the astonishing circumstances of what had befallen;⁶ the

¹ 'Until the time when'; the Greek here may mean 'in order that the time may come', or possibly, 'when the time comes'. The Latin, apparently by an error, has 'in order that when the time comes', which spoils the grammar of the sentence.

² Deut. 18. 15.

³ It was Caiaphas, not Annas, who was high priest at this time; but St Luke seems to have regarded Annas as somehow associated with his son-in-law in the exercise of the office; cf. Lk. 3. 2.

⁴ Cf. Mt. 10. 20.

⁵ Ps. 117. 22. Cf. Mt.

21. 42; 1 Pet. 2. 7.

⁶ 'Exclaiming at the astonishing circumstances of'; the Greek manuscripts have 'praising God over'.

man in whom this miracle of healing had taken place was more than forty years old.

- 23 Now that they were set free, they went back to their company, and told them all the chief priests and elders had said. And they, when they heard it, uttered prayer to God with one accord; Ruler of all, thou art the maker of heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them. Thou hast said through thy Holy Spirit, by the lips of thy servant David, our father, What means this turmoil among the nations; why do the peoples cherish vain dreams? See how the kings of the earth stand in array, how its rulers make common cause, against the Lord and his Christ.¹ True enough, in this city of ours, Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel to aid them, made common cause against thy holy servant Jesus, so accomplishing all that thy power and wisdom had decreed. Look down upon their threats, Lord, now as of old; enable thy servants to preach thy word confidently, by stretching out thy hand to heal; and let signs and miracles be performed in the name of Jesus, thy holy Son. When they had finished praying, the place in which they had gathered rocked to and fro, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to preach the word of God with confidence.

- 32 There was one heart and soul in all the company of believers; none of them called any of his possessions his own, everything was shared in common. Great was the power with which the apostles testified to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and great was the grace that rested on them all. None of them was destitute; all those who owned farms or houses used to sell them, and bring the price of what they had sold to lay it at the apostles' feet, so that each could have what share of it he needed. 36 There was a Levite called Joseph, a Cypriot by birth, to whom the apostles gave the fresh name of Barnabas, which means, the man of encouragement; he had an estate, which he sold, and brought the purchase-money to lay it at the apostles' feet.

5 But there was a man called Ananias who, with his wife Sapphira, sold an

estate, and kept back some of the money, with his wife's knowledge, only bringing a part of it to lay at the feet of the apostles. Whereupon Peter said, Ananias, how is it that Satan has taken possession of thy heart, bidding thee defraud the Holy Spirit by keeping back some of the money that was paid thee for the land? Unsold, the property was thine; after the sale, the money was at thy disposal; what has put it into thy heart so to act? It is God, not man, thou hast defrauded. At these words, Ananias fell down and died; and a great fear came upon all those who heard it. So the young men rose and took him up, and carried him out to burial. It was about three hours later that his wife came in, knowing nothing of what had happened; and Peter said to her, Tell me, woman, was it for so much that you sold the estate? Yes, she said, for so much. Then Peter said to her, What is this conspiracy between you, to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Even now I hear at the door the footsteps of those who have been burying thy husband; they will carry thee out too. And all at once she fell at his feet and died; so that when the young men came in they found her a corpse, and carried her out to bury her with her husband. Great fear came upon the church and upon all who heard the story. And there were many signs and miracles done by the apostles before the people. They used to gather with one accord in Solomon's porch. No one else² dared to join them, although the people held them in high honour, and the number of those who believed in the Lord, both men and women, still increased; they even used to bring sick folk into the streets, and lay them down there on beds and pallets, in the hope that even the shadow of Peter, as he passed by, might fall upon one of them here and there, and so they would be healed of their infirmities. From neighbouring cities, too, the common people flocked to Jerusalem, bringing with them the sick and those who were troubled by unclean spirits; and all of them were cured.

This roused the high priest and those who thought with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees. Full of indignation, they

¹ Ps. 2. 1. ² *ov.* 13-15: It cannot be decided with certainty whether 'no one else' refers to other Christians or to those outside the Church, and what was the fear which kept them at a distance.

19 arrested the apostles and shut them up in
the common gaol. But, in the night, an
angel of the Lord came and opened the
20 prison doors, and led them out; Go, he
said, and take your stand in the temple;
preach fully to the people the message of
21 true life.¹ So, at his word, they went into
the temple at dawn, and began preaching.
Meanwhile the high priest and his fol-
lowers met, and summoned the Council,
with all the elders of the Jewish people;
and they sent to the prison-house to have
22 them brought in. When they came to look
in the prison, the officers could not find
them there; so they went back and re-
ported, We found the prison-house locked
23 up with all due care, and the guards at their
posts before the door; but when we opened
it there was no one to be found within. At
24 hearing this, the temple superintendent
and the chief priests were at a loss to know
25 what had become of them; until an eye-
witness told them, The men you put in
prison are standing in the temple, teaching
26 the people there. So the superintendent
and his officers went and fetched them,
using no violence, because they were afraid
27 of being stoned by the people; and they
brought them in and bade them stand be-
fore the Council, where the high priest
28 questioned them. We warned you in set
terms, he said, not to preach in this man's
name, and you have filled all Jerusalem
with your preaching; you are determined
29 to lay this man's death at our door. Peter
and the other apostles answered, God has
30 more right to be obeyed than men. It was
the God of our fathers that raised up Jesus,
31 the man you hung on a gibbet to die. It is
God that has raised him up to his own
right hand, as the prince and Saviour who is
to bring Israel repentance, and remission
32 of sins. Of this, we are witnesses; we and
the Holy Spirit God gives to all those who
obey him.
33 On hearing this they were cut to the
34 quick, and designed to kill them. But now
one of the Pharisees in the Council, a law-
yer named Gamaliel, who was held in

esteem by all the people, rose and bade
them send the apostles out for a little; then
35 he said to them, Men of Israel, think well
what you mean to do with these men.
There was Theodas, who appeared in days
36 gone by and claimed to be someone of im-
portance, and was supported by about four
hundred men; he was killed, and all his
followers were dispersed, and came to no-
thing.² And after him Judas the Galilean
37 appeared in the days of the registration; he
persuaded the people to rebel under his
leadership, but he too perished, and all his
followers were scattered. And my advice
38 is still the same; have nothing to do with
these men, let them be. If this is man's
design or man's undertaking, it will be
overthrown; if it is God's, you will have no
39 power to overthrow it. You would not
willingly be found fighting against God.
And they fell in with his opinion; so they
40 sent for the apostles and, after scourging
them, let them go with a warning that they
were not on any account to preach in the
name of Jesus. And they left the presence
41 of the Council, rejoicing that they had been
found worthy to suffer indignity for the
sake of Jesus' name. And every day, both
42 in the temple and from house to house,
their teaching and their preaching was
continually of Jesus Christ.

6 At this time, as the number of the
disciples increased, complaints were
brought against those who spoke Hebrew
by those who spoke Greek; their widows,
they said, were neglected in the daily ad-
ministration of relief.³ So the twelve called
2 together the general body of the disciples,
and said, It is too much that we should
have to forgo preaching God's word, and
bestow our care upon tables. Come then,
3 brethren, you must find among you seven
men who are well spoken of, full of the
Holy Spirit and of wisdom, for us to put
in charge of this business, while we devote
4 ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of
preaching. This advice found favour with
5 all the assembly; and they chose Stephen,

¹ 'True life'; literally, 'this life', but such a translation would imply that 'life' referred to a way of living, whereas the Greek word used applies to a principle of life, namely, the principle of supernatural life which is implanted in us by baptism.

² This Theodas cannot be the same as the Theudas mentioned by Josephus (*Ant. xx. v. 1*) as having revolted under Cuspius Fadus (A.D. 44-46) unless Josephus has made an error over dates.

³ 'Those who spoke Greek'; that is, Jews who had been brought up outside Palestine, and Gentiles who had become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and afterwards Christians.

a man who was full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, who was a proselyte from Antioch. These they presented to the apostles, who laid their hands on them with prayer.

7 By now the word of God was gaining influence, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem was greatly increasing; many of the priests had given their allegiance to the faith. And Stephen, full of grace and power, performed great miracles and signs among the people. There were those who came forward to debate with him, some of the synagogue of the Freedmen¹ (as it is called), and of the Cyreneans and Alexandrians, and of those who came from Cilicia and Asia; but they were no match for Stephen's wisdom, and for the Spirit which then gave utterance.² Thereupon they employed agents to say they had heard him speaking blasphemously of Moses, and of God. Having thus roused the feelings of the people, and of the elders and scribes, they set upon him and carried him off, and so brought him before the Council. There they put forward false witnesses, who declared, This man is never tired of uttering insults against the holy place, and the law. We have heard him say that the Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place, and will alter the traditions which Moses handed down to us. And all those who sat there in the Council fastened their eyes on him, and saw his face looking like the face of an angel.

7 Then the high priest asked, Are these charges true? And he answered, Brethren and fathers, listen to me. When the God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, it was while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he took up his dwelling in Charan. Leave thy country, he said, and thy kindred, and come to the land to which I direct thee.³ So it was that he left the country of the Chaldaeans, and lived in Charan; it was only after his father's death that he was bidden to remove thence into

this land where you now dwell. There, God gave him no inheritance, not so much as a foot's space; he only promised the possession of it to him and to his posterity after him, although at this time he had no child. And this is what God told him, that his descendants would live as strangers in a foreign land, where they would be enslaved and ill-used for four hundred years. But I will pass judgement, the Lord said, on the nation which enslaves them; and at last they will escape, and settle down to worship me here.⁴ Then he made a covenant with Abraham, the covenant that ordained circumcision. So it was that he became the father of Isaac, whom he circumcised seven days afterwards, and Isaac of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

The patriarchs, out of jealousy, sold Joseph as a slave, to be taken to Egypt. In Egypt, God was with him; he rescued him from all his afflictions, and won him favour and a name for wisdom with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all the royal household. And now a famine came upon all Egypt and Chanaan, cruelly afflicting them, till our fathers could procure no food. So Jacob, hearing that there was corn in Egypt, sent out our fathers on their first journey; and on their second journey Joseph made himself known to them, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph's kindred. Then Joseph sent for his father Jacob, and for his family, seventy-five souls in all; and Jacob went down into Egypt, where he and our fathers died. They were removed afterwards to Sichem; and it was in the grave which Abraham had bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hemor, the man of Sichem, that they were buried.⁵

And when the time drew near for the fulfilment of the promise which God had made to Abraham, the people had increased and multiplied in Egypt. And now a new king arose in Egypt, one who knew nothing of Joseph; this king dealt treacherously with our race, using them so ill

¹ 'The Freedmen'; according to some Greek manuscripts, 'the Libyans'. ² Some Latin manuscripts have 'the Spirit with which he spoke', which is the natural (though not the only possible) rendering of the Greek. ³ Gen. 12. 1. ⁴ *vv.* 6, 7; Gen. 15. 13; perhaps with a reminiscence of Ex. 3. 12 added at the end. ⁵ There is a discrepancy between this account and that given in Genesis, which suggests either that St Stephen's memory played him false in the course of an extempore speech, or that there was some early corruption in the text. According to Gen. 50. 13, Jacob was buried in the grave bought by Abraham at Hebron, not at Sichem. Joseph was buried at Sichem (Jos. 24. 32).

that they exposed their children, instead
 20 of rearing them. It was at this time that
 Moses was born, and, finding favour with
 God, was brought up in his father's house
 21 for three months; then, when he had been
 exposed, he was rescued by Pharaoh's
 daughter, who adopted him as her son.
 22 Thus Moses was well trained in all the
 learning of the Egyptians; he was vigorous,
 23 too, in speech and in act. And now, when
 he had reached forty years of age, it came
 into his mind to visit his brethren, the
 24 children of Israel. When he saw one of
 them being unjustly used, he came to the
 rescue and avenged the man who was
 25 wronged, by killing the Egyptian. He ex-
 pected them to understand, but they could
 not understand, that he was the means by
 which God was to bring them deliverance.
 26 Next day, he came in sight when two of
 them were quarrelling, and tried to restore
 peace between them; Sirs, he said, you are
 brethren; why do you inflict injury on one
 27 another? Whereupon the man who was
 doing his neighbour a wrong thrust him
 aside, asking, Who made thee a ruler and
 28 a judge over us? Art thou ready to kill me,
 as thou didst kill the Egyptian yesterday?
 29 And at that Moses fled, and lived as an
 exile in the land of Madian; it was there
 30 that two sons were born to him.

Forty years later, a vision came to him
 in the wilderness of mount Sinai; a bush
 had caught fire; and an angel was standing
 31 among the flames. Moses saw it, and was
 astonished at the sight; and as he drew
 near to look, the voice of the Lord came to
 32 him, I am the God of thy fathers, of Abra-
 ham, and Isaac, and Jacob. And Moses
 did not dare to look close; fear made him
 33 tremble. Then the Lord said to him, Take
 the shoes off thy feet; the place on which
 34 thou standest is holy ground. The affliction
 of my people in Egypt is before my eyes
 continually; I have heard their lamenting,
 and have come down to deliver them.
 Come now, I have an errand for thee in
 35 Egypt.¹ It was this same Moses, the man
 whom they had disowned, and asked him,
 Who made thee a ruler and a judge over
 us? that God sent to be their ruler and
 their deliverer, helped by the angel whom

he saw there at the bush. He it was who
 36 led them out, performing wonders and
 signs in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and in
 the wilderness, over a space of forty years.

It was this Moses who said to the chil-
 37 dren of Israel, The Lord your God will
 raise up for you a prophet like myself, from
 among your own brethren; to him you
 must listen.² He it was who took part with
 38 the angel that spoke to him on mount Sinai,
 and with our fathers, at the meeting in the
 desert. There he received words of life to
 hand on to us; and yet our fathers would
 39 not give him obedience. They disowned
 him; they turned their thoughts towards
 Egypt, and said to Aaron, Make us gods,
 40 to lead our march; as for this Moses, who
 brought us out of the land of Egypt, there
 is no saying what has become of him.³
 41 So they fashioned a calf at this time, making
 offerings to an idol, and keeping holiday
 over the works of their own hands. Where-
 42 upon God turned away from them, and
 gave them over to the worship of all the
 host of heaven; so it is written in the book
 of the prophets, Is it true that you brought
 me victims and sacrifices, you sons of Is-
 43 rael, for forty years in the wilderness?
 You carried about the tent of Moloch, and
 the star of your god Rempham, and wor-
 shipped them, images of your own fashion-
 ing. And now I will send you into exile on
 the further side of Babylon.⁴

In the wilderness, our fathers had the
 44 tabernacle with them, to remind them of
 God's covenant; he who spoke to Moses
 bade him fashion it after the model which
 had been shewn him. And when God dis-
 45 possessed the Gentiles, to make room for
 our fathers' coming, our fathers under
 Josue brought this tabernacle, as an heir-
 loom, into the land which they conquered.
 So it was until the time of David. David,
 46 who had won favour in God's sight, longed
 to devise a resting-place for the God of
 Israel, but in the end it was Solomon that
 47 built the house for him. Yet we are not to
 think that the most High dwells in temples
 made by men's hands; the prophet says:
 48 Heaven is my throne, and earth is the foot-
 49 stool under my feet. What home will you
 build for me, says the Lord, what place can

¹ *vv.* 30-34; *Ex.* 3. 2 and following. ² *Deut.* 18. 15. ³ *Ex.* 32. 1. ⁴ *vv.* 42, 43; *Am.* 5. 25, where, however, there is a difference of reading in the Hebrew. St Stephen quotes from the Septuagint, but has substituted 'Babylon' for 'Damascus' in the original.

50 be my resting-place? Was it not my hands that made all this?¹

51 Stiff-necked race, your heart and ears still uncircumcised, you are for ever resisting the Holy Spirit, just as your fathers did. There was not one of the prophets they did not persecute; it was death to foretell the coming of that just man, whom you in these times have betrayed and murdered; you, who received the law dictated by angels, and did not keep it.

54 At hearing this, they were cut to the heart, and began to gnash their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on heaven, and saw there the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand; I see heaven opening, he said, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Then they cried aloud, and put their fingers into their ears; with one accord they fell upon him, thrust him out of the city, and stoned him. And the witnesses put down their clothes at the feet of
58 a young man named Saul. Thus they stoned Stephen; he, meanwhile, was praying; Lord Jesus, he said, receive my spirit; and then, kneeling down, he cried aloud, Lord, do not count this sin against them. And with that, he fell asleep in the Lord.

Saul was one of those who gave their voices for his murder.

8 The church in Jerusalem was much persecuted at this time, and all except the apostles were scattered about over the countryside of Judaea and Samaria.
2 Stephen was buried by devout men, who
3 mourned greatly over him. Saul, meanwhile, was making havoc of the church; he made his way into house after house, carrying men and women off and committing them to prison.

4 Those who had been driven away spread the gospel as they went from place to place; and Philip, who had gone down to one of the cities of Samaria, preached Christ
6 there. The multitude listened with general accord to what Philip said, as their own eyes and ears witnessed the miracles he did. There were many possessed by unclean spirits, and these came out, crying
8 aloud; many, too, were healed of the palsy,
9 and of lameness, and there was great rejoicing in that city. And there was a man

called Simon, who had been in the city before Philip came there, misleading the people of Samaria with sorcery, and pretending to have great powers, so that high and low hung upon his words; This, they said, is an angel called the great angel of God. Long misled by his sorceries, they continued to pay attention to him, until Philip came and preached to them about God's kingdom. Then they found faith and were baptized, men and women alike, in the name of Jesus Christ; and Simon, who had found faith and been baptized with the rest, kept close to Philip's side; he was astonished by the great miracles and signs he saw happening.

And now the apostles at Jerusalem, hearing that Samaria had received the word of God, sent Peter and John to visit them. So these two came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, who had not, as yet, come down on any of them; they had received nothing so far except baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then the apostles began to lay their hands on them, so that the Holy Spirit was given them, and Simon, seeing that the Holy Spirit was granted through the imposition of the apostles' hands, offered them money; Let me too, he said, have such powers that when I lay my hands on anyone he will receive the Holy Spirit. Whereupon Peter said to him, Take thy wealth with thee to perdition, thou who hast told thyself that God's free gift can be bought with money. There is no share, no part for thee in these doings; thy heart is not true in the sight of God. Repent of this baseness of thine, and pray to God, in the hope of finding pardon for the thought which thy heart has conceived. I see plainly that a bitter poison has taken hold of thee; thou art the bondsman of iniquity. And Simon answered, Pray for me to the Lord, that none of this harm you have spoken of may fall upon me.

So, when they had borne their full witness and preached the word of the Lord, they began their journey back to Jerusalem, carrying the gospel into many Samaritan villages. Meanwhile, Philip was commanded by an angel of the Lord, Rise up, and go south to meet the road which leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, out

¹ vs. 49, 50: Is. 66. 1.

27 in the desert.¹ So he rose up and went; and found there an Ethiopian. This man was a eunuch, a courtier of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, and had charge of all her wealth; he had been up to worship at Jerusalem, and was now on his way home, driving along in his chariot and reading the prophet Isaias. The Spirit said to Philip, Go up to that chariot and keep close by it. And Philip, as he ran up, heard him reading the prophet Isaias, and asked, Canst thou understand what thou art reading? How could I, said he, without someone to guide me? And he entreated Philip to come up and sit beside him. The passage of scripture which he was reading was this; He was led away like a sheep to be slaughtered; like a lamb that is dumb before its shearer, he would not open his mouth. He was brought low, and all his rights taken away; who shall tell the story of his age? His life is being cut off from the earth.² And the eunuch turned to Philip, and said, Tell me, about whom does the prophet say this? Himself, or some other man? Then Philip began speaking, and preached to him about Jesus, taking this passage as his theme. As they went on their way, they came to a piece of water, and the eunuch said, See, there is water here; why may I not be baptized? Philip said, If thou dost believe with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.³ So he had the chariot stopped, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him there. But when they came up from the water, Philip was carried off by the spirit of the Lord, and the eunuch did not see him any longer; he went on his way rejoicing. As for Philip, he was next heard of at Azotus; and from there he went preaching all round the villages, until he reached Caesarea.

9 Saul, with every breath he drew, still threatened the disciples of the Lord

with massacre; and now he went to the high priest and asked him for letters of commendation to the synagogues at Damascus, so that he could arrest all those he found there, men and women, who belonged to the way, and bring them back to Jerusalem.⁴ Then, on his journey, when he was nearly at Damascus, a light from heaven shone suddenly about him. He fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? Who art thou, Lord? he asked. And he said, I am Jesus, whom Saul persecutes. This is a thankless task of thine, kicking against the goad. And he, dazed and trembling, asked, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? Then the Lord said to him, Rise up, and go into the city, and there thou shalt be told what thy work is. His companions stood in bewilderment, hearing the voice speak, but not seeing anyone.⁵ When he rose from the ground he could see nothing, although his eyes were open, and they had to lead him by the hand, to take him into Damascus. Here for three days he remained without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

There was, in Damascus, a disciple named Ananias; to him the Lord called in a vision, Ananias. Here I am, Lord, he answered. And the Lord said to him, Rise up and go to the road called Straight Street; and enquire at the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus, named Saul. Even now he is at his prayers; and he has had a vision of a man called Ananias coming in and laying hands on him, to cure him of blindness. At this, Ananias answered, Lord, many have told me about this man, and all the hurt he has done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and he has come here with authority from the chief priests to imprison all those who call upon thy name. But the Lord said to him, Go on thy errand; this is a man I have chosen to be the instrument for bringing my name before the heathen and their rulers, and before

¹ Some have supposed that it was the road, not Gaza itself, which was 'deserted'; but it is possible that the old Gaza, destroyed in 96 B.C., is here distinguished from the new Gaza, built in 58 B.C., and destroyed in A.D. 65. ² *vv.* 32, 33: *Is.* 53. 7. The Hebrew differs in several points from the text of the Septuagint, which is here quoted. Nor is the meaning of the Greek here beyond dispute; some would render 'his condemnation' instead of 'his rights', and 'his posterity' instead of 'his age'.

³ This verse is wanting in some of the Greek, and also in some of the Latin manuscripts. ⁴ 'The way'; that is, the Christian profession. ⁵ *vv.* 5-7: The words from 'This is a thankless task...' to '... the Lord said to him' are omitted by all the Greek and some Latin manuscripts. *v.* 7: 'Hearing the voice speak', but not hearing what was said. This is made clear in 22. 9 below, where 'to hear' is used in the sense of 'to understand', as in I Cor. 14. 2.

16 the people of Israel too. I have yet to tell him, how much suffering he will have to
 17 undergo for my name's sake. So Ananias set out; and as soon as he came into the house he laid his hands upon him, and said, Brother Saul, I have been sent by that Lord Jesus who appeared to thee on thy way as thou earnest here; thou art to recover thy sight, and be filled with the Holy
 18 Spirit. And with that, a kind of film fell away from his eyes, and his sight was recovered. He rose up, and was baptized;
 19 and now, when he had taken food, his strength returned to him. For some days he lived with the disciples at Damascus, and from the first, in the synagogues, he preached that Jesus was the Son of God.
 20 All those who heard it were amazed; Why, they said, is not this the man who brought ruin on all those who invoked this name, when he was in Jerusalem; the man who came here for the very purpose of arresting such people and presenting them to the chief priests? But Saul was inspired with ever greater strength, and silenced the Jews who lived at Damascus by shewing them clearly that this was the Christ.
 23 So many days passed, and then the Jews
 24 plotted against his life.¹ Saul was aware of the plot; and, since they kept watch over the gates, day and night, to make an end of
 25 him, the disciples contrived to let him down by night along the face of the wall, lowering him to the ground in a hamper.
 26 So he reached Jerusalem, where he tried to attach himself to the disciples; but they could not believe he was a true disciple,
 27 and all avoided his company. Whereupon Barnabas took him by the hand and brought him in to the apostles, telling them how, on his journey, he had seen the Lord and had speech with him, and how at Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name
 28 of Jesus. So he came and went in their company at Jerusalem, and spoke boldly in the name of the Lord. He preached, besides, to the Jews who talked Greek, and disputed with them, till they set about
 29 trying to take his life.² As soon as they heard of this, the brethren took him down

to Caesarea, and put him on his way to Tarsus.

Meanwhile, all through Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, the church enjoyed peace and became firmly established, guided by the fear of God and filled with encouragement by the Holy Spirit.³ And now Peter, as he visited the saints everywhere, came down to see those who dwelt at Lydda. There he found a man called Aeneas, who had not left his bed for eight years, being palsied. And Peter said to him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ sends thee healing; rise up, and make thy bed; whereupon he rose up at once. All those who dwelt at Lydda and Saron came to see him, and their hearts turned to the Lord. And there was a disciple at Joppa called Tabitha, which means the same as Dorcas, a gazelle. She abounded in acts of charity and in almsdeeds; and it so happened that at this time she fell sick, and died, and they washed the body and laid it in an upper room. Since Lydda was close to Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to find him; Come to us, they urged him, without delay. So Peter rose and went with them; and when he came there they took him into the upper room, where all the widows stood round him in tears, shewing him the coats and cloaks which Dorcas used to make while she was among them. Peter sent them all out, and went on his knees to pray; then, turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, rise up; and she opened her eyes and looked at Peter, and sat up on the bed. So he gave her his hand, and raised her to her feet; and then, calling in the saints and the widows, he shewed her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many learned to believe in the Lord. He stayed in Joppa a number of days after this, lodging with a tanner whose name was Simon.

10 There was, at Caesarea, a centurion named Cornelius, belonging to what is called the Italian cohort, a pious man who worshipped the true God, like all his household, gave alms freely to the

¹ It would appear from Gal. i. 16-18, that the 'days' here mentioned covers a period of three years, during part of which St Paul was in retirement in Arabia.

² Some manuscripts of the Latin give the sense 'He preached, besides, to the Gentiles, and disputed with the Jews who talked Greek'.
³ Filled with encouragement; the Greek seems rather to mean, 'grew (in numbers) through the encouragement' of the Holy Spirit.

people, and prayed to God continually.¹

3 He, about the ninth hour of the day, had a vision, in which he clearly saw an angel of God come in and address him by his
4 name. What is it, Lord? he asked, gazing at him in terror. And he answered, Thy prayers and alms-deeds are recorded on
5 high in God's sight. And now he would have thee send men to Joppa, to bring here
6 one Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodges with a tanner, called Simon, whose house is close to the sea; thou wilt learn
7 from him what thou hast to do.² So the angel visitor left him, and thereupon he summoned two of his servants, and one of the soldiers who were in attendance on
8 him, a man of piety; he told them all that had passed, and sent them on their way to Joppa.

9 Next day, while these were on their journey and were drawing near the city, Peter went up to the house-top about noon, to pray there. He was hungry, and waiting for a meal; and while they were preparing
11 it, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opening, and a bundle, like a great sheet, let down by its four corners on to the earth;
12 in it were all kinds of four-footed beasts, and things that creep on the earth, and all the birds of heaven. And a voice came to him, Rise up, Peter, lay about thee and eat.
14 It cannot be, Lord, answered Peter; never in my life have I eaten anything profane, anything unclean.³ Then the voice came to him a second time, It is not for thee to call anything profane, which God has made clean. Three times this happened, and then the bundle was drawn up again
17 into heaven. Peter was still puzzling in his mind over the meaning of his vision, when Cornelius' messengers, who had now found their way to Simon's house, were
18 seen standing at the gate; where they called out and asked if Simon, who was also called
19 Peter, lodged there. To Peter, as he was turning over the vision in his mind, the Spirit said, Here are three men asking for thee; rise and go down, and accompany them without misgiving; it is I who have

sent them. So Peter went down to the
21 men; Here I am, he said, the man you are looking for; what is your errand? The centurion Cornelius, they said, a man who worships the true God and keeps his law, as all the Jewish people will testify, has received a revelation from one of the holy angels; he was to have thee brought to his house, and listen to what thou wouldst say. Thereupon Peter bade them come in, and
23 made them welcome; and next day he set out with them, accompanied by some of the brethren from Joppa.

The day after that, they reached Cae-
24 sarea, where Cornelius was awaiting them; he had gathered his kinsmen and his closest friends about him. And as soon as Peter
25 had entered, he was met by Cornelius, who fell at his feet and did reverence to him; but Peter raised him; Stand up, he said,
26 I am a man like thyself. So he went in, still conversing with him, and found a great
27 company assembled. You know well enough, he told them, that a Jew is contaminated if he consorts with one of another race, or visits him; but God has been shewing me that we ought not to speak of
29 any man as profane or unclean; and so, when I was sent for, I came without demur. Tell me then, why you have sent for me. And Cornelius said, Three days ago,
30 at this very time, I was making my afternoon prayer in my house,⁴ when suddenly I saw a man standing before me, in white
31 clothes, who said to me, Cornelius, thy prayer has been heard, thy almsdeeds have won remembrance in God's sight. Thou
32 art to send to Joppa, and summon thence that Simon who is also called Peter; he is lodging with a tanner called Simon, close to the sea.⁵ I lost no time, therefore, in
33 sending for thee, and thou hast done me a favour in coming. Now thou seest us assembled in thy presence, ready to listen to whatever charge the Lord has given thee.

Thereupon Peter began speaking; I see
34 clearly enough, he said, that God makes no distinction between man and man; he wel-
35 comes anybody, whatever his race, who

¹ Cornelius was one of those Gentiles who, without adopting the rite of circumcision, conformed to the Jewish religion in general; he was not a proselyte in the full sense. ² The last ten words of this verse are omitted in the Greek manuscripts.

³ St Peter seems to have interpreted the command as a direction to satisfy his hunger indiscriminately, although some of the creatures he saw were unclean according to the Mosaic law.

⁴ Some manuscripts imply that Cornelius was fasting until three in the afternoon, the time of his vision. ⁵ Some manuscripts add, at the end of this verse, 'and he, when he comes, will speak to thee'.

fears him and does what piety demands.

36 God has sent his word to the sons of Israel, giving them news of peace through Jesus

37 Christ, who is Lord of all. You have heard the story, a story which ran through the whole of Judaea, though it began in Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed; about Jesus of Nazareth, how

38 God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, so that he went about doing good, and curing all those who were under the devil's tyranny, with God at his side.

39 We are witnesses of all he did in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem. And they killed him, hanging him on a gibbet;

40 but on the third day God raised him up again, and granted the clear sight of him,

41 not to the people at large, but to us, the witnesses whom God had appointed beforehand; we ate and drank in his company

42 after his rising from the dead. And he gave us a commission to preach to the people, and to bear witness that he, and none other, has been chosen by God to judge the living

43 and the dead. All the prophets bear him this testimony, that everyone who has faith in him is to find remission of sins through his name.

44 Before Peter had finished speaking to them thus, the Holy Spirit fell on all those

45 who were listening to his message.¹ The faithful who had come over with Peter, holding to the tradition of circumcision as they did, were astonished to find that the free gift of the Holy Spirit could be lavished upon the Gentiles, whom they

46 heard speaking with tongues, and proclaiming the greatness of God. Then Peter said openly, Who will grudge us the water

47 for baptizing these men, that have received

48 the Holy Spirit just as we did? And he gave orders that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And after this, they asked him to stay on some days with them.

11 And now the apostles and brethren in Judaea were told how the word of

2 God had been given to the Gentiles. And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who held to the tradition of circumcision

found fault with him; Why didst thou pay a visit, they asked, to men who are uncircumcised, and eat with them? Whereupon Peter told them the story point by point from the beginning; I was in the city of Joppa, he said, at my prayers, when I fell into a trance and saw a vision. A bundle, like a great sheet, came down from heaven, lowered by the four corners, till it reached me. I looked closely to find out what it was, and there I saw four-footed creatures of earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and the birds that fly in heaven. And I heard a voice saying to me, Rise up, Peter, lay about thee and eat. So I answered, It cannot be, Lord; nothing profane or unclean has ever crossed my lips. And a second utterance came from heaven in answer, It is not for thee to call anything profane, which God has made clean. Three times this happened, and then all was drawn up again into heaven. And at that very moment three men appeared at the door of the house where I was, with a message to me from Caesarea. The Spirit bade me accompany them without misgiving; so these six brethren came with me, and together we entered the man's home. There he told us how he had had a vision of an angel in his house; this angel stood before him, and said, Send to Joppa, and bid Simon, who is also called Peter, come to thee. He will have such a message for thee as will bring salvation to thee and to all thy household. And then, when I had set about speaking to them, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as it was with us at the beginning. Then I was reminded of what the Lord said to us, John's baptism was with water, but there is a baptism with the Holy Spirit which you are to receive.² And now, if God has made them the same free gift, which he made to us when faith in the Lord Jesus had gone before it, who was I, what power had I, to stay God's hand? At these words, they were content, and gave glory to God; Why then, they said, it seems God has granted life-giving repentance of heart to the Gentiles too.

Meanwhile, those who had been dispersed owing to the persecution that was

¹ This is the only occasion on which we hear of the Holy Spirit being granted to those who, although they had the desire of baptism, had not yet received that sacrament. It seems that the early Church needed special encouragement before it adopted the practice of receiving as converts those who did not conform to the full law of Moses.

² See 1. 5 above.

raised over Stephen had travelled as far away as Phoenice and Cyprus and Antioch, without preaching the word to anyone except the Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they found their way to Antioch, spoke to the Greeks as well, preaching the Lord Jesus to them.¹ And the Lord's power went with them, so that a great number learned to believe, and turned to the Lord. The story of this came to the ears of the Church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas on a mission to Antioch. When he came there and saw what grace God was bestowing on them, he was full of joy, and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with steady purpose of heart, like the good man he was, full of the Holy Spirit, full of faith; a great multitude was thus won over to the Lord. He went on to Tarsus, to look for Saul, and when he found him, brought him back to Antioch. For a whole year after this they were made welcome in the Church there, teaching a great multitude. And Antioch was the first place in which the disciples were called Christians.

At this time, some prophets from Jerusalem visited Antioch; and one of these, Agabus by name, stood up and prophesied through the Spirit that a great famine was to come upon the whole world, as it did in the reign of the emperor Claudius. Thereupon it was decided that each of the disciples should contribute according to his means, to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judaea. And so they did; and in sending it to the presbyters they entrusted it to the hands of Barnabas and Saul.²

12 It was at this same time that Herod exerted his authority to persecute some of those who belonged to the Church. James, the brother of John, he beheaded, and then, finding that this was acceptable to the Jews, he went further, and laid hands on Peter too. It was the time of unleavened bread; and he imprisoned Peter, after arresting him, with a guard of four soldiers, relieved four times a day; when

paschal-time was over, he would bring him out in the presence of the people. Peter, then, was well guarded in prison, but there was a continual stream of prayer going up to God from the church on his behalf. And now the day was coming when Herod was to bring him out; that night, Peter was sleeping with two chains on him, between two soldiers, and there were warders at the door guarding his prison. Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood over him, and a light shone in his cell. He smote Peter on the side, to rouse him; Quick, he said, rise up; and thereupon the chains fell from his hands. Then the angel said to him, Gird thyself up, and put on thy shoes; and, when he had done this, Throw thy cloak over thee, and follow me. So he followed him out, unaware that what the angel had done for him was true; he thought he was seeing a vision. Thus they passed one party of guards, then a second, and reached the iron gate which leads out into the city; this opened for them of its own accord. They came out, and as soon as they had passed on up one street, the angel left him.

At this, Peter came to himself. Now I can tell for certain, he said, that the Lord has sent his angel, to deliver me out of Herod's hands, and from all that the people of the Jews hoped to see. After some thought, he made for the house belonging to Mary the mother of John, also called Mark. Here many had gathered for prayer; a girl named Rhoda came to answer, when he knocked at the porch door, and she, recognizing Peter's voice, was too overjoyed to open the gate for him; she ran in, and told them that Peter was standing at the gate. Thou art mad, they told her, but she still insisted that it was so; and then they said, It must be his guardian angel. Meanwhile, Peter went on knocking; so they opened, and found him there, and stood astonished. Calling for silence by a gesture of his hand, he told them how the Lord had delivered him from prison; Give news of this, he said, to James and the rest of the brethren. And so he left them, and went elsewhere.³

¹ We are not told that these Greeks were distinguished, like Cornelius, even by a partial observance of the Jewish law, and it seems probable that here, for the first time, the gospel was preached generally to heathens. ² *vv.* 28-30: See p. 193, note 3. Claudius was emperor A.D. 41-54. ³ 'Elsewhere': implying evidently that he put himself outside Herod's jurisdiction. It seems probable that St Luke kept silence about St Peter's movements out of caution. He may have gone to Rome at this time, but his immediate destination was perhaps Antioch (see Gal. 2. 11).

18 When day broke, there was a great to-do
among the soldiers, to know what had be-
19 come of Peter. Herod, after searching for
him without avail, questioned the warders
and had them punished. Then he went
down from Judaea to Caesarea, and spent
20 his time there. He was much out of hu-
mour with the people of Tyre and Sidon;
and these, since their country depended on
the king's country for its supplies, waited
upon him by common consent, and tried
21 (by winning over Blastus, the royal cham-
berlain) to make their peace. So, on an
appointed day, Herod put on his royal
finery and sat down on a raised dais to
22 harangue them; whereupon the people
cried out in applause. It is no man, it is a
23 god that speaks. And immediately the
angel of the Lord smote him, for not refer-
ring the glory to God; and he was eaten up
by worms, and so died.

24 And still the word of God grew strong
25 and spread wide. Barnabas and Saul re-
turned from Jerusalem, their mission of
relief fulfilled, and took John, also called
Mark, in their company.¹

13 The Church at Antioch had as its
prophets and teachers Barnabas,
and Simon who was called Niger, and Lu-
cius of Cyrene, and Manahan, foster-
brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
2 These were offering worship to God and
fasting, when the Holy Spirit said, I must
have Barnabas and Saul dedicated to the
3 work to which I have called them. There-
upon they fasted and prayed and laid their
hands on them, and so took leave of them.
4 And they, sent on their travels by the Holy
Spirit, went down to Seleucia, and from
5 there took ship for Cyprus. So they
reached Salamis, where they preached
God's word in the Jewish synagogues;
6 they had John, too, to help them. And
when they had been through the whole
island up to Paphos, they encountered
there a magician who claimed to be a pro-
7 phet, a Jew named Bar-Jesus. He was
in the company of the governor, Sergius

Paulus, a man of good sense, who had sent
for Barnabas and Saul and asked if he
might hear the word of God. And Elymas,
the magician (that is what his name means
when translated), opposed them, trying to
turn the governor away from the faith.²
Then Saul, whose other name is Paul, filled
with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on
him,³ and said; Child of the devil, versed
in all trickery and cunning, enemy of all
honest dealing, wilt thou never have done
with trying to twist the straight paths of
the Lord? See, then, if the hand of the
Lord does not fall upon thee now. Thou
shalt become blind, and see the sun no
more for a while. At this, a dark mist fell
upon him, and he had to go about looking
for someone to lead him by the hand. And
now the governor, seeing what had hap-
pened, and overcome with awe at the
Lord's teaching, learned to believe.

After this Paul and his companions took
ship from Paphos and made for Perge in
Pamphylia; here John left them, and went
back to Jerusalem. They passed on from
Perge, and reached Pisidian Antioch,
where they went and took their seats in the
synagogue on the sabbath day. When the
reading from the law and the prophets was
finished, the rulers of the synagogue sent
a message to them to say, Brethren, if
you have in your hearts any word of encourage-
ment for the people, let us hear it. Then
Paul stood up, and made a gesture with his
hand to claim audience. Listen, he said,
men of Israel, and all you who worship the
true God.⁴ The God of this people of Is-
rael chose out our fathers, and made his
people great at the time when they were
strangers in the land of Egypt, stretching
out his arm to deliver them from it. For
forty years he bore with their hard hearts
in the wilderness; then he overthrew seven
nations in the land of Chanaan, whose
lands he gave them for an inheritance. By
now, some four hundred and fifty years
had passed; and after this he appointed
judges over them, up to the time of the
prophet Samuel.⁵ Then they asked for a

¹ Some of the best Greek manuscripts have 'returned to Jerusalem' (that is, after distributing relief to the various districts in Judaea), but this reading is probably erroneous.

² 'The magician' is a translation, not of Bar-Jesus, but of Elymas, a name which Bar-Jesus had adopted.

³ The name of Paul is here mentioned for the first time, probably because it was the name he used when travelling in Gentile countries.

⁴ 'You who worship the true God', that is, Gentile adherents of the Jewish faith, like Cornelius (to. 2).

⁵ St Paul is probably reckoning as four hundred and fifty years the space of time between the patriarchs and Josue. Some early authorities give a different reading, according to which the space of four hundred and fifty years is reckoned between Josue and Samuel.

king, and God gave them Saul, son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned forty years; but afterwards dismissed him, and raised up David to be their king. To him, he gave this testimony, I have found in David, son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will accomplish all that is my will.¹

It is out of this man's posterity, according to the promise made to him, that God has brought us a Saviour, Jesus. John had prepared the way for his coming, by proclaiming a baptism in which all the people of Israel was to repent; but John himself, when he was coming to the end of his life's course, told them, I am not what you suspect me to be; look rather for one who comes after me; I am not worthy to untie the shoes on his feet. Brethren, you who are sons of Abraham, and you others who fear God, this message of salvation is sent to you. The people at Jerusalem, like their rulers, did not recognize Jesus for what he was; unwittingly they fulfilled, by condemning him, those utterances of the prophets which they had heard read, sabbath after sabbath. And although they could find no capital charge against him, they petitioned Pilate for his death. So, when they had fulfilled all that had been written about him, they took him down from the cross and laid him in a tomb.

And, on the third day, God raised him from the dead. He was seen, over a space of many days, by the men who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem; it is they who now bear witness of him before the people. And this is the message we preach to you; there was a promise made to our forefathers, and this promise God has redeemed for our posterity, by raising Jesus to life. Thus, it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my son; I have begotten thee this day.² And this is how he describes raising him from the dead, never to return to corruption again, I will grant you the privileges I have promised to David;³ to which purpose he says in another psalm, Thou wilt not allow thy faithful servant to see corruption.⁴ David saw corruption; he served God's purpose in his own generation, and then fell asleep,

and rested with his fathers; but he whom God raised to life saw no corruption at all. Here is news for you, then, brethren; remission of your sins is offered to you through him. There are claims from which you could not be acquitted by the law of Moses, and whoever believes in Jesus is quit of all these. Beware, then, of incurring the prophets' rebuke; Look upon this, you scornful souls, and lose yourselves in astonishment. Such wonders I am doing in your days, that if a man told you the story you would not believe him.⁵

As they left, they were implored to preach the same message there on the next sabbath. And when the synagogue broke up, many Jews and many who worshipped the true God as proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; and they preached to them, urging them to be true to the grace of God. On the following sabbath almost all the city had assembled to hear God's word. The Jews, when they saw these crowds, were full of indignation, and began to argue blasphemously against all that Paul said. Whereupon Paul and Barnabas told them roundly, We were bound to preach God's word to you first; but now, since you reject it, since you declare yourselves unfit for eternal life, be it so; we will turn our thoughts to the Gentiles. This, after all, is the charge the Lord has given us, I have appointed thee to be a light for the Gentiles, that thou mayst bring salvation to the ends of the earth.⁶ The Gentiles were rejoiced to hear this, and praised the word of the Lord; and they found faith, all those of them who were destined to eternal life. And the word of the Lord spread far and wide all through the country. But the Jews used influence with such women of fashion as worshipped the true God, and with the leading men in the city, setting on foot a persecution against Paul and Barnabas and driving them out of their territory; so they shook off the dust from their feet as they left them, and went on to Iconium. The disciples, meanwhile, were filled with rejoicing, and with the Holy Spirit.

14 While they were at Iconium, they went into the Jewish synagogue

¹ 1 Kk. 13. 14.

² 'For our posterity'; a few early authorities have 'for us, their children'. The quotation is from Ps. 2. 7.

³ Is. 55. 3.

⁴ Ps. 15. 10. Cf. St Peter's argument in Ac. 2. 27.

⁵ Hab. 1. 5; there are some differences in the Hebrew.

⁶ Is. 49. 6.

together, and preached in such a way that a great number both of Jews and of Greeks found faith, although the Jews who would not believe stirred up trouble among the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. For a long time, then, they remained there, speaking boldly in the Lord's name, while he attested the preaching of his grace by allowing signs and wonders to be performed by their means; the common folk of the city were divided in opinion, some taking part with the Jews, and some with the apostles. Then, when both Gentiles and Jews, in concert with their rulers, made a movement to assault and stone them, they thought it best to take refuge in the Lycaonian cities, Lystra and Derbe, and the country round them; and they preached the gospel there. There was a lame man sitting at Lystra, crippled from birth, so that he had never walked, who listened to Paul's preaching; and Paul, looking closely at him, and seeing that there was saving faith in him, said aloud, Stand upright on thy feet; whereupon he sprang up, and began to walk.

The multitudes, seeing what Paul had done, cried out in the Lycaonian dialect, It is the gods, who have come down to us in human shape. They called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury, because he was the chief speaker; and the priest of Jupiter, Defender of the City, brought out bulls and wreaths to the gates, eager, like the multitude, to do sacrifice.

The apostles tore their garments when they heard of it; and both Barnabas and Paul ran out among the multitude, crying aloud: *Sirs, why are you doing all this? We too are mortal men like yourselves; the whole burden of our preaching is that you must turn away from follies like this to the worship of the living God, who made sky and earth and sea and all that is in them. In the ages that are past, he has allowed Gentile folk everywhere to follow their own devices; yet even so he has not left us without some proof of what he is; it is his bounty that grants us rain from heaven, and the seasons which give birth to our crops, so that we have nourishment and comfort to our heart's desire. With words like this they persuaded the people, not*

easily, to refrain from offering sacrifice to them.

But some of the Jews from Antioch and Iconium had followed them; these won over the multitude to their side, and they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, leaving him there for dead. But the disciples formed a ring about him, and soon he rose up and went back into the city; next day he left, with Barnabas, for Derbe. In that city too they preached, and made many disciples; then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, where they fortified the spirits of the disciples, encouraging them to be true to the faith, and telling them that we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven without many trials. Then, with fasting and prayer, they appointed presbyters for them in each of the churches, and commended them to the care of the Lord in whom they had learned to believe. So they passed through Pisidia, and reached Pamphylia. They preached the word of the Lord in Perge, and went down to Attalia, taking ship there for Antioch, where they had been committed to God's grace for the work they had now achieved. On their arrival, they called the Church together, and told the story of all God had done to aid them, and how, through faith, he had left a door open for the Gentiles. And they stayed there a considerable time with the disciples.

15 But now some visitors came down from Judaea, who began to tell the brethren, You cannot be saved without being circumcised according to the tradition of Moses. Paul and Barnabas were drawn into a great controversy with them; and it was decided that Paul and Barnabas and certain of the rest¹ should go up to see the apostles and presbyters in Jerusalem about this question. So the church saw them on their way, and they passed through Phoenice and Samaria, relating how the Gentiles were turning to God, and so brought great rejoicing to all the brethren. When they reached Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, and by the apostles and presbyters; and they told them of all that God had done to aid them. But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees came forward and

¹ 'Of the rest'; or perhaps 'of the other party'.

declared, They must be circumcised; we must call upon them to keep the law of Moses.

6 When the apostles and presbyters as-
7 sembled to decide about this matter there
was much disputing over it, until Peter
rose and said to them, Brethren, you know
well enough how from early days it has
been God's choice that the Gentiles should
hear the message of the gospel from my
8 lips, and so learn to believe. God, who can
read men's hearts, has assured them of his
favour by giving the Holy Spirit to them
9 as to us. He would not make any difference
between us and them; he had removed all
the uncleanness from their hearts when he
10 gave them faith. How is it, then, that you
would now call God in question, by put-
ting a yoke on the necks of the disciples,
such as we and our fathers have been too
11 weak to bear?¹ It is by the grace of our
Lord Jesus Christ that we hope to be
12 saved, and they no less. Then the whole
company kept silence, and listened to Bar-
nabas and Paul describing all the signs and
wonders God had performed among the
Gentiles by their means.
13 And when they had finished speaking,
James answered thus, Listen, brethren, to
14 what I have to say. Simon has told us, how
for the first time God has looked with
favour on the Gentiles, and chosen from
among them a people dedicated to his
15 name. This is in agreement with the words
of the prophets, where it is written: After-
16 wards, I will come back, and build up
again David's tabernacle that has fallen;
I will build up its ruins, and raise it afresh;
17 so that all the rest of mankind may find the
Lord, all those Gentiles among whom my
name is named, says the Lord, who is the
18 doer of all this.² God has known from all
19 eternity what he does to-day.³ And so I
give my voice for sparing the consciences

of those Gentiles who have found their
way to God; only writing to bid them ab-
20 stain from what is contaminated by idola-
try, from fornication, and from meat which
has been strangled or has the blood in it.
As for Moses, ever since the earliest times
21 he has been read, sabbath after sabbath, in
the synagogues, and has preachers in every
city to expound him.⁴

Thereupon it was resolved by the
22 apostles and presbyters, with the agree-
ment of the whole church, to choose out
some of their own number and despatch
them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas;
namely, Judas who was called Barsabas,
and Silas, who were leading men among
the brethren. And they sent, by their
23 hands, this message in writing; To the
Gentile brethren in Antioch, Syria and
Cilicia, their brethren the apostles and
presbyters send greeting. We hear that
24 some of our number who visited you have
disquieted you by what they said, unset-
tling your consciences, although we had
given them no such commission; and
25 therefore, meeting together with common
purpose of heart, we have resolved to send
you chosen messengers, in company with
our well-beloved Barnabas and Paul, men
26 who have staked their lives for the name of
our Lord Jesus Christ. We have given this
27 commission to Judas and Silas, who will
confirm the message by word of mouth. It
28 is the Holy Spirit's pleasure and ours that
no burden should be laid upon you beyond
these, which cannot be avoided; you are
29 to abstain from what is sacrificed to idols,
from blood-meat and meat which has been
strangled, and from fornication. If you
keep away from such things, you will have
done your part. Farewell.

30 So they took their leave and went down
to Antioch, where they called the multi-
tude together and delivered the letter to

¹ 'Tempting God' is generally used of one who challenges God to prove his power by working a miracle; here it must be understood in a less precise sense of shewing distrust, by taking no notice of the signs he has already given. 'Been too weak to bear', in the sense, apparently, that the Law of Moses was in fact ill kept; cf. 7. 53 above.

² *vv. 16-17*: Am. 9. 11, 12. The Hebrew, as we have it, does not agree with the quotation St James here makes from the Greek Septuagint. ³ The end of this verse is wanting in some manuscripts; according to this reading, it is necessary to connect what remains of verse 18 with verse 17, 'says the Lord, who makes this known from all eternity'. If verse 18 stands in full, it is not part of the quotation, but a reflection by St James that God's inclusion of the Gentiles in his Church does not imply any change in his eternal decrees.

⁴ There is much difference of opinion about the bearing of this verse on the argument. Perhaps it is simplest to take it as meaning that the Church has no need to keep alive the custom of circumcision, since there are Jewish synagogues everywhere to hand down the tradition of the Mosaic law. Or the sense may be, that it was not advisable to abrogate all the ceremonial precepts of the old law, as long as its continued recitation in the synagogue gave them prominence.

31 them; and they, upon reading it, were re-
 32 joiced at this encouragement. Judas and
 Silas, for they were prophets too, said
 much to encourage the brethren and estab-
 33 lish their faith; they stayed there for some
 time before the brethren let them go home,
 34 in peace, to those who had sent them. But
 Silas had a mind to remain there; so Judas
 35 went back alone to Jerusalem.¹ Paul and
 Barnabas waited at Antioch, teaching and
 preaching God's word, with many others
 36 to help them; and then, after some days,
 Paul said to Barnabas, Let us go back and
 visit the brethren in all the cities where we
 have preached the word of the Lord, to see
 37 how they are doing. And Barnabas was for
 taking John, also called Mark, with them.
 38 But Paul said, here was a man who left
 them when they reached Pamphylia, and
 took no part with them in the work; it was
 not right to admit such a man to their com-
 39 pany. So sharp was their disagreement,
 that they separated from each other; Bar-
 nabas took Mark with him, and sailed off
 40 to Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas for his
 companion and went on his journey, com-
 mended by the brethren to the Lord's
 41 grace. And he travelled all through Syria
 and Cilicia, establishing the churches in
 the faith, and bidding them observe the
 commands which the apostles and presby-
 ters had given.²

16 So he reached Derbe, and Lystra.
 Here he met a disciple, named
 Timothy, son of a believer who was a
 2 Jewess and a Gentile father. He was well
 spoken of by the brethren at Lystra and
 3 Iconium, and Paul resolved to take him as
 a companion on his journey. But he was
 careful to circumcise him; he was thinking
 of the Jews living in those parts, who all
 knew that Timothy's father was a Gentile.
 4 As they passed from city to city, they re-
 commended to their observance the decree
 laid down by the apostles and presbyters
 5 at Jerusalem. They found the churches
 firmly established in the faith, and their

numbers daily increasing. Thus they
 passed through Phrygia and the Galatian
 country; the Holy Spirit prevented them
 from preaching the word in Asia. Then,
 when they had come as far as Mysia on
 their journey, they planned to enter Bithy-
 nia; but the Spirit of Jesus would not
 allow it.³ So they crossed Mysia, and went
 down to the sea at Troas.

Here Paul saw a vision in the night; a
 certain Macedonian stood by him in en-
 treaty, and said, Come over into Mace-
 donia, and help us. That vision once seen,
 we were eager to sail for Macedonia; we
 concluded that God had called us there to
 preach to them.⁴ So we put out from
 Troas, made a straight course to Samo-
 thrace, and next day to Neapolis. Thence
 we reached Philippi, which is a Roman
 colony and the chief city in that part of
 Macedonia; in this city we remained for
 some days, conferring together.⁵ On the
 sabbath day we went out beyond the city
 gates, by the river side, a meeting-place,
 we were told, for prayer; and we sat down
 and preached to the women who had
 assembled there. One of those who were
 listening was a woman called Lydia, a
 purple-seller from the city of Thyatira,
 and a worshipper of the true God; and the
 Lord opened her heart, so that she was
 attentive to Paul's preaching. She was
 baptized, with all her household; and she
 was urgent with us; Now you have de-
 cided that I have faith in the Lord, she
 said, come to my house and lodge there;
 and she would take no denial. And now,
 as we were on our way to the place of
 prayer, we chanced to meet a girl who was
 possessed by a divining spirit; her pre-
 dictions brought in large profits to her
 masters. This girl used to follow behind
 Paul and the rest of us, crying out, These
 men are the servants of the most high God;
 they are proclaiming to us the way of sal-
 vation. And when she had done this for a
 number of days, Paul was distressed by it,
 he turned round and said to the spirit, I

¹ Some of the Latin manuscripts, following the Greek, omit either the whole of this verse or the second half of it. ² The Greek manuscripts and a few of the Latin omit the second half of this verse, from 'and bidding them' onwards. ³ *v.* 6, 7: If the apostles went into northern Galatia, e.g. to Ankara, they would pass on from there into Bithynia without coming anywhere near Mysia. Some commentators, therefore, would translate in verse 6, 'they passed through the Phrygio-Galatic region', that is, the country round Pisidian Antioch which Paul had visited already on his previous journey. The Greek has, 'the Phrygian and Galatian country'. ⁴ It is evident from this verse that St Luke himself joined St Paul about the time when he reached Troas. ⁵ 'Conferring together'; this appears to be the meaning of the Latin. The Greek, however, has simply 'passing the time'.

command thee to come out of her, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; and there and then it came out of her.

19 Her masters, who saw that all their hopes of profit had vanished, took hold of Paul and Silas and dragged them off to justice in the market-place. When they brought them before the magistrates, they said, These men, Jews by origin, are disturbing the peace of our city; they are recommending customs which it is impossible for us, as Roman citizens, to admit or to observe. The crowd gathered round, to join in the accusation; and the magistrates, tearing their clothes off them, gave orders that they should be beaten; then, when they had inflicted many lashes on them, put them in prison, and bade the gaoler 24 keep them in safe custody. Thus instructed, he put them in the inner ward, and secured their feet in the stocks. At midnight, Paul and Silas were at their prayers, praising God, while the prisoners 26 listened to them. And all at once there was a violent earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison rocked; whereupon every door opened, and every man's chains were undone. The gaoler, who had been awakened, saw the prison doors open, and drew his sword as if to kill himself, thinking the prisoners had escaped; but Paul cried with a loud voice, Do no hurt to thyself; we are all here. And so, when he had called for a light, he came running in and fell at the feet of Paul and Silas, all trembling; 30 Sirs, he asked, as he led them out, what am I to do, to save myself? Have faith, they said to him, in the Lord Jesus; there lies salvation for thee, and for thy household. Then they preached the word of the Lord to him, and to all that were in his house; and he, there and then, at dead of night, took them away to wash their wounds, and without delay he and all his 34 were baptized. So he led them to his home, where he put food before them, and he and all his household made rejoicing at having found faith in God.

35 When day came, the magistrates sent their officers to say, Those men are to be discharged. And the gaoler reported the

message to Paul; The magistrates have sent ordering your discharge; it is time you should come out, and go on your way in peace. But Paul said to them, What, have they beaten us in public, without trial, Roman citizens as we are,¹ and sent us to prison, and now would they let us out secretly? That will not serve; they must come here themselves, and fetch us out in person. When the officers gave this message to the magistrates, they were alarmed by this talk of Roman citizenship; so they came and pleaded with them, urging them, as they brought them out, to leave the city. On leaving the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they saw the brethren and gave them encouragement; then they set out on their travels.

17 They continued their journey through Amphipolis and Apollonia, and so reached Thessalonica. Here the Jews had a synagogue, and Paul, as his custom was, paid them a visit there. Over a space of three sabbaths he reasoned with them out of the scriptures, expounding these and bringing proofs from them that the sufferings of Christ and his rising from the dead were fore-ordained; the Christ, he said, is none other than the Jesus whom I am preaching to you. Some of them were convinced, and threw in their lot with Paul and Silas; a great number, too, of those Gentiles who worshipped the true God, and not a few of the leading women. The Jews were indignant at this, and they found confederates among the riff-raff of the market-place, to make a disturbance and throw the city into an uproar. Then they made a sudden descent on Jason's house, in the hope of bringing Paul and Silas out into the presence of the people; but, as they could not find them, they dragged Jason² and some of the brethren before the city council, crying out, Here they are, the men who are turning the state upside down; they have come here too;³ and Jason has given them hospitality. All these folk defy the edicts of Caesar; they say there is another king, one Jesus. Both the crowd and the city council took alarm at hearing this, and

¹ Cf. 22. 25 below.

² Jason was perhaps a person well known in the early Church, since his name is thus introduced without further explanation. It is not certain whether he was the Jason mentioned in Rom. 16. 21, then living at Rome, where the Acts were probably written.

³ Turning the state upside down, rather, according to the Greek, 'the world', but through the early corruption of one letter in certain Latin manuscripts the Vulgate text reads, 'the city'.

they demanded bail from Jason and the others before they would let them go.

10 Thereupon the brethren sent Paul and Silas away by night to Beroea; where, as soon as they arrived, they made their way

11 to the Jewish synagogue. These were of a better breed than the Thessalonians; they welcomed the word with all eagerness, and examined the scriptures, day after day,

12 to find out whether all this was true; so that many of them learned to believe, as certain Greek women of fashion did, and not a few

13 of the men as well. But now some of the Thessalonian Jews, hearing that the word of God had been preached by Paul at Beroea too, came on there, to upset and

14 disturb the minds of the multitude; whereupon the brethren sent Paul away, to continue his journey up to the coast; Silas and Timothy remained there still.¹

15 Those who were escorting Paul on his journey saw him as far as Athens, and then left him, with instructions for Silas and Timothy to rejoin him as soon as possible.

16 And while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his heart was moved within him to find the city so much given over to idolatry,

17 and he reasoned, not only in the synagogue with Jews and worshippers of the true God, but in the market-place, with all he met. He encountered philosophers, Stoics and Epicureans, some of whom asked,

18 What can his drift be, this dabbler?² while others said, He would appear to be proclaiming strange gods; because he had preached to them about Jesus and Resurrection.

19 So they took him by the sleeve and led him up to the Areopagus; May we ask, they said, what this new teaching is thou art delivering? Thou dost introduce

20 terms which are strange to our ears; pray let us know what may be the meaning of it.

21 (No townsman of Athens, or stranger visiting it, has time for anything else than saying something new, or hearing it said.)

22 So Paul stood up in full view of the Areopagus, and said, Men of Athens, wherever I look I find you scrupulously

23 religious. Why, in examining your monu-

ments as I passed by them, I found among others an altar which bore the inscription, To the unknown God. And it is this unknown object of your devotion that I am revealing to you. The God who made the world and all that is in it, that God who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples that our hands have made; no human handicraft can do him service, as if he stood in need of anything, he, who gives to all of us life and breath and all we have. It is he who has made, of one single stock, all the nations that were to dwell over the whole face of the earth. And he has given to each the cycles it was to pass through; and the fixed limits of its habitation,³ leaving them to search for God; would they somehow grope their way towards him? Would they find him? And yet, after all, he is not far from any one of us; it is in him that we live, and move, and have our being; thus, some of your own poets have told us, For indeed, we are his children. Why then, if we are the children of God, we must not imagine that the divine nature can be represented in gold, or silver, or stone, carved by man's art and thought. God has shut his eyes to these passing follies of ours; now, he calls upon all men, everywhere, to repent, because he has fixed a day when he will pronounce just judgement on the whole world. And the man whom he has appointed for that end he has accredited to all of us, by raising him up from the dead.

When resurrection from the dead was mentioned, some mocked, while others said, We must hear more from thee about this. So Paul went away from among them. But there were men who attached themselves to him and learned to believe, among them Dionysius the Areopagite; and so did a woman called Damaris, and others with them.

18 Paul left Athens after this, and went to Corinth. Here he met a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who, with his wife Priscilla, had lately come

¹ Beroea is close to the sea, and a long way from Athens. It is possible that St Paul started out, following the line of his previous journey, for Dyrrhachium on the west coast of Greece, but for some reason had to change his plans (Rom. 15, 19, 22). ² 'This dabbler'; the Greek word means properly a bird which picks up seeds, and so became a term of contempt for a loafer who picks up gossip. The Latin translators, apparently not understanding this, invented a rendering, 'the seed-word man', which St Augustine interprets as meaning 'one who sows the Word'. ³ It is not clear whether these 'cycles' are seasons of the year (cf. 14, 16 above), or decisive moments in history; nor whether the 'limits' are geographical boundaries, or periods set to the enjoyment by this or that nation of its possessions.

from Italy, when Claudius decreed that all Jews should leave Rome. He paid them a visit: then, since they were brothers of the same craft (both were tent-makers) he stayed and worked with them. Every sabbath he held a disputation in the synagogue, trying to convince both Jews and Greeks by confronting them with the name of the Lord Jesus. Just at the time when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was much occupied with preaching, while he bore witness to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. But they set their faces against it and talked blasphemy, until he shook the dust out of his garments, and said to them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clear of it; I will go to the Gentiles henceforward. So he left them, and went to the house of one Titius Justus, a worshipper of the true God, who lived next door to the synagogue. But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, learned to believe in the Lord, and so did all his household; and by now many of the Corinthians listened and found faith, and were baptized. And the Lord said to Paul in a vision at night, Do not be afraid, speak out, and refuse to be silenced; I am with thee, and none shall come near to do thee harm; I have a great following in this city. So he remained there a year and six months, preaching the word of God among them.

Then, when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a concerted attack on Paul, and dragged him before the judgement-seat. This fellow, they said, is persuading men to worship God in a manner the law forbids. Paul was just opening his mouth to speak, when Gallio said to the Jews, It would be only right for me to listen to you Jews with patience, if we had here some wrong done, or some malicious contrivance; but the questions you raise are a matter of words and names, of the law which holds good among yourselves. You must see to it; I have no mind to try such cases. And he drove them away from the judgement-seat. Thereupon there was a general onslaught upon Sosthenes, the

ruler of the synagogue, who was beaten before the judgement-seat; but all this caused Gallio no concern.¹

Paul stayed on many days yet, then took leave of the brethren and sailed off to Syria; before he left Cenchrae he shaved his head, since he was under a vow.² He took Priscilla and Aquila with him, but left them behind when he reached Ephesus. He himself went to the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews, who asked him to make a longer stay. But he would not consent; he said, as he took leave of them, I will come back to you again, if it is God's will, and departed from Ephesus by sea. On landing at Caesarea, he went up from there to greet the church, then went down again to Antioch, where he spent some time; he left it to make an orderly progress through the Galatian and Phrygian country, where he established all the disciples in the faith.³

Meanwhile a Jewish visitor came to Ephesus, Apollo by name; he was born in Alexandria, and was an eloquent man, well grounded in the scriptures. He had had instruction in the way of the Lord;⁴ and, with a spirit full of zeal, used to preach and teach about the life of Jesus accurately enough, although he knew of no baptism except that of John. So he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue, whereupon Priscilla and Aquila, who had been listening, made friends with him, and explained the way of God to him more particularly. He was meaning to continue his journey into Achaia; in this the brethren encouraged him, and wrote asking the disciples there to welcome him. His visit was a welcome reinforcement to the believers; he spared no pains to refute the Jews publicly, proving from the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

19 It was while Apollo was away at Corinth that Paul finished his journey through the inland country, and came to Ephesus. He met some disciples there and asked them, Was the Holy Spirit given to you, when you learned to believe? Why,

¹ It is not clear whether Sosthenes was a Christian who was beaten by the Jews or, perhaps more probably, a Jew who was beaten by the Gentiles. The same name appears in I Cor. i. 1.

² Num. 6. 9. ³ This may refer either to the countries of Phrygia and Galatia, or to the district which could be indifferently described as Phrygian or Galatian (see p. 132, note 3).

⁴ 'The way of the Lord' is perhaps not to be understood here of the Christian religion, but of that way which was prepared for the Lord by St John the Baptist (Mt. 3. 3).

they said, nobody even mentioned to us
 3 the existence of a Holy Spirit. What bap-
 4 tism, then, did you receive? Paul asked;
 5 and they said, John's baptism. So Paul
 6 told them, John baptized to bring men to
 7 repentance; but he bade the people have
 8 faith in one who was to come after him,
 9 that is, in Jesus. On hearing this, they
 10 received baptism in the name of the Lord
 11 Jesus; and when Paul laid his hands upon
 12 them, the Holy Spirit came down on them,
 13 and they spoke with tongues, and pro-
 14 phesied. In all, these men were about
 15 twelve in number.
 16 And now he went into the synagogue,
 17 and for three months spoke boldly there,
 18 reasoning with them and trying to con-
 19 vince them about the kingdom of God; but
 20 since there were some who hardened their
 21 hearts and refused belief, discrediting the
 22 way of the Lord in the eyes of the multi-
 23 tude, he left them, and withdrew his own
 24 disciples, holding disputations daily in the
 25 school of a certain Tyrannus. This lasted
 26 for two years, so that the Lord's word came
 27 to the ears of all those who lived in Asia,
 28 both Jews and Greeks. And God did
 29 miracles through Paul's hands that were
 30 beyond all wont; so much so, that when
 31 handkerchiefs or aprons which had touched
 32 his body were taken to the sick, they got
 33 rid of their diseases, and evil spirits were
 34 driven out. Some of the wandering Jewish
 35 exorcists took it upon themselves to invoke
 36 the name of the Lord Jesus over those who
 37 were possessed by evil spirits, with the
 38 words, I conjure you in the name of Jesus,
 39 the name that is preached by Paul. Among
 40 these were the seven sons of Sceva, one of
 41 the Jewish chief priests. And the evil spirit
 42 answered, Jesus I recognize, Paul I know
 43 well enough; but you, what are you? And
 44 with that, the man who was possessed by
 45 the evil spirit ran at them and got the
 46 better of them, defying the power of both;
 47 so that they fled from the house naked and
 48 wounded.¹ This came to the ears of every
 49 Jew and Greek living in Ephesus; fear fell
 50 upon them all, and the name of the Lord
 51 Jesus was held in great honour. Many be-
 52 lievers came forward, confessing their evil

practices and giving a full account of them;
 and a number of those who followed magic
 arts made their books into a heap and
 burned them in public: the value of these
 was reckoned up, and proved to be fifty
 thousand silver pieces. So, irresistibly,
 the word of the Lord spread and pre-
 vailed.

When all this was over, the thought in
 Paul's heart was to go to Jerusalem, first
 travelling through Macedonia and Achaia;
 When I have been there, he said, I must go
 on and see Rome. And he sent on two of
 those who ministered to him, Timothy and
 Erastus, into Macedonia, but waited for a
 while himself in Asia. It was just at this
 time that the way of the Lord was the cause
 of a notable disturbance. There was a
 silversmith called Demetrius, who used to
 make silver models of Diana's temple, and
 so gave plentiful employment to the crafts-
 men. And now he called a meeting of
 these, and of the workmen who were in the
 same trade, and spoke thus, Friends, you
 all know that our prosperity depends upon
 this business of ours. And you can see and
 hear for yourselves that this Paul has per-
 suaded a whole multitude to change their
 allegiance, not only at Ephesus but over
 most of Asia, by telling them that gods
 made by men's hands are no gods at all. It
 is not only that we are in danger of finding
 this work of ours discredited. The temple
 of the great goddess Diana will count for
 nothing, she will be shorn of her greatness,
 the goddess whom Asia and all the world
 reveres. At these words, they were all
 overcome with rage, and began to shout,
 Great is Diana of Ephesus. Their uproar
 filled the whole city, as they ran by com-
 mon consent into the theatre, carrying with
 them Gaius and Aristarchus, who were
 companions of Paul from Macedonia. When
 Paul had a mind to shew himself
 before the people, his disciples tried to
 prevent it: and some of the delegates of
 Asia, who were his friends, sent a message
 to him, imploring him not to risk his life
 in the theatre.

Meanwhile some cried this, some that;
 the meeting was all in confusion, and most

¹ *ov.* 14-16: If we assume, with the best manuscripts, that we are to read 'seven' in verse 14 and 'both' in verse 16, it is difficult to see how the two verses can be reconciled; unless we are to understand that the possessed man defied the power of both *names*, those of Jesus and Paul. (In a fragment which dates from the second century A.D., we find 'both' used for 'all'.)

of them could not tell what had brought
 33 them together. The Jews thrust Alexander
 forward, and some of the crowd brought
 him down with them; so Alexander made
 a gesture with his hand, and tried to give an
 34 account of himself before the people;¹ but
 as soon as they found out that he was a Jew,
 a single cry came from every mouth, and
 for some two hours they kept on shouting,
 35 Great is Diana of Ephesus. Then the town
 clerk restored quiet among the crowd;
 Ephesians, he said, as if there were anyone
 who does not know that the city of Ephesus
 is the acolyte of the great Diana, and of the
 36 image which is Jupiter's offspring! Since
 this is beyond dispute, you had best be
 quiet, and do nothing rashly. These men
 you have brought here have not robbed the
 temples; they have not used blasphemous
 37 language about your goddess. And if De-
 metrius and his fellow craftsmen have any
 charge to bring against them, why, we have
 court-days, we have proconsuls; let the two
 39 parties go to law. If, on the other hand,
 you have any further question to raise, it
 40 can be settled by lawful assembly. We may
 easily be called to account for to-day's pro-
 ceedings, and there is no grievance which
 will enable us to account for this riot. With
 these words he broke up the meeting.

20 When the tumult was over, Paul
 summoned his disciples, to rally
 their spirits and bid them farewell, and set
 2 out on his journey into Macedonia. He
 passed through all that region, and gave
 them much encouragement; then he en-
 3 tered Greece. When he had stayed three
 months there, he was meaning to take ship
 for Syria; but, finding that the Jews were
 plotting against him, he resolved to go back
 4 again through Macedonia. He was accom-
 panied as far as Asia by Sopater, son of
 Pyrrhus, from Beroea, Aristarchus and
 Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from
 5 Derbe, Timothy, and two friends from
 Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. These
 went on first, and waited for us at Troas.
 6 As soon as the time of unleavened bread
 was over, we set sail from Philippi, and

took five days to reach them at Troas,
 where we spent seven days. When the new
 7 week began, we had met for the breaking
 of bread, and Paul was preaching to them;
 he meant to leave them next day, and he
 continued speaking till midnight.² There
 8 were many lamps burning in the upper
 room where we had met; and a young man
 9 called Eutychus, who was sitting in the
 embrasure of the window, was overcome
 by deep sleep. As Paul still went on
 preaching, sleep weighed him down, and
 he fell from the third storey to the ground,
 where he was taken up dead. Paul went
 10 down, bent over him, and embraced him;
 then he said, Do not disturb yourselves;
 his life is yet in him. And so he went up
 11 again and broke bread and ate; afterwards
 he talked with them for some time until
 dawn came, when he left. And the boy
 12 was taken home alive, to their great com-
 fort.

For ourselves, we took ship and sailed
 13 to Assos, where we were to take Paul on
 board; he had arranged this, because he
 himself meant to go across by land. So at
 14 Assos we met him, and took him on board,
 and journeyed to Mitylene. Sailing thence,
 15 we reached a point opposite Chios the fol-
 lowing day; on the next, we put in at
 Samos, and arrived on the third at Miletus.
 Paul had made up his mind to sail past
 16 Ephesus, for fear of having to waste time
 in Asia; he was eager, if he found it pos-
 sible, to keep the day of Pentecost at Jeru-
 17 salem. From Miletus he sent a message to
 Ephesus, summoning the presbyters of the
 church there. And when they had come
 18 out to him and gathered round him, he said
 to them, You yourselves can testify, how
 I have lived among you, since the first day
 when I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord
 19 in all humility, not without tears over the
 trials which beset me, through the plots of
 the Jews; and how I have never failed you,
 20 when there was any need of preaching to
 you, or teaching you, whether publicly or
 house by house. I have proclaimed both
 21 to Jew and to Greek repentance before
 God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Here, as in 18. 17, it is not clear whether the Jew mentioned was a Christian or not; but it seems the name must have been one which St Luke's readers would be expected to recognize without introduction (cf. 17. 6). It is not likely that this is the Alexander mentioned in I Tim. 1. 20; II Tim. 4. 14.

² 'When the new week began'; literally, 'on the first day of the week'; but evidently, since the Jewish sabbath ended at six in the evening, the scene here described took place on the Saturday not on the Sunday night.

22 Now, a prisoner in spirit, I am going up
to Jerusalem, knowing nothing of what is
23 to befall me there; only, as I go on from
city to city, the Holy Spirit assures me that
at Jerusalem bondage and affliction await
24 me. I care nothing for all that; I do not
count my life precious compared with my
work, which is to finish the course I run,
the task of preaching which the Lord Jesus
has given me, in proclaiming the good
25 news of God's grace.¹ Here, then, I stand,
well knowing that you will not see my face
again; you, among whom I came and went,
26 preaching the kingdom of God.² And I ask
you to bear me witness to-day that I have
27 no man's blood on my hands; I have never
shrunk from revealing to you the whole of
28 God's plan. Keep watch, then, over your-
selves, and over God's Church, in which
the Holy Spirit has made you bishops; you
are to be the shepherds of that flock which
he won for himself at the price of his own
29 blood. I know well that ravening wolves
will come among you when I am gone, and
30 will not spare the flock; there will be men
among your own number who will come
forward with a false message, and find dis-
31 ciples to follow them. Be on the watch
then; do not forget the three years I spent,
instructing every one of you continually,
32 and with tears. Now, as then, I commend
you to God, and to his gracious word, that
can build you up and give you your allotted
33 place among the saints everywhere. I have
never asked for silver or gold or clothing
34 from any man; you will bear me out, that
these hands of mine have sufficed for all
35 that I and my companions needed. Always
I have tried to shew you that it is our duty
so to work, and be the support of the weak,
remembering the words spoken by the
Lord Jesus himself, It is more blessed to
36 give than to receive.³ When he had said
this, he knelt down and prayed with them
37 all. They all wept abundantly, and em-
braced Paul and kissed him, grieving most
38 over what he had said about never seeing
his face again. And so they escorted him
to the ship.

21 When we tore ourselves away from
them, and at last put out to sea, we
made a straight course, sailing to Cos, and
next day to Rhodes, and thence to Patara.
There, finding a ship crossing to Phoenice,
we went on board and set sail. We sighted
Cyprus, but passed it on our left, and held
on for Syria, where we landed at Tyre, the
port for which the vessel had shipped her
cargo. Here we enquired for the brethren,
and made a stay of seven days with them;
they, by revelation, warned Paul not to go
up to Jerusalem, but when the time came
to an end, we left them and continued our
journey. All of them, with their wives and
children, escorted us until we were out of
the city; and so we knelt down on the beach
to pray; then, when farewells had been
made on either side, we went on board the
ship, while they returned home. The end
of our voyage brought us from Tyre to
Ptolemais, where we greeted the brethren
and stayed one day with them; the day
after, we left them and arrived at Caesarea,
where we went to the house of Philip the
evangelist, one of the seven, and lodged
with him.⁴ He had four daughters, un-
wedded maids, who possessed the gift of
prophecy. During our stay of several days
there, a prophet named Agabus came down
from Judaea.⁵ When he visited us, he took
up Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands
and feet with it; then he said, Thus speaks
the Holy Spirit, The man to whom this
girdle belongs will be bound, like this, by
the Jews at Jerusalem, and given over into
the hands of the Gentiles. At hearing this,
both we and our hosts implored Paul not
to go up to Jerusalem. To which he an-
swered, What do you mean by lamenting,
and crushing my spirits? I am ready to
meet prison and death as well in Jerusalem
for the name of the Lord Jesus. Finding
that he would not take our advice, we com-
posed ourselves, and said, The Lord's will
be done.

When the time came to an end, we made
all ready, and went up to Jerusalem. Some
of the brethren from Caesarea went with

¹ The text here is very confused; and the Latin rendering would be literally translated, 'I do not count my life more precious than myself, as long as I can finish my course'; the Greek sense is probably, 'I do not count my life precious to myself as long as I can finish my course'. ² It seems likely, from several references in the epistles, that St Paul was at Ephesus again after the end of his first captivity. It so, it is clear that he speaks here only of human probabilities, not foreseeing his release; and he knew by revelation was that he was to be imprisoned (verse 23 above). ³ This saying of our Lord's has not been recorded in any of the four gospels. ⁴ Cf. 6. 5 above. ⁵ Cf. 11. 28 above.

us, to take us to the house of a Cypriot called Mnason, one of the first disciples, with whom we were to lodge. When we reached Jerusalem, the brethren received us with joy. The next day Paul took us with him to see James; and the presbyters had gathered; and he greeted them, and told them point by point of all that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. They praised God for the news he gave, and said, Brother, thou canst see for thyself how many thousands of the Jews have learned to believe, and they are all zealous supporters of the law. And this is what has come to their ears about thee; that thou dost teach the Jews in Gentile parts to break away from the law of Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, and not to follow the tradition. What will happen? Why, a multitude of them will assuredly gather round thee, hearing that thou hast come. Follow our advice, then, in this; we have four men here who are under a vow; if thou wilt take these with thee, and join in their purification and defray the cost for the shaving of their heads, then all will see clearly that the report they have heard about thee has no substance, and that thou dost follow the observances of the law like other men.¹ As for the Gentile believers, we have already written to them; we laid it down that they must abstain from what is sacrificed to idols, and from blood-meat and meat which has been strangled, and from fornication.

So, next day, Paul took the men with him, and began going to the temple, publicly fulfilling the days of purification, until the time came for each to have sacrifice made on his behalf. And when the seven days were all but at an end, the Jews from Asia saw him in the temple. Whereupon they threw the whole multitude into an uproar, and laid hands on him, crying out; Men of Israel, come to the rescue; here is the man who goes about everywhere, teaching everybody to despise our people, and our law, and this place. He has brought Gentiles into the Temple, too, profaning these sacred precincts. They had

seen Trophimus, who was from Ephesus, in the city with him, and it was he whom they suspected Paul of introducing into the temple. The whole city was in a commotion, and the common folk ran up from all sides. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, upon which the gates were shut; and they were preparing to kill him, when word came to the captain of the garrison that the whole of Jerusalem was in an uproar. He at once summoned his troops, with their officers, and swept down upon them; and at the sight of the captain with his troops they left off beating Paul.

The captain came up and arrested him, giving orders that he should be bound with a double chain; then he asked who he was, and what he had done. But some of the crowd were shouting this and some that, and it was impossible to find out the truth amidst the clamour; so he gave orders that Paul should be taken to the soldiers' quarters. When he reached the steps, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the crowd's violence; a rabble of the common people kept following behind, with cries of, Put him to death. And just as he was being taken into the soldiers' quarters, Paul asked the captain, May I have a word with thee? At which he said, What, canst thou talk Greek? Thou art not, then, that Egyptian, who raised a band of four thousand cut-throats, some time back, and led them out into the wilderness? I am a Jew, said Paul, a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, no mean city; my request of thee is that thou wouldst let me speak to the people. And so, having obtained his leave, Paul stood there on the steps, and made a gesture with his hand to the people. There was deep silence, and he began addressing himself to them in Hebrew.²

22 Brethren and fathers, listen to the defence I am putting before you. (And now they gave him even better audience, finding that he spoke to them in Hebrew.) I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia and brought up in this city; I was trained, under Gamaliel, in exact knowledge of our ancestral law, as jealous for the

¹ Num. 6. 9. It was the custom for richer Jews to pay for the sacrifices offered by the poor on such occasions; and St Paul, though he asserted the freedom of the Gentiles, himself conformed to such Jewish usages, cf. I Cor. 9. 20. ² 'Hebrew'; that is, probably, the Aramaic spoken by the Jews of that time.

honour of the law as you are, all of you, to-day. I persecuted this way to the death, putting men and women in chains and handing them over to the prisons. The chief priests and all the elders will bear me out in that; it was from them that I was carrying letters to their brethren, when I was on my way to Damascus, to make fresh prisoners there and bring them to Jerusalem for punishment. While I was on my journey, not far from Damascus, about midday, this befell me; all at once a great light from heaven shone about me, and I fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? Who art thou, Lord? I answered. And he said to me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom Saul persecutes. My companions saw the light, but could not catch the voice of him who spoke to me.¹ Then I said, What must I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me, Rise up, and go into Damascus; there thou shalt be told of all the work that is destined for thee. The glory of that light had blinded me, and my companions were leading me by the hand when I came into Damascus. There a certain Ananias, a man well known among his Jewish neighbours for his pious observance of the law, came and stood beside me, and said, Brother Saul, look up and see. And at that instant I looked up into his face. Then he said to me, The God of our fathers has made choice of thee to know his will, to have sight of him who is just, and hear speech from his lips; and what thou hast seen and heard, thou shalt testify before all men. Come then, why art thou wasting time? Rise up, and receive baptism, washing away thy sins at the invocation of his name. Afterwards, when I had gone back to Jerusalem, and was at prayer in the temple, I fell into a trance, and saw the Lord there speaking to me; Make haste, he said, leave Jerusalem with all speed; they will not accept thy witness of me here. But, Lord, I said, it is within their own knowledge, how I used to imprison those who believed in thee, and scourge them in the synagogues; and when the blood of Stephen, thy martyr, was shed, I too stood by and

gave my consent, and watched over the garments of those who slew him. And he said to me, Go on thy way; I mean to send thee on a distant errand, to the Gentiles.

Up to this point, they listened to his speech; but then they cried aloud, Away with such a fellow from the earth; it is a disgrace that he should live. So, when he saw them raising shouts and throwing down their garments and flinging dust into the air, the captain had Paul taken into the soldiers' quarters, telling them to examine him under the lash; thus he would find out the cause of the outcry against him. And they had already tied Paul down with thongs, when he said to the centurion who was in charge, Have you the right to scourge a man, when he is a Roman citizen, and has not been sentenced? The centurion, as soon as he heard this, went to the captain and told him of it, What art thou about? he said. This man is a Roman citizen. So the captain came and asked him, What is this? Thou art a Roman citizen? Yes, he said. Why, answered the captain, it cost me a heavy sum to win this privilege. Ah, said Paul, but I am a citizen by birth. Upon this, the men who were to have put him to the question moved away from him; and the captain himself was alarmed, to find out that this was a Roman citizen, and he had put him in bonds. So, the next day, determined to discover the truth about the charge the Jews were bringing against him, he released him, summoned a meeting of the chief priests and the whole Council, and brought Paul down to confront them with him.

23 Paul fastened his eyes on the Council, and said, Brethren, all my life I have behaved myself with full loyalty of conscience towards God. At this, the high priest Ananias bade those who were standing near smite him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him, It is God that will smite thee, for the whitened wall thou art; thou art sitting there to judge me according to the law, and wilt thou break the law by ordering them to smite me? What, said the

¹ Cf. p. 123, note 5.

² 'Him who is just'; this seems to have been a title applied to our Lord in the early Church; cf. p. 14 and 7, 52 above. It was perhaps based on the prophecy made in Wis. 2, 18, where the just man is mocked by his adversaries for making himself out to be the son of God; and perhaps also on Is. 53, 11. St Luke in his account of the Crucifixion, 23, 47, has 'a just man' where St Matthew and St Mark have 'son of God'.

bystanders, wouldst thou insult God's
5 high priest? And Paul said, Brethren, I
could not tell that it was the high priest;
to be sure, it is written, Thou shalt not
6 speak ill of him who rules thy people.¹ And
now, finding that there were two factions
among them, one of the Sadducees and the
other of the Pharisees, Paul cried out in
the Council, Brethren, I am a Pharisee, and
my fathers were Pharisees before me. And
I am standing on my trial because I am one
who hopes for the resurrection of the dead.
When he said this, a dissension arose be-
tween the Pharisees and the Sadducees and
8 the assembly was in two minds. The Sad-
ducees will have it that there is no resur-
rection, that there are no angels or spirits,
9 whereas the Pharisees believe in both. So
that a great clamour followed; and some of
the Pharisees came forward to protest; We
cannot find any fault in this man, they said.
Perhaps he has had a message from a spirit,
10 or an angel. Then dissension rose high;
and the captain, who was afraid that they
would tear Paul in pieces, ordered his
troops to come down and rescue Paul from
their midst, and bring him safe to the
soldiers' quarters.

11 On the next night, the Lord came to his
side, and told him, Do not lose heart; thou
hast done with bearing me witness in Jeru-
salem, and now thou must carry the same
12 witness to Rome. When day came, the
Jews held a conclave, and bound them-
selves under a solemn curse that they
would not eat or drink until they had killed
13 Paul; more than forty of them joined in
this conspiracy. So they went to the chief
priests and elders, and told them, We have
bound ourselves under a solemn curse not
to take food until we have killed Paul.
15 Your part, then, is to signify to the captain
your wish and the Council's, that he would
bring him down before you, as if you meant
to examine his cause more precisely; and
we are ready to make away with him before
16 he reaches you. Paul's sister had a son who
heard of this ambush being laid; and he
went to the soldiers' quarters and gave
17 news of it to Paul. Whereupon Paul had
one of the centurions brought to him, and
said, Take this young man to the captain;

he has news to give him. So he bade him 18
follow, and took him to the captain; The
prisoner, Paul, he said, had me summoned
and asked me to take this young man into
thy presence; he has a message for thee.
And the captain, taking him by the hand 19
and drawing him aside, asked, What is the
news thou bringest me? The Jews, he said, 20
have formed this design; they will ask thee
to bring Paul down before the Council
to-morrow, as if they meant to examine his
cause more precisely. Do not listen to 21
them; some of them will be lying in am-
bush for him, more than forty in number.
They have sworn not to eat or drink until
they have made away with him; even now
they are in readiness, only waiting for thy
consent.

Thereupon the captain dismissed the 22
young man, warning him not to let anyone
know that he had revealed this secret to
him. Then he summoned two of the cen- 23
turions, and told them, You are to have
two hundred men from the cohort ready
to march to Caesarea, with seventy horse-
men and two hundred spearmen; they will
set out at the third hour of the night. And 24
you must provide beasts, so that they can
mount Paul and take him safely to the
governor, Felix. (He was afraid that the 25
Jews might seize on Paul and kill him; and
that he himself might be falsely accused of
taking a bribe from them.²) He also wrote
a letter, with these contents: Claudius 26
Lysias, to his excellency Felix, the gov-
ernor, sends greeting. Here is a man 27
whom the Jews seized, and set about killing
him; but I came up with my men and
rescued him, learning that he was a Roman
citizen. Since I had a mind to discover 28
what complaint it was they had against
him, I took him down into the presence of
their Council; but I found that the accusa- 29
tion was concerned with disputes about
their own law, and that he was charged
with nothing that deserved death or im-
prisonment. And now, since I have in- 30
formation of a plot which they have laid
against him, I am sending him to thee,
telling his accusers at the same time that
they must plead their cause before thee.
Farewell.

¹ It seems likely that St Paul, looking round the Council to see what faces he could recognize, heard the high priest's interruption without seeing who the speaker was. ² The words in parentheses are wanting in the majority of manuscripts.

31 The soldiers, obeying their orders, took Paul with them, and conducted him, travelling all night, to Antipatris. Next day they left the horsemen to accompany him, and went back to their quarters. The horsemen, upon reaching Caesarea, delivered the letter to the governor, and brought Paul, too, into his presence. So the governor read the letter, asked from what province he came, and was told, 35 From Cilicia; then he said, I will give thee a hearing when thy accusers, too, are present. And he gave orders that he should be kept safe in Herod's palace.

24 Five days later the high priest Ananias came down, accompanied by some of the elders and by an advocate named Tertullus; these appeared before the governor against Paul. So, when Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began his indictment thus. Such is the peace thou hast enabled us to enjoy, so many wrongs have been righted for us through thy wisdom, that always and everywhere, most noble Felix, we are ready to acknowledge it with grateful hearts. But I must not weary thee with more of this; what we ask of thy courtesy is no more than a brief audience. Here is a man who is known to us as a pestilent mover of sedition among Jews all over the world, a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, who has not scrupled to attempt a violation of the temple. We arrested him, and had intended to try him according to our own law, when the captain, Lysias, came and took him out of our hands, with great violence, and insisted that his accusers must appear before thee. Interrogate him thyself, and thou wilt be able to learn the truth about all the accusations we bring against him.¹ And the Jews, for their part, supported the indictment, alleging that all this was the truth.

10 Then the governor made a sign to bid Paul speak, and he answered, I am the more emboldened to make my defence, because I know well that thou hast been a judge over this nation for many years.

11 Thou hast the means of assuring thyself

that it is only twelve days since I came up to Jerusalem, to worship there. They have never found me raising controversy, or bringing a crowd together, either in the temple, or in the synagogues, or in the open city; nor can they produce any proof of the charges they bring against me. But this I admit to thee, that in worshipping God, my Father, I follow what we call the way, and they call a sect. I put my trust in all that is written in the law and the prophets, sharing before God the hope they have too, that the dead will rise again, both just and unjust. To that end I, like them, am at pains to keep my conscience clear of offence towards God or man, at all times. After some years' absence I came up to bring alms to the men of my own race, and certain offerings. It was when I had just made these offerings and had been purified in the temple, that I was found there, no crowd about me, no rioting, by whom? By some Jews from Asia, who ought to be here, standing in thy presence, if they had any quarrel with me. In default of that, it is for those who are here to give their own account of what blame they found in me, when I stood before the Council; unless it were over one single utterance, when I cried out, standing there among them, If I am on my trial before you to-day, it is because of the resurrection of the dead.

Felix, who had full information about this way, reserved judgement; I will give you a hearing, he said, when Lysias, the captain, has come down here. And he gave orders to the centurion that Paul was to be kept safely, but left at his ease, and that any of his friends should be given liberty to minister to him. And some days afterwards, when Felix was there with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and listened to his message about faith in Jesus Christ. When he spoke of justice, and continence, and of the judgement that is to come, Felix was terrified; No more of this for the present, he said, I will send for thee when I can find leisure. At the same time, he hoped that Paul would offer him a bribe, and for that reason

¹ *vv. 6-8:* The words 'and had intended to try him according to our own law', 'and insisted that his accusers must appear before thee', are wanting in some manuscripts; others omit the intervening words as well, so that the passage reads 'We arrested him; interrogate him, and thou wilt be able to learn the truth about all the accusations we bring against him'. As the text stands, it is not quite certain whether Felix is asked to interrogate St Paul, or Claudius Lysias; probably the former (but cf. verse 22 below).

sent for him often, and courted his company.¹ So two years passed; then Porcius Festus came as successor to Felix; and Felix, who wished to ingratiate himself with the Jews, left Paul in prison.

25 And Festus, three days after entering his province, went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem. Here the high priest and the leaders of the Jews put before him their case against Paul, and were urgent with him, asking as a favour, that he would summon Paul to Jerusalem; meanwhile they were preparing an ambush, so as to make away with him on the journey. But Festus answered that Paul was in safe keeping at Caesarea; he himself would be removing there as soon as possible; Let those of you who are men of influence, he said, travel down with me, and bring your charges against this man, if you have anything against him. So, when he had spent a week with them, or ten days at most, he went down to Caesarea; and next day, sitting on the judgement-seat, he gave orders for Paul to be brought in. When he appeared, there were the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem, standing round him and bringing many grave accusations against him, which they could not prove; while Paul said in his defence, I have committed no crime against the Jewish law, or against the temple, or against Caesar. But Festus had a mind to ingratiate himself with the Jews, so he answered Paul thus, Art thou ready to go up to Jerusalem, and meet these charges before me there? Upon which Paul said, I am standing at Caesar's judgement-seat, where I have a right to be tried. As for the Jews, I have done them no wrong, as thou knowest well enough. If I am guilty, if I have done something which deserves death, I do not ask for reprieve; if their charges are without substance, no one has a right to make them a present of my life. I appeal to Caesar. Then Festus conferred with his council, and answered, Hast thou appealed to Caesar? To Caesar thou shalt go.

Some days later, king Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea, to give Festus their greeting, and, since he was spending se-

veral days there, Festus put Paul's case before the king; There is a man here, he said, whom Felix left behind him in prison; and when I went to Jerusalem the chief priests and elders of the Jews denounced him to me, asking for his condemnation. I replied that it is not the Roman custom to pronounce a condemnation, until the accused man has been confronted with his accusers, and been given the opportunity to clear himself of the charge. So they came here with me, and I did not keep them waiting; the next day, sitting on the judgement-seat, I gave orders for the man to be brought in. His accusers, as they stood round him, could not tax him with any criminal offence, such as I had expected; their controversies with him were concerned with scruples of their own, and with a dead man called Jesus, whom Paul declared to be alive. For myself, I hesitated to enter upon the discussion of such matters; so I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem, and meet these charges there. Upon which Paul appealed to have his case reserved for the emperor's cognizance; and I gave orders that he should be kept safe until I can send him to Caesar. Then Agrippa said to Festus, I have often wished, myself, to hear this man speak. Thou shalt hear him, said he, to-morrow.

So, on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and made their entry into the hall of judgement, attended by the captains and all the eminent persons of the city; and Paul, at Festus' command, was brought in. Then Festus said, King Agrippa, and all you who are present, you see before you a man over whom the whole Jewish body has been petitioning me, not only here but at Jerusalem, crying out that he must not be allowed to live a day longer. For myself, I was satisfied that he had not done anything deserving of death; but, since he has appealed to the emperor, I have thought it best to send him, and now, writing to my sovereign lord, I have no clear account to give of him. That is why I have brought him before you, and before thee especially, king Agrippa, so that the examination may afford material for my letter. It would be unreasonable, I

¹ Some manuscripts read 'would offer him a bribe for his release', which is evidently the meaning of the passage.

conceive, to remit a prisoner for trial without putting on record the charges that lie against him.

26 Then Agrippa said to Paul, Thou art free to give an account of thyself. And Paul, stretching out his hand, began his defence: King Agrippa, I count myself fortunate to-day, to be defending myself against all the accusations of the Jews in thy presence. No one is more familiar than thou with the customs of the Jews, and their controversies; and this makes me bold to ask thee for a patient audience. What my life was like when boyhood was over, spent from the first among my own people and in Jerusalem, all the Jews know; their earliest memory of me, would they but admit it, is of one who lived according to the strictest tradition of observance we have, a Pharisee. And if I stand here on my trial, it is for my hope of the promise God made to our fathers. Our twelve tribes worship him ceaselessly, night and day, in the hope of attaining that promise; and this is the hope, my lord king, for which the Jews call me to account. Why should it be beyond the belief of men such as thou art, that God should raise the dead?

Well then, I thought it my duty to defy, in many ways, the name of Jesus the Nazarene. And that is what I did, at Jerusalem; it was I, under powers granted me by the chief priests, who shut up many of the faithful in prison; and when they were done to death, I raised my voice against them. Often have I tried to force them into blaspheming, by inflicting punishment on them in one synagogue after another; nay, so unmeasured was my rage against them that I used to go to foreign cities to persecute them. It was on such an errand that I was making my way to Damascus, with powers delegated to me by the chief priests, when, journeying at midday, I saw, my lord king, a light from heaven, surpassing the brightness of the sun, which shone about me and my companions. We all fell to the ground,¹ and I heard a voice which said to me, in Hebrew,

Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? This is a thankless task of thine, kicking against the goad. Who art thou, Lord? I asked. And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom Saul persecutes. Rise up, and stand on thy feet; I have shewn myself to thee, that I may single thee out to serve me, as the witness of this vision thou hast had, and other visions thou wilt have of me. I will be thy deliverer from the hands of thy people, and of the Gentiles, to whom I am now sending thee. Thou shalt open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive, through faith in me, remission of their sins and an inheritance among the saints.

Whereupon, king Agrippa, I did not show myself disobedient to the heavenly vision. First to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem, then to all the country of Judaea, then to the heathen, I preached repentance, bidding them turn to God, and so act as befits men who are penitent. That is why the Jews, when they caught me in the temple, tried to murder me. But, thanks to God's help, I still stand here to-day, bearing my witness to small and great alike. Yet there is nothing in my message which goes beyond what the prophets spoke of, and Moses spoke of, as things to come; a suffering Christ, and one who should shew light to his people and to the Gentiles by being the first to rise from the dead.

When Paul had proceeded so far with his defence, Festus said in a loud voice, Paul, thou art mad; they are driving thee to madness, these long studies of thine. But Paul answered, No, most noble Festus, I am not mad; the message which I utter is sober truth. The king knows about all this well enough; that is why I speak with such confidence in his presence. None of this, I am sure, is news to him; it was not in some secret corner that all this happened. Dost thou believe the prophets, king Agrippa? I am well assured thou dost believe them. At this, Agrippa said to Paul, Thou wouldst have me turn Christian with very little ado.² Why, said Paul, it would

¹ They all fell to the ground at the first shock of the apparition, but the others soon regained their feet (9. 7 above). ² Some commentators have thought that Agrippa said, whether sarcastically or in earnest, 'Thou dost almost persuade me to turn Christian'; but the Greek has rather the sense, 'Thou art trying to persuade me to be a Christian with very little effort (from thyself)', or perhaps 'at very short notice'.

be my prayer to God that, whether it were with much ado or little, both thou and all those who are listening to me to-day should become just such as I am, but for these chains.¹ Then the king rose, and so did the governor, and Bernice, and all those who sat there with them. When they had retired, they said to one another, This man is guilty of no fault that deserves death or imprisonment. And Agrippa said to Festus, If he had not appealed to Caesar, this man might have been set at liberty.

27 And now word was given for the voyage to Italy, Paul being handed over, with some other prisoners, to a centurion called Julius, who belonged to the Augustan cohort. We embarked on a boat from Adrumetum which was bound for the Asiatic ports, and set sail; the Macedonian, Aristarchus, from Thessalonica, was with us. Next day we put in at Sidon; and here Julius shewed Paul courtesy by allowing him to visit his friends and be cared for. Then, setting sail, we coasted under the lee of Cyprus, to avoid contrary winds, but made a straight course over the open sea that lies off Cilicia and Pamphylia, and so reached Lystra in Lycia.² There the centurion found a boat from Alexandria which was sailing for Italy, and put us on board. We had a slow voyage for many days after this; we made Gnidus with difficulty, and then, with the wind beating us back, had to sail under the lee of Crete by way of Salmone. Here we were hard put to it to coast along as far as a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Thalassa.³ Much time had now been wasted, and sailing had become dangerous; the fast was already over; and Paul bade them make the best of it.⁴ Sirs, he said, I can see plainly that there is no sailing now, without injury and great loss, not only of our freight and of the vessel, but of our own lives too.⁵

The centurion, however, paid more at-

tention to the helmsman and the master than to Paul's advice. The harbour was not well placed for wintering in; so that more of them gave their voices for sailing further still, in the hope of making Phoenice and wintering there; it is a harbour in Crete, which faces in the direction of the South-west and North-west winds.⁶ A light breeze was now blowing from the South, so that they thought they had achieved their purpose, and coasted along Crete, leaving their anchorage at Assos.⁷ But it was not long before a gale of wind struck the ship, the wind called Euraquilo;⁸ she was carried out of her course, and could make no head against the wind, so we gave up and let her drive. We now ran under the lee of an island named Cauda, where we contrived, with difficulty, to secure the ship's boat. When it had been hoisted aboard, they strengthened the ship by passing ropes round her; then, for fear of being driven on to the Syrtis sands, they let down the sea-anchor, and so drifted.⁹ On the next day, so violently were we tossed about in the gale, they lightened ship, and on the third, they deliberately threw the spare tackle overboard.

For several days we saw nothing of the sun or the stars, and a heavy gale pressed us hard, so that we had lost, by now, all hope of surviving; and we were much in want of food. And now Paul stood up in their presence, and said, Sirs, you should have taken my advice; if you had not put out from Crete, you would have saved all this injury and damage. But I would not have you lose courage, even now; there is to be no loss of life among you, only of the ship. An angel stood before me last night, sent by the God to whom I belong, the God whom I serve, and said, Have no fear, Paul, thou art to stand in Caesar's presence; and behold, God has granted thee the safety of all thy fellow voyagers. Have courage, then, sirs; I trust in God, believing that all

¹ But for these chains'; the Greek may mean, 'these chains notwithstanding'. ² We have no other record of a port called Lystra on the Lycian coast; the well-known name of Myra is given instead by most manuscripts, but this may be a mere correction. ³ Thalassa; a better reading is Lasea.

⁴ The fast was the day of expiation, occurring about the time of the equinoctial gales. ⁵ St Paul here is not prophesying; he is using maxims of common prudence. ⁶ In the direction of'; this probably means not 'in the teeth of', but 'down along the course of', so that the harbour would face north-east and south-east, as the modern Loutra does. ⁷ No port called Assos is known to have existed in Crete; the Latin interpreters seem to have mistaken for a proper name the Greek word, 'close in'.

⁸ Euraquilo, that is, the North-east wind. ⁹ 'The sea-anchor'; literally, 'the instrument'. It appears that the ancients sometimes dragged a heavy plank behind their ships, to retard their speed in a gale, and this seems to be the intention of the Latin rendering; some would translate the Greek 'lowering the sails'.

26 will fall out as he has told me. Only we are
 27 to be cast up on an island. On the fourteenth night, as we drifted about in the Adriatic sea¹, the crew began to suspect, about midnight, that we were nearing
 28 land; so they took soundings, and made it twenty fathom; then they sounded again a short distance away, and made it fifteen
 29 fathom. Afraid, therefore, that we might be cast ashore on some rocky coast, they let down four anchors from the stern, and
 30 fell to wishing it were day. And now the sailors had a mind to abandon the ship, and lowered the boat into the sea, pretending that they meant to lay out anchors from the
 31 bows. But Paul told the centurion and the soldiers, These must stay on board, or
 32 there is no hope left for you; whereupon the soldiers cut the boat's ropes away and let it drop.

33 As day began to break, Paul entreated them all to take some food; To-day, he said, is the fourteenth day you have been in suspense, and all that time gone hungry, neglecting to eat; pray take some food, then; it will make for your preservation; not a hair of anyone's head is to be lost.

34 And with that he took bread, and gave thanks to God before them all, and broke it, and began to eat. Thereupon they all found courage, and themselves took a meal. The whole number of souls on board
 35 was two hundred and seventy six. So all ate till they were content; and afterwards they began to lighten the ship, throwing the corn into the sea.

36 When day broke, they found that the coast was strange to them. But they sighted a bay with a sloping beach, and made up their minds, if it should be possible, to run the ship ashore there. They lifted the anchors and trusted themselves to the mercy of the sea, at the same time unlash the tiller; then they hoisted the foresail to the breeze, and held on for the
 37 shore.² But now, finding they were running into a cross-sea, they grounded the ship where they were. The bows, which were stuck fast, felt no movement, but the stern began falling to pieces under the violence of the waves; whereupon the soldiers

would have killed the prisoners, for fear that any of them should dive overboard and escape, but the centurion balked them of their will, because he had a mind to keep Paul safe. He gave orders that those who could swim should go overboard first, and make their way to land; of the rest, some were ferried across on planks, and some on the ship's wreckage. So it was that all reached land in safety.

28 When we were safe on land, we found that the island was called Melita. The kindness which the natives shewed to us was beyond the ordinary; they welcomed us all by making a fire for us, because rain was coming on, and it was cold. Paul had collected a bundle of fag-gots and had just put them on the fire, when a viper, coming out to escape the heat, fastened on his hand;³ and the natives, when they saw the beast coiled round his hand, said to one another, This must be some murderer; he has been rescued from the sea, but divine vengeance would not let him live. He, meanwhile, shook the beast into the fire, and was none the worse. They still waited to see him swell up, or fall down dead on a sudden; but when they had waited a long time, and found that there was nothing amiss with him, they changed their minds, and declared that he must be a god. Among the estates in that part were some which belonged to the leading citizen of the island, a man named Publius, who took us in and for three days entertained us hospitably; and it so happened that Publius' father had taken to his bed, laid up with fever and dysentery. Paul, who had gone to visit him, laid his hands upon him with prayer, and healed him; whereupon all the other folk in the island who were suffering from infirmities came to him and found a cure. These paid us great honour, and when we embarked they loaded us with all the supplies we needed.

It was at the end of three months that we sailed, in a ship from Alexandria which had wintered at the island; its sign was Castor and Pollux. We put in at Syracuse, where

¹ 'The Adriatic sea'; that is, the central Mediterranean in general.

² It is not certain which of the

sails is meant by the word here used. ³ There are no poisonous snakes in Malta to-day; if this was true in St Paul's time, it is not difficult to suppose that this viper may have come over in, and escaped from, one of the African grain-ships.

13 we waited for three days; then we coasted
round the further shore, and so arrived at
Rhegium. When we had spent a day there,
14 a South wind came on, and we made Pu-
teoli on the second day out. Here we found
some brethren, who prevailed on us to stay
with them for a week. And so we ended
15 our journey at Rome. The brethren there,
who had heard our story, came out as far
as Appius' Forum, and on to the Three
Taverns, to meet us; Paul gave thanks to
God and took courage when he saw them.

16 Once we were in Rome, Paul was al-
lowed to have his own residence, which he
shared with the soldier who guarded him.
17 It was three days later that he called a
meeting of the leading men among the
Jews. When they had assembled, he told
them, Brethren, I am one who has done
nothing to the prejudice of our people, or
of our ancestral customs; yet, in Jerusalem,
they handed me over to the Romans as a
18 prisoner. These, when they had examined
me, had a mind to release me, since no
capital charge lay against me; but the Jews
cried out against it, and I was forced to
19 appeal to Caesar, though it is not as if I had
any fault to find with my own nation. That
is why I have asked for the opportunity of
seeing you and speaking to you. It is be-
cause I hope as Israel hopes, that I wear
20 this chain. At this they said to him, We
have not received any letter about thee
from Judaea, nor has any of the brethren
21 come here with any ill report or hard words
about thee. We ask nothing better than to

hear what thy opinions are; all we know of
this sect is, that it is everywhere decried.

22 So they made an appointment with him,
and met him at his lodging in great num-
bers. And he bore his testimony and told
them about the kingdom of God, trying to
convince them from Moses and the prop-
hets of what Jesus was, from dawn till
dusk. Some were convinced by his words,
24 others refused belief; and they took their
leave still at variance among themselves,
but not till Paul had spoken one last word,
It was a true utterance the Holy Spirit
made to our fathers through the prophet
Isaias: Go to this people, and tell them,
26 You will listen and listen, but for you there
is no understanding; you will watch and
watch, but for you there is no perceiving.
The heart of this people has become dull,
27 their ears are slow to listen, and they keep
their eyes shut, so that they may never see
with those eyes, or hear with those ears, or
understand with that heart, and turn back
to me, and win healing from me.¹ Take
28 notice, then, that this message of salvation
has been sent by God to the Gentiles, and
they, at least, will listen to it.

29 So much he told the Jews, and then they
left him, with much dissension among
themselves.² And for two whole years he
30 lived in a lodging hired at his own expense,
and welcomed all who came to visit him,
proclaiming God's kingdom, and teaching
31 them the truths which concern our Lord
Jesus Christ, boldly enough, without let or
hindrance.

¹ *vv.* 26, 27: Is. 6, 9, 10.

² This verse is wanting in some manuscripts.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE ROMANS

IT is Paul who writes; a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be his apostle, and set apart to preach the gospel of God. That gospel, promised long ago by means of his prophets in the holy scriptures, tells us of his Son, descended, in respect of his human birth, from the line of David, but, in respect of the sanctified spirit that was his, marked out miraculously as the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead; our Lord Jesus Christ. It is through him we have received the grace of apostleship; all over the world, men must be taught to honour his name by paying him the homage of their faith, and you among them, you, who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. I wish, to all those at Rome whom God loves and has called to be holy, grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. And first, I offer thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, you whose faith is so renowned throughout the world. The God to whom I address the inner worship of my heart, while I preach the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I make mention of you, never failing to ask, when I am at my prayers, that somehow, in God's Providence, I may be granted at last an opportunity of visiting you. I long to see you, in the hope that I may have some spiritual gift to share with you, so as to strengthen your resolve; or rather, so that the faith we find in each other, you and I, may be an encouragement to you and to me as well. I should be sorry, brethren, if you were left in doubt that (although hitherto I have always been prevented) I have often planned to visit you, and to be able to claim some harvest among you, as I can among the Gentiles elsewhere. I have the same duty to all, Greek and barbarian,

learned and simple; and for my own part I am eager to preach the gospel to you in Rome as I have to others. I am not ashamed of this gospel. It is an instrument of God's power, that brings salvation to all who believe in it, Jew first and then Greek. It reveals God's way of justifying us, faith first and last; as the scripture says, It is faith that brings life to the just man.¹

God's anger is being revealed from heaven; his anger against the impiety and wrong-doing of the men whose wrong-doing denies his truth its full scope. The knowledge of God is clear to their minds; God himself has made it clear to them; from the foundations of the world men have caught sight of his invisible nature, his eternal power and his divineness, as they are known through his creatures. Thus there is no excuse for them; although they had the knowledge of God, they did not honour him or give thanks to him as God; they became fantastic in their notions, and their senseless hearts grew benighted; they, who claimed to be so wise, turned fools, and exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for representations of perishable man, of bird and beast and reptile. That is why God abandoned their lustful hearts to filthy practices of dishonouring their own bodies among themselves. They had exchanged God's truth for a lie, reverencing and worshipping the creature in preference to the Creator (blessed is he for ever, Amen); and, in return, God abandoned them to passions which brought dishonour to themselves. Their women exchanged natural for unnatural intercourse; and the men, on their side, giving up natural intercourse with women, were burnt up with desire for each

¹ Hab. 2. 4. It is not certain whether the expression 'faith first and last' (literally, 'from faith to faith') implies a progress from belief in the Old Testament prophecies to belief in our Lord, or a progress from the act of faith by which we become Christians to the spirit of faith in which, as Christians, we ought to live.

other; men practising vileness with their fellow men. Thus they have received a fitting retribution for their false belief.¹

28 And as they scorned to keep God in their view, so God has abandoned them to a frame of mind worthy of all scorn, that prompts them to disgraceful acts. They are
29 versed in every kind of injustice, knavery, impurity, avarice, and ill-will; spiteful, murderous, contentious, deceitful, depraved, backbiters, slanderers, God's enemies; insolent, haughty, vainglorious; inventive in wickedness, disobedient to
30 their parents; without prudence, without honour, without love, without loyalty, without pity. Yet, with the just decree of
31 God before their minds, they never grasped the truth that those who so live are deserving of death; not only those who commit such acts, but those who countenance such a manner of living.²

2 So, friend, if thou canst see thy neighbour's faults, no excuse is left thee, whoever thou art; in blaming him, thou dost own thyself guilty, since thou, for all
3 thy blame, livest the same life as he.³ We know that God passes unerring judgement upon such lives; and dost thou, friend, think to escape God's judgement, thou who dost blame men for living thus, and
4 art guilty of the same acts thyself? Or is it that thou art presuming on that abundant kindness of his, which bears with thee and waits for thee? Dost thou not know that
5 God's kindness is inviting thee to repent? Whereas thou, by the stubborn impenitence of thy heart, dost continue to store up retribution for thyself against the day of retribution, when God will reveal the
6 justice of his judgements. He will award to every man what his acts have deserved; eternal life to those who have striven for glory, and honour, and immortality, by
7 perseverance in doing good; the retribution of his anger to those who are contumacious, rebelling against truth and paying homage to wickedness.

There will be affliction then and distress
9 for every human soul that has practised wickedness, the Jew in the first instance, but the Gentile too; there will be glory and
10 honour and peace for everyone who has done good, the Jew in the first instance, but the Gentile too. There are no human
11 preferences with God. Those who have been sinners without regard to the law will be doomed without regard to the law; those who have been sinners with the law for their rule will be judged with the law for their rule. To have heard the law read out
12 is no claim to acceptance with God; it is those who obey the law that will be justified. As for the Gentiles, though they have
13 no law to guide them, there are times when they carry out the precepts of the law unbidden, finding in their own natures a rule to guide them, in default of any other rule; and this shews that the obligations of
14 the law are written in their hearts; their conscience utters its own testimony, and when they dispute with one another they find themselves condemning this, approving that.⁴ And there will be a day
15 when God (according to the gospel I preach) will pass judgement, through Jesus Christ, on the hidden thoughts of men.

Thou claimest Jewish blood; thou re-
17 liest on the law; God is all thy boast; thou canst tell what is his will, discern what things are of moment, because the law has taught thee. Thou hast confidence in thyself as one who leads the blind, a light to their darkness; admonishing the fool, in-
18 structing the simple, because in the law thou hast the incarnation of all knowledge and all truth. Tell me, then, thou who
19 teachest others, hast thou no lesson for thyself? Is it a thief that preaches against stealing, an adulterer that forbids adultery?
20 Dost thou rob temples, thou, who shrinkest from the touch of an idol? Thy boast
21 is in the law; wilt thou break the law, to God's dishonour? The name of God, says
22 the scripture, has become a reproach among the Gentiles, because of you.⁵

¹ *vs.* 18-27: Many of the considerations here brought forward are to be found in Wis. ch. 13. It is not clear, in verse 18, whether the heathen are blamed for 'holding the truth and yet sinning', or for 'hindering the truth by means of their sin'.

² The words 'they never grasped the truth' are not found in the best Greek manuscripts; these read, at the end of the verse, 'they not only commit such acts, but countenance those who commit them'.

³ 'Whoever thou art' probably implies that verses 1-16 are addressed both to Jews and to Gentiles.

⁴ The meaning of the last clause in this verse is disputed; but it seems likely that St Paul is alluding to the Stoic philosophers, who classed some things as 'preferred' and others as 'rejected'; a third class they called 'things of no moment', and there may be an allusion to this in verse 18 below.

⁵ Ez. 36. 23.

25 Circumcision, to be sure, is of value, so long as thou keepest the law; but if thou breakest the law, thy circumcision has lost its effect. And if one who has never been circumcised observes the conditions of the law, does it not follow that he, though uncircumcised, will be reckoned as one who is circumcised? That he, who keeps the law, though uncircumcised in body, will be able to pass judgement on thee, who breakest the law, though circumcised according to the letter of it? To be a Jew is not to be a Jew outwardly; to be circumcised is not to be circumcised outwardly, 29 in the flesh. He is a Jew indeed who is one inwardly; true circumcision is achieved in the heart, according to the spirit, not the letter of the law, for God's, not for man's approval.

3 Of what use is it, then, to be a Jew? What value was there in circumcision? Much, I answer, in every respect; chiefly because the Jews had the words of God entrusted to them. Some, to be sure, shewed unfaithfulness on their side; but can we suppose that unfaithfulness on their part will dispense God from his promise? It is not to be thought of; God must prove true to his word, though all men should play him false; so it is written, Thy dealings were just, and if thou art called in question, thou hast right on thy side.¹ Thus our fault only serves to bring God's integrity to light. (Does that mean that God does wrong in punishing us for it? Impossible again, even according to our human standards; that would mean that God has no right to judge the world; it would mean that because my deceitfulness has promoted God's glory by giving scope to his truthfulness, I on my side do not deserve to be condemned as a sinner. If so, why should we not do evil so that good may come of it? That is what we are accused of preaching by some of our detractors; and their condemnation of it is just.)

Well then, has either side the advantage? In no way. Jews and Gentiles, as we have before alleged, are alike convicted of sin.² Thus, it is written, There is not an innocent man among them, no, not one. There is nobody who reflects, and searches for God; all alike are on the wrong course, all are wasted lives; not one of them acts honourably, no, not one.³ Their mouths are gaping tombs, they use their tongues to flatter. Under their lips the venom of asps is hidden.⁴ Their talk overflows with curses and calumny.⁵ They run hot-foot to shed blood; havoc and ruin follow in their path;⁶ the way of peace is unknown to them. They do not keep the fear of God before their eyes.⁷ So the law says, and we know that the words of the law are meant for the law's own subjects; it is determined that no one shall have anything to say for himself, that the whole world shall own itself liable to God's judgements.⁸ No human creature can become acceptable in his sight by observing the law; what the law does is to give us the full consciousness of sin.

But, in these days, God's way of justification has at last been brought to light; one which was attested by the law and the prophets, but stands apart from the law; God's way of justification through faith in Jesus Christ, meant for everybody and sent down upon everybody without distinction, if he has faith. All alike have sinned, all alike are unworthy of God's praise.⁹ And justification comes to us as a free gift from his grace, through our redemption in Christ Jesus. God has offered him to us as a means of reconciliation, in virtue of faith, ransoming us with his blood. Thus God has vindicated his own holiness, shewing us why he overlooked our former sins in the days of his forbearance; and he has also vindicated the holiness of Jesus Christ, here and now, as one who is himself holy, and imparts holiness to those who take their stand upon faith in him.¹⁰ What has

¹ Ps. 50. 4. ² 'Has either side the advantage?'; the Greek word here may mean 'Do we excel them?' or 'Are we excelled by them?' Nor are commentators agreed whether 'we' refers to the Jews or to the Gentiles. But the general sense remains clear. ³ *ib.* 10-12; Ps. 13. 2, 3. ⁴ Ps. 5. 10; Ps. 139. 3. ⁵ Ps. 9 (second part), 7. ⁶ *ib.* 15-17; Is. 59. 7, 8. ⁷ Ps. 35. 1. ⁸ 'The law' seems to be used here, as often, for the Old Testament generally. ⁹ 'God's praise'; some translate 'the glory of God', but it seems simplest to understand the words here as in Jn. 12. 43, as referring to the praise which God bestows. ¹⁰ The Greek text here can be, and commonly is, translated thus: 'he has also vindicated his (God's) holiness, here and now, as one who is himself holy, and imparts holiness to those who take their stand upon faith in Jesus Christ'. The other interpretation is, apparently, that of the Latin translators.

become, then, of thy pride? No room has been left for it. On what principle? The principle which depends on observances? No, the principle which depends on faith; our contention is, that a man is justified by faith apart from the observances of the law. Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles too? Of the Gentiles too, assuredly; there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised man if he learns to believe, and the Gentile because he believes.

Does that mean that we are using faith to rob the law of its force? No, we are setting the law on its right footing.¹

4 What, for instance, shall we say of Abraham, our forefather by human descent? What kind of blessing did he win? If it was by observances that Abraham attained his justification, he, to be sure, has something to be proud of. But it was not so in God's sight; what does the scripture tell us? Abraham put his faith in God, and it was reckoned virtue in him.² The reward given to one who works to earn it is not reckoned as a favour, it is reckoned as his due. When a man's faith is reckoned virtue in him, according to God's gracious plan, it is not because of anything he does; it is because he has faith, faith in the God who makes a just man of the sinner.³ So, too, David pronounces his blessing on the man whom God accepts, without any mention of observances: Blessed are those who have all their faults forgiven, all their transgressions buried away;⁴ blessed is the man who is not a sinner in the Lord's reckoning. This blessing, then, does it fall only on those who are circumcised, or on the uncircumcised as well? We saw that Abraham's faith was reckoned virtue in him. And in what state of things was that reckoning made? Was he circumcised or uncircumcised at the time? Uncircumcised, not circumcised yet.⁵ Circumcision was only given to him as a token; as the seal of that justification which came to him

through his faith while he was still uncircumcised. And thus he is the father of all those who, still uncircumcised, have the faith that will be reckoned virtue in them too. Meanwhile, he is the father of those who are circumcised, as long as they do not merely take their stand on circumcision, but follow in the steps of that faith which he, our father Abraham, had before circumcision began.

It was not through obedience to the law, but through faith justifying them, that Abraham and his posterity were promised the inheritance of the world.⁶ If it is only those who obey the law that receive the inheritance, then his faith was ill founded, and the promise has been annulled. (The effect of the law is only to bring God's displeasure upon us; it is only where there is a law that transgression becomes possible.) The inheritance, then, must come through faith (and so by free gift); thus the promise is made good to all Abraham's posterity, not only that posterity of his which keeps the law, but that which imitates his faith. We are all Abraham's children; and so it was written of him, I have made thee the father of many nations. We are his children in the sight of God, in whom he put his faith, who can raise the dead to life, and send his call to that which has no being, as if it already were.

Abraham, then, believed, hoping against hope; and thus became the father of many nations; Like these, he was told, thy posterity shall be.⁷ There was no wavering in his faith; he gave no thought to the want of life in his own body, though he was nearly a hundred years old at the time, nor to the deadness of Sara's womb; he shewed no hesitation or doubt at God's promise, but drew strength from his faith, confessing God's power, fully convinced that God was able to perform what he had promised. This, then, was reckoned virtue in him; and the words, It was reckoned virtue in him, were not written of him only; they were written of us too. It will be reckoned

¹ As in verse 19 above, 'the law' seems to indicate the Old Testament generally, since the considerations here introduced relate to the story of Abraham.

² Gen. 15. 6.

³ According to God's gracious plan;

these words do not appear in the Greek manuscripts.

⁴ Ps. 31. 1, 2.

⁵ Gen. 12. 2, and elsewhere; circumcision is first mentioned in Gen. 17. 10.

⁶ None of the promises recorded in Genesis would appear to justify this assertion literally; but it seems likely that Jewish tradition, from a comparison of Gen. 12. 3; 15. 5, and so on, interpreted them in the sense of world-wide diffusion. This promise of world-inheritance, St Paul argues, has not been kept, if by Abraham's posterity we mean only the Jews; it remains to be fulfilled, therefore, in the Church of Christ, which is Abraham's posterity in a spiritual sense.

⁷ Gen. 15. 5.

virtue in us, if we believe in God as having raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead: handed over to death for our sins, and raised to life for our justification.

5 Once justified, then, on the ground of our faith, let us enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,¹ as it was through him that we have obtained access, by faith, to that grace in which we stand. We are confident in the hope of attaining glory as the sons of God; nay, we are confident even over our afflictions, knowing well that affliction gives rise to endurance, and endurance gives proof of our faith, and a proved faith gives ground for hope. Nor does this hope delude us; the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom we have received. Were that hope vain, why did Christ, in his own appointed time, undergo death for us sinners, while we were still powerless to help ourselves? It is hard enough to find anyone who will die on behalf of a just man, although perhaps there may be those who will face death for one so deserving. But here, as if God meant to prove how well he loves us, it was while we were still sinners that Christ, in his own appointed time, died for us. All the more surely, then, now that we have found justification through his blood, shall we be saved, through him, from God's displeasure. Enemies of God, we were reconciled to him through his Son's death; reconciled to him, we are surer than ever of finding salvation in his Son's life. And, what is more, we can boast of God's protection; always through our Lord Jesus Christ, since it is through him that we have attained our reconciliation.

It was through one man that guilt came into the world; and, since death came owing to guilt, death was handed on to all mankind by one man. (All alike were guilty men;² there was guilt in the world before ever the law of Moses was given. Now, it is only where there is a law to transgress that guilt is imputed,³ and yet

we see death reigning in the world from Adam's time to the time of Moses, over men who were not themselves guilty of transgressing a law, as Adam was.) In this, Adam was the type of him who was to come. Only, the grace which came to us was out of all proportion to the fault. If this one man's fault brought death on a whole multitude, all the more lavish was God's grace, shewn to a whole multitude, that free gift he made us in the grace brought by one man, Jesus Christ. The extent of the gift is not as if it followed a single guilty act; the sentence which brought us condemnation arose out of one man's action, whereas the pardon that brings us acquittal arises out of a multitude of faults. And if death began its reign through one man, owing to one man's fault, more fruitful still is the grace, the gift of justification, which bids men enjoy a reign of life through one man, Jesus Christ.

Well then, one man commits a fault, and it brings condemnation upon all; one man makes amends, and it brings to all justification, that is, life. A multitude will become acceptable to God through one man's obedience, just as a multitude, through one man's disobedience, became guilty. The law intervened, only to amplify our fault; but, as our fault was amplified, grace has been more amply bestowed than ever; that so, where guilt held its reign of death, justifying grace should reign instead, to bring us eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6 Does it follow that we ought to go on sinning, to give still more occasion for grace? God forbid. We have died, once for all, to sin; can we breathe its air again? You know well enough that we who were taken up into Christ by baptism have been taken up, all of us, into his death. In our baptism, we have been buried with him, died like him, that so, just as Christ was raised up by his Father's power from the dead, we too might live and move in a new kind of existence. We have to be closely

¹ Some Greek manuscripts have 'we enjoy' for 'let us enjoy'. ² 'All alike were guilty'; some would translate 'In him (Adam) all had sinned'. ³ The sense seems to be, that those who lived before Adam's time and that of Moses, whatever their sins were, incurred no guilt of disobedience, there being no (revealed) law to disobey. Death is the penalty of disobedience; and the fact that death came to Adam's immediate descendants must therefore be attributed to Adam's disobedience, not to their own. St Paul must not be understood as meaning that men are not responsible for their actions where they have no revealed law to guide them; cf. 2. 15 above.

fitted into the pattern of his resurrection, as we have been into the pattern of his death; ⁶ we have to be sure of this, that our former nature has been crucified with him, and the living power of our guilt annihilated, so that we are the slaves of guilt no longer. ⁷ Guilt makes no more claim on a man who is dead. ⁸ And if we have died with Christ, we have faith to believe that we shall share his life. We know that Christ, now he has risen from the dead, cannot die any more; death has no more power over him; the death he died was a death, once for all, to sin; the life he now lives is a life that looks towards God. ⁹ And you, too, must think of yourselves as dead to sin, and alive with a life that looks towards God, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

² You must not, then, allow sin to tyrannize over your perishable bodies, to make you subject to its appetites. You must not make your bodily powers over to sin, to be the instruments of harm; make yourselves over to God, as men who have been dead and come to life again; make your bodily powers over to God, to be the instruments of right-doing. Sin will not be able to play the master over you any longer; you serve grace now, not the law. And if it is grace, not the law, we serve, are we therefore ⁶ fall into sin? God forbid. You know well enough that wherever you give a slave's consent, you prove yourselves the slaves of that master; slaves of sin, marked out for death, or slaves of obedience, marked out for justification. And you, thanks be to God, although you were the slaves of sin once, accepted obedience with all your hearts, true to the pattern of teaching to which you are now engaged. ⁸ Thus you escaped from the bondage of sin, and became the slaves of right-doing instead. ⁹ I am speaking in the language of common

life, because nature is still strong in you. ⁶ Just as you once made over your natural powers as slaves to impurity and wickedness, till all was wickedness, you must now make over your natural powers as slaves to right-doing, till all is sanctified. At the ²⁰ time when you were the slaves of sin, right-doing had no claim upon you. And what ²¹ harvest were you then reaping, from acts which now make you blush? Their reward is death. Now that you are free from the ²² claims of sin, and have become God's slaves instead, you have a harvest in your sanctification, and your reward is eternal life. Sin offers death, for wages; God ²³ offers us eternal life as a free gift, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

7 You must surely be aware, brethren (I am speaking to men who have some knowledge of law) that legal claims are only binding on a man so long as he is alive. A married woman, for instance, is bound ² by law to her husband while he lives; if she is widowed, she is quit of her husband's claim on her; she will be held an adulteress ³ if she gives herself to another man during her husband's lifetime, but once he is dead she is quit of his claim, and can give herself to another man without adultery. Well, ⁴ brethren, you too have undergone death, as far as the law is concerned, in the person of Christ crucified, ⁷ so that you now belong to another, to him who rose from the dead. We yield increase to God, whereas, when ⁵ we were merely our natural selves, the sinful passions to which the law bound us worked on our natural powers, so as to yield increase only to death. Now we are ⁶ quit of the claim which death had on us, so that we can do service in a new manner, according to the spirit, not according to the letter as of old. ⁸

Does this mean that law and guilt are the

¹ vv. 1-5: Here, as in Col. 2. 12, St Paul thinks of baptism not as washing us from our sins, but as burying us to our sins. Baptism (which then suggested the idea of total immersion) mystically identifies us with our Lord's passage through the tomb. (Cf. I Cor. 10. 2.) ² The living power of our guilt'; literally, 'the body of guilt'. Some think that this means our bodies, considered as the instruments of sin; but this does not seem to follow the line of St Paul's allegory. ³ This probably introduces a maxim of ordinary human law; namely, that no criminal action lies against a man when he is already dead. Cf. 7. 1 below.

⁴ Christ died to sin, in the sense that the burden of human sins which he freely took upon himself demanded, as of right, his death, but now, having undergone that sentence, he has satisfied all the obligations which his condescension brought upon him. ⁵ Some would translate, 'You accepted obedience with all your hearts to the pattern of teaching which was handed on to you'.

⁶ Nature is still strong in you'; probably in the sense that they are not yet sufficiently advanced in spirituality to be able to understand St Paul unless he uses crude metaphors. ⁷ Literally, 'You were put to death... through the body of Christ'. ⁸ Quit of the claim which death had on us'; this is the intention of the Latin. The Greek manuscripts have 'We are quit of the law's claim, since we have died in (or 'to') that which hitherto held us bound'.

same thing? God forbid we should say that. But it was only the law that gave me my knowledge of sin; I should not even have known concupiscence for what it is, if the law had not told me, Thou shalt not covet. But the sense of sin, with the law's ban for its foothold, produced in me every sort of concupiscence. Without the law, the sense of sin is a dead thing. At first, without the law, I was alive; then, when the law came with its ban, the sense of sin found new life, and with that, I died. The ban, which was meant to bring life, proved death to me; the sense of sin, with the law's ban for its foothold, caught me unawares, and by that means killed me. The law, to be sure, is something holy; the ban is holy, and right, and good. A good thing, and did it prove death to me? God forbid we should say that. No, it was sin that produced death in me, using this good thing to make itself appear as sin indeed, sin made more sinful than ever by the ban imposed on it.

The law, as we know, is something spiritual; I am a thing of flesh and blood, sold into the slavery of sin. My own actions bewilder me; what I do is not what I wish to do, but something which I hate. Why then, if what I do is something I have no wish to do, I thereby admit that the law is worthy of all honour; meanwhile, my action does not come from me, but from the sinful principle that dwells in me. Of this I am certain, that no principle of good dwells in me, that is, in my natural self; praiseworthy intentions are always ready to hand, but I cannot find my way to the performance of them; it is not the good my will prefers, but the evil my will disproves, that I find myself doing. And if what I do is something I have not the will to do, it cannot be I that bring it about, it must be the sinful principle that dwells in me. This, then, is what I find about the law, that evil is close at my side, when my

will is to do what is praiseworthy.¹ Inwardly, I applaud God's disposition, but I observe another disposition in my lower self, which raises war against the disposition of my conscience, and so I am handed over as a captive to that disposition towards sin which my lower self contains. Pitiable creature that I am, who is to set me free from a nature thus doomed to death? Nothing else than the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. If I am left to myself, my conscience is at God's disposition, but my natural powers are at the disposition of sin.²

Well then, no judgement stands now against those who live in Christ Jesus, not following the ways of flesh and blood. The spiritual principle of life has set me free, in Christ Jesus, from the principle of sin and of death. There was something the law could not do, because flesh and blood could not lend it the power; and this God has done, by sending us his own Son, in the fashion of our guilty nature, to make amends for our guilt. He has signed the death-warrant of sin in our nature, so that we should be fully quit of the law's claim, we, who follow the ways of the spirit, not the ways of flesh and blood. To live the life of nature is to think the thoughts of nature; to live the life of the spirit is to think the thoughts of the spirit; and natural wisdom brings only death, whereas the wisdom of the spirit brings life and peace. That is because natural wisdom is at enmity with God, not submitting itself to his law; it is impossible that it should. Those who live the life of nature cannot be acceptable to God; but you live the life of the spirit, not the life of nature; that is, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. A man cannot belong to Christ unless he has the Spirit of Christ. But if Christ lives in you, then although the body be a dead thing in virtue of our guilt, the spirit is a living thing, by virtue of our

¹ 'This, then, is what I find about the law, that . . .', etc. Others would reader, 'I discover, then, this principle, that . . .', etc. But this would be very doubtful Greek. ² *vv.* 7-25: Commentators are not agreed, whether St Paul is giving us his own experience in this matter, or is dramatically representing the experience of mankind under his own person. There is a further doubt whether what is here said should be understood only of man unregenerate, or equally of souls regenerated by grace, in which concupiscence nevertheless persists. St Paul's main contention, in any case, appears to be that we cast no aspersions on the holiness of the Mosaic law, when we describe it as powerless to save us. The very struggles which our moral experience entails are proof that the law is holy, since our conscience continues to approve of it even when we are disobeying our conscience by yielding to sin. *v.* 25: Most Greek manuscripts have 'Thanks be to God', instead of 'Nothing else than the grace of God'; their meaning is evidently the same.

111 justification.¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead will give life to your perishable bodies too, for the sake of his Spirit who dwells in you.

112 Thus, brethren, nature has no longer any claim upon us, that we should live a life of nature. If you live a life of nature, you are marked out for death; if you mortify the ways of nature through the power of the Spirit, you will have life.² Those who follow the leading of God's Spirit are all God's sons; the spirit you have now received is not, as of old, a spirit of slavery, to govern you by fear; it is the spirit of adoption, which makes us cry out, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself thus assures our spirit, that we are children of God; and if we are his children, then we are his heirs too; heirs of God, sharing the inheritance of Christ; only we must share his sufferings, if we are to share his glory.

113 Not that I count these present sufferings as the measure of that glory which is to be revealed in us. If creation is full of expectancy, that is because it is waiting for the sons of God to be made known. Created nature has been condemned to frustration; not for some deliberate fault of its own, but for the sake of him who so condemned it, with a hope to look forward to; namely, that nature in its turn will be set free from the tyranny of corruption, to share in the glorious freedom of God's sons. The whole of nature, as we know, groans in a common travail all the while.⁴ And not only do we see that, but we ourselves do the same; we ourselves, although we have already begun to reap our spiritual harvest, groan in our hearts, waiting for that adoption which is the ransoming of our bodies from their slavery. It must be so, since our salvation is founded upon the hope of something. Hope would not be hope at all if its object

were in view; how could a man still hope for something which he sees? And if we are hoping for something still unseen, then we need endurance to wait for it. Only, as before,⁵ the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; when we do not know what prayer to offer, to pray as we ought, the Spirit himself intercedes for us, with groans beyond all utterance: and God, who can read our hearts, knows well what the Spirit's intent is; for indeed it is according to the mind of God that he makes intercession for the saints.

114 Meanwhile, we are well assured that everything helps to secure the good of those who love God, those whom he has called in fulfilment of his design.⁶ All those who from the first were known to him, he has destined from the first to be moulded into the image of his Son, who is thus to become the eldest-born among many brethren. So predestined, he called them; so called, he justified them; so justified, he glorified them. When that is said, what follows? Who can be our adversary, if God is on our side? He did not even spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all; and must not that gift be accompanied by the gift of all else? Who will come forward to accuse God's elect, when God acquits us? Who will pass sentence against us, when Jesus Christ, who died, nay, has risen again, and sits at the right hand of God, is pleading for us? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? For thy sake, says the scripture, we face death at every moment, reckoned no better than sheep marked down for slaughter.⁷ Yet in all this we are conquerors, through him who has granted us his love. Of this I am fully persuaded; neither death nor life, no angels or principalities or powers, neither what is present nor what is to come, no

¹ 'Although the body be a dead thing'; this may refer either to physical death (verse 12 above), or to the mortification inflicted on the body during life (6. 2 above).

² 'The ways of nature'; many Greek manuscripts have 'the activities of the body'.
³ 'Him who so condemned it'; this is ordinarily understood of God, but it is hard to see the force of this interpretation. It is perhaps better to take it of Adam, as St Chrysostom does.

⁴ vs. 18-22: The word here translated 'creation' or 'created nature' probably means: creation as a whole. St Paul, with something of a poetic outlook, sees the struggle for survival in nature as a proof of its dumb aspiration towards that more perfect creation which is to come; the agony of its frustrated striving is the birth-pang of a new order (cf. Mt. 24. 8; Jn. 16. 21). Others interpret 'creation' as referring to *human* nature; in which case 'we ourselves' in verse 23 must be understood of the apostles, or of Christians as opposed to those who live according to nature.

⁵ 'As before'; that is, as in verse 16 above.
⁶ Some Greek manuscripts read 'God helps in every way to secure the good of those who love God'.
⁷ 'In fulfilment of his design'; the Greek fathers, however, interpret, 'in accordance with their wills'.
⁸ Ps. 43. 22.

39 force whatever, neither the height above us nor the depth beneath us, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which comes to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9 I am not deceiving you, I am telling you the truth in Christ's name, with the full assurance of a conscience enlightened by the Holy Spirit, when I tell you of the great sorrow, the continual anguish I feel in my heart, and how it has ever been my wish that I myself might be doomed to separation from Christ, if that would benefit my brethren, my own kinsmen by race.¹ They are Israelites, adopted as God's sons; the visible presence, and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the Temple worship, and the promises, are their inheritance; the patriarchs belong to them, and theirs is the human stock from which Christ came; Christ, who rules as God over all things, blessed for ever, Amen.² And yet it is not as if God's promise had failed of its effect. Not all those who are sprung from Israel are truly Israelites; not all the posterity of Abraham are Abraham's children; It is through Isaac, he was told, that thy posterity shall be traced. That is to say, God's sonship is not for all those who are Abraham's children by natural descent; it is only the children given to him as the result of God's promise that are to be counted as his posterity. It was a promise God made, when he said, When this season comes round again, I will visit thee, and Sara shall have a son. And not only she, but Rebecca too received a promise, when she bore two sons to the same husband, our father Isaac. They had not yet been born; they had done nothing, good or evil; and already, so that God's purpose might stand out clearly as his own choice, with no action of theirs to

account for it, nothing but his will, from whom the call came, she was told, The elder is to be the servant of the younger.³ So it is that we read, I have been a friend to Jacob, and an enemy to Esau.⁴

What does this mean? That God acts unjustly? That is not to be thought of. I will shew pity, he tells Moses, on those whom I pity; I will shew mercy where I am merciful;⁵ the effect comes, then, from God's mercy, not from man's will, or man's alacrity. Pharaoh, too, is told in scripture, This is the very reason why I have made thee what thou art, so as to give proof, in thee, of my power, and to let my name be known all over the earth.⁶ Thus he shews mercy where it is his will, and where it is his will he hardens men's hearts.⁷ Hereupon thou wilt ask, If that is so, how can he find fault with us, since there is no resisting his will? Nay, but who art thou, friend, to bandy words with God? Is the pot to ask the potter, Why hast thou fashioned me thus?⁸ Is not the potter free to do what he will with the clay, using the same lump to make two objects, one for noble and one for ignoble use? It may be that God has borne, long and patiently, with those who are the objects of his vengeance, fit only for destruction, meaning to give proof of that vengeance, and display his power at last;⁹ meaning also to display, in those who are the objects of his mercy, how rich is the glory he bestows, that glory for which he has destined them.¹⁰

We are the objects of his mercy; we, whom he has called, Jews and Gentiles alike. That is what he says in the book of Osee, Those who were no people of mine, I will call my people; she who was unpitied and unloved shall be loved and pitied.¹¹ In places where they used to be told, You are no people of mine, they will be called, now, sons of the living God.¹²

¹ St Paul only says that he would be prepared to sacrifice his own salvation conditionally (i.e. if God sanctioned, and were prepared to accept, such offers of substitution); not absolutely (since we are bound to desire our own salvation).

² 'Christ, who rules as God'; some commentators would translate, 'Blessed be God who is above all things, for ever', making this a distinct sentence; but they have not been able to suggest any plausible grounds for the intrusion of this irrelevant apostrophe, and the order of words in the Greek makes it almost impossible.

³ Gen. 25. 23. ⁴ Mal. 1. 2. ⁵ Ex. 33. 19.

⁶ 'I have made thee what thou art'; literally, 'I have raised thee up'. The phrase is variously interpreted as meaning 'brought thee into existence', 'raised thee to the throne of Egypt', or 'enabled thee to recover from the effects of the earlier plagues'. See Ex. 9. 16.

⁷ Eccl. 15-18: Some commentators have understood these verses as part of the objection made by the imaginary critic whom St Paul is answering; they are more often taken as part of St Paul's own assertion.

⁸ Is. 45. 9. ⁹ Meaning to give proof... at last; these words have sometimes been interpreted 'although he would have liked to give proof... there and then', but the Greek does not favour this rendering.

¹⁰ Eccl. 11-23: St Paul is speaking here, not of predestination to eternal life, but of that first grace, entirely gratuitous, which leads men to Christ.

¹¹ Os. 2. 23.

¹² Os. 1. 10.

17 And, where Israel is concerned, Isaiah cries out, The number of the sons of Israel may be like the sand of the sea, but it is a remnant that will be left; and the Lord is making up his reckoning and cutting it short in his justice; it is a short reckoning that he will make upon earth.¹ So Isaiah had said earlier on, If the Lord of Hosts had not left us a stock to breed from, we should have been like Sodom, we should have gone the way of Gomorrah.² What do we conclude, then? Why, that the Gentiles, who never aimed at justifying themselves, attained justification, the justification which comes of faith; whereas the Israelites aimed at a disposition which should justify them, and never reached it. Why was this? Because they hoped to derive their justification from observance, not from faith. They tripped on the stone which trips men's feet; so we read in scripture, Behold, I am setting down in Sion one who is a stone to trip men's feet, a boulder to catch them unawares; those who believe in him will not be disappointed.³

10 Brethren, they have all the good will of my heart, all my prayers to God, for their salvation. That they are jealous for God's honour, I can testify; but it is with imperfect understanding. They did not recognize God's way of justification, and so they tried to institute a way of their own, instead of submitting to his. Christ has superseded the law, bringing justification to anyone who will believe. The account which Moses gives of that justification which comes from the law, is that a man will find life in its commandments if he observes them.⁴ But the justification which comes from faith makes a different claim; Do not say, Who will scale heaven for us? (as if we had to bring Christ down to earth), or, Who will go down into the depth for us? (as if we had to bring

Christ back from the dead). No, says the scripture, the message is close to thy hand, it is on thy lips, it is in thy heart; meaning by that the message of faith, which we preach.⁵ Thou canst find salvation, if thou wilt use thy lips to confess that Jesus is the Lord, and thy heart to believe that God has raised him up from the dead. The heart has only to believe, if we are to be justified; the lips have only to make confession, if we are to be saved. That is what the scripture says, Anyone who believes in him will not be disappointed.⁶

There is no distinction made here between Jew and Gentile; all alike have one Lord, and he has enough and to spare for all those who call upon him. Every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.⁷ Only, how are they to call upon him until they have learned to believe in him? And how are they to believe in him, until they listen to him? And how can they listen, without a preacher to listen to? And how can there be preachers, unless preachers are sent on their errand? So we read in scripture, How welcome is the coming of those who tell of peace, who tell of good news.⁸ True, there are some who have not obeyed the call of the gospel; so Isaiah says, Lord, who has given us a faithful hearing?⁹ (See how faith comes from hearing; and hearing through Christ's word.¹⁰) But, tell me, did the news never come to them? Why, yes; the utterance fills every land, the message reaches the ends of the world.¹¹ And, tell me, was not Israel warned of it? Why, there is a saying that goes back to Moses, I will make them jealous of a nation that is no nation at all; I will put rivalry between them and a nation which has never learnt wisdom.¹² And Isaiah speaks out boldly, Those who never looked for me have found me; I have made myself known to those who never asked for word of me; and he says of Israel, I have stretched out my hands all day to a people

¹ *cp.* 27, 28: Is. 10. 22. The meaning of verse 28 is not clear, either in the Greek or in the Hebrew; it is usually interpreted as meaning that God will cut short *the time*, and exercise judgement swiftly on Israel; but it seems more in point, both in this passage and in Isaiah, to understand it as meaning that he will cut short the *number* of those Jews who are to be regarded, henceforth, as his people. ² Is. 1. 9.

³ Is. 8. 14, 28. 16. For 'will not be disappointed' the Hebrew has 'will not take flight'. ⁴ Lev. 18. 5. ⁵ *cp.* 6-8: Deut. 30. 12. In the Hebrew, the second question is 'Who shall cross the sea?' The sense of the passage is, in any case, that no heroic efforts are needed to find God's law; this St Paul here applies to the grace of the gospel, which Christ brought down from heaven (and back from the grave) to us, without any effort of our own to find it. ⁶ Is. 28. 16. ⁷ J1. 2. 32. ⁸ Is. 52. 7. ⁹ Is. 53. 1.

¹⁰ This verse has here been printed as a parenthesis, because the sense of verse 18 evidently follows closely on that of verse 16, 'True, they did not obey the call of the Gospel, but this does not mean that they did not hear it'. ¹¹ Ps. 18. 4. ¹² Deut. 32. 21.

that refuses obedience and cries out against me.¹

- 11** Tell me, then, has God disowned his people? That is not to be thought of. Why, I am an Israelite myself, descended from Abraham; Benjamin is my tribe. No, God has not disowned the people which, from the first, he recognized as his. Do you not remember what scripture tells us about Elias? The complaint, I mean, which he made before God about Israel: Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and overthrown thy altars; I am the only one left, and my life, too, is threatened. And what does the divine revelation tell him? There are seven thousand men I have kept true to myself, with knees that never bowed to Baal.² So it is in our time; a remnant has remained true; grace has chosen it. And if it is due to grace, then it is not due to observance of the law; if it were, grace would be no grace at all. What does it mean, then? Why, that Israel has missed its mark; only this chosen remnant has attained it, while the rest were blinded;³ so we read in scripture, God has numbed their senses, given them unseeing eyes and deaf ears, to this day.⁴ David, too, says, Let their feasting be turned into a trap, a snare, a spring to recoil upon them; let their eyes be dim, so that they cannot see, keep their backs bowed down continually.⁵
- Tell me, then, have they stumbled so as to fall altogether? God forbid; the result of their false step has been to bring the Gentiles salvation, and the result of that must be to rouse the Jews to emulate them. Why then, if their false step has enriched the world, if the Gentiles have been enriched by their default, what must we expect, when it is made good? (I am speaking now to you Gentiles.)⁶ As long as my apostolate is to the Gentiles, I mean to make much of my office, in the hope of stirring up my own flesh and blood to emulation, and saving some of them. If

the losing of them has meant a world reconciled to God, what can the winning of them mean, but life risen from the dead?⁷

When the first loaf is consecrated, the whole batch is consecrated with it; so, when the root is consecrated, the branches are consecrated too.⁸ The branches have been thinned out, and thou, a wild olive, hast been grafted in among them; and sharest, with them, the root and the richness of the true olive. That is no reason why thou shouldst boast thyself better than the branches; remember, in thy mood of boastfulness, that thou owest life to the root, not the root to thee. Branches were cut away, thou wilt tell me, so that I might be grafted in. True enough, but it was for want of faith that they were cut away, and it is only faith that keeps thee where thou art; thou hast no reason for pride, rather for fear; God was unforgiving with the branches that were native to the tree, what if he should find occasion to be unforgiving with thee too? There is graciousness, then, in God, and there is also severity. His severity is for those who have fallen away, his graciousness is for thee, only so long as thou dost continue in his grace; if not, thou too shalt be pruned away. Just so they too will be grafted in, if they do not continue in their unbelief; to graft them in afresh is not beyond God's power. Indeed, it was against nature when thou wast grafted on to the true olive's stock, thou, who wert native to the wild olive; it will be all the easier for him to graft these natural branches on to their own parent stock.

I must not fail, brethren, to make this revelation known to you; or else you might have too good a conceit of yourselves. Blindness has fallen upon a part of Israel, but only until the tale of the Gentile nations is complete; then the whole of Israel will find salvation, as we read in scripture. A deliverer shall come from Sion, to rid Jacob of his unfaithfulness; and this shall be the fulfilment of my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.⁹ In the

¹ *vv.* 20, 21: *Is.* 65: 1.

² *vv.* 3, 4: *III Kg.* 19: 10, 18.

³ 'Blinded'; the Greek word, here

and in verse 25 below, implies rather that they became callous, insensible.

⁴ *Is.* 6: 9; 29: 10.

⁵ *vv.* 9, 10: *Ps.* 68: 23.

⁶ The words here printed in brackets are usually taken as referring only to what follows; but the whole passage from verse 11 onwards seems to be addressed to the Gentile reader.

⁷ 'Life risen from the dead'; many commentators understand this as meaning that the return of the Jews to Christ will be the signal for the Second Coming. But if St Paul had had this in his mind he would have been more likely to say 'the resurrection of the dead' than to use this unwonted formula.

⁸ *Num.* 15: 20. The olive-tree here represents the Jewish people, and its 'root' is generally understood of the patriarchs.

⁹ *vv.* 26, 27: *Is.* 59: 20; 27: 9.

preaching of the gospel, God rejects them, to make room for you; but in his elective purpose he still welcomes them, for the sake of their fathers; God does not repent of the gifts he makes, or of the calls he issues. You were once rebels, until through their rebellion you obtained pardon; they are rebels now, obtaining pardon for you, only to be pardoned in their turn. Thus God has abandoned all men to their rebellion, only to include them all in his pardon.

How deep is the mine of God's wisdom, of his knowledge; how inscrutable are his judgements, how undiscoverable his ways! Who has ever understood the Lord's thoughts, or been his counsellor? Who ever was the first to give, and so earned his favours? All things find in him their origin, their impulse, the centre of their being; to him be glory throughout all ages, Amen.¹

12 And now, brethren, I appeal to you by God's mercies to offer up your bodies as a living sacrifice, consecrated to God and worthy of his acceptance; this is the worship due from you as rational creatures.² And you must not fall in with the manners of this world; there must be an inward change, a remaking of your minds, so that you can satisfy yourselves what is God's will, the good thing, the desirable thing, the perfect thing. Thus, in virtue of the grace that is given me, I warn every man who is of your company not to think highly of himself, beyond his just estimation, but to have a sober esteem of himself, according to the measure of faith which God has apportioned to each. Each of us has one body, with many different parts, and not all these parts have the same function; just so we, though many in number, form one body in Christ, and each acts as

the counterpart of another. The spiritual gifts we have differ, according to the special grace which has been assigned to each. If a man is a prophet, let him prophesy as far as the measure of his faith will let him.³ The administrator must be content with his administration, the teacher, with his work of teaching, the preacher, with his preaching.⁴ Each must perform his own task well; giving alms with generosity, exercising authority with anxious care, or doing works of mercy smilingly.

Your love must be a sincere love; you must hold what is evil in abomination, fix all your desire upon what is good. Be affectionate towards each other, as the love of brothers demands, eager to give one another precedence. I would see you unwearied in activity, aglow with the Spirit, waiting like slaves upon the Lord; buoyed up by hope, patient in affliction, persevering in prayer; providing generously for the needs of the saints, giving the stranger a loving welcome. Bestow a blessing on those who persecute you; a blessing, not a curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with the mourner. Live in harmony of mind, falling in with the opinions of common folk, instead of following conceited thoughts; never give yourselves airs of wisdom.⁵

Do not repay injury with injury; study your behaviour in the world's sight as well as in God's.⁶ Keep peace with all men, where it is possible, for your part. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved; allow retribution to run its course; so we read in scripture, Vengeance is for me, I will repay, says the Lord.⁷ Rather, feed thy enemy if he is hungry, give him drink if he is thirsty; by doing this, thou wilt heap coals of fire upon his head.⁸ Do not be disarmed by malice; disarm malice with kindness.⁹

¹ Is. 40. 13.

² Job 41. 2.

³ 'The centre of their being'; in the Greek, 'their goal'.

⁴ 'Your bodies', that is, 'yourselves'; but perhaps, for the benefit of the uncircumcised Gentiles, St Paul is specially careful to insist on the need of consecrating our bodily powers to God.

⁵ 'As far as the measure of his faith will let him'; this has commonly been rendered 'according to the rule of faith', but neither the Greek nor the Latin text justifies this interpretation. The sense is determined by verse 3 above.

⁶ 'The administrator'; the word here used is the technical term for a deacon, but the meaning of it here is probably more general.

⁷ 'Falling in with the opinions of common folk'; some would render 'being content with a humble position'; but it does not appear how the verb can have this meaning.

⁸ The words 'as well as in God's' are wanting in most Greek manuscripts.

⁹ Deut. 32. 35. For 'allow retribution to run its course' others would prefer to translate, 'make way before the anger' (of your opponent), or 'give space for your anger' (to simmer down).

¹⁰ Prov. 25. 21. St Augustine and other commentators tell us that the coals of fire are a metaphorical description of the shame and remorse which our enemy feels at our kind usage of him.

¹¹ If we avenge ourselves, we Christians are converted to the enemy's point of view, instead of converting him to ours.

13 Every soul must be submissive to its lawful superiors; authority comes from God only, and all authorities that hold sway are of his ordinance. Thus the man who opposes authority is a rebel against the ordinance of God, and rebels secure their own condemnation. A good conscience has no need to go in fear of the magistrate, as a bad conscience does. If thou wouldst be free from the fear of authority, do right, and thou shalt win its approval; the magistrate is God's minister, working for thy good. Only if thou dost wrong, needst thou be afraid; it is not for nothing that he bears the sword; he is God's minister still, to inflict punishment on the wrong-doer. Thou must needs, then, be submissive, not only for fear of punishment, but in conscience. It is for this same reason that you pay taxes; magistrates are in God's service, and must give all their time to it. Pay every man, then, his due; taxes, if it be taxes, customs, if it be customs; respect and honour, if it be respect and honour. Do not let anybody have a claim upon you, except the claim which binds us to love one another. The man who loves his neighbour has done all that the law demands.¹ (All the commandments, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and the rest, are resumed in this one saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.²) Love of our neighbour refrains from doing harm of any kind; that is why it fulfils all the demands of the law.

11 Meanwhile, make no mistake about the age we live in; already it is high time for us to awake out of our sleep; our salvation is

closer to us now than when we first learned to believe.³ The night is far on its course; day draws near. Let us abandon the ways of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Let us pass our time honourably, as by the light of day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in lust and wantonness, not in quarrels and rivalries. Rather, arm yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ; spend no more thought on nature and nature's appetites.

14 Find room among you for a man of over-delicate conscience, without arguing about his scruples.⁴ Another man can, in conscience, eat what he will; one who is scrupulous must be content with vegetable fare.⁵ Let not the first, over his meat, mock at him who does not eat it, or the second, while he abstains, pass judgement on him who eats it. God, after all, has found room for him. Who art thou, to pass judgement on the servant of another? Whether he keeps his feet or falls,⁶ concerns none but his master. And keep his feet he will; God is well able to give him a sure footing. One man makes a distinction between this day and that; another regards all days alike; let either rest fully content in his own opinion.⁷ He who observes the day, observes it in the Lord's honour. Just so, he who eats does so in the Lord's honour; he gives thanks to God for it; and he who abstains from eating abstains in the Lord's honour, and he too thanks God. None of us lives as his own master, and none of us dies as his own master. While we live, we live as the Lord's servants, when we die, we die as the Lord's servants; in life and in death, we belong to the Lord. That was why Christ died and lived again;

¹ 'Do not let anybody have a claim upon you', etc., this is usually explained as meaning that we are to be diligent in paying off our debts, except that debt of mutual love, which can never be paid off, but always urges. In view of what immediately follows, it seems likely St Paul also means, that we shall seldom have scruples of conscience over the obligations of human justice, if we live by the law of divine love. ² Ex. 20. 13-17; Lev. 19. 18. ³ The connexion of this passage with what goes before is only general; it is more closely related to what follows, viz. the anxiety of St Paul over the want of unity among Christians at Rome. ⁴ 'A man of over-delicate conscience'; literally, one who is 'weak in faith'. But the context of this whole chapter makes it clear that St Paul is using the word 'faith' in a special sense, corresponding to what we mean by 'conscience'. Accordingly, the word 'weak' must be interpreted in the sense which St Paul sometimes gives it, of 'scrupulous', 'easily scandalized', cf. II Cor. 11. 29.

⁵ The close connexion between this and the chapter which follows is proof that St Paul is still dealing with disputes between Jewish and Gentile converts, as such. It is clear, then, that the weaker brother who refuses to eat meat does so, not on any vegetarian principles (since the ordinary Jew had none), but either (i) because the meat put before him has not been killed in the Jewish fashion (cf. Ac. 15. 20), or (ii) because he is afraid that the meat put before him may have been offered in sacrifice to idols (cf. I Cor. 10. 25, and 8 throughout). ⁶ 'Falls'; that is, incurs condemnation, as in I Cor. 10. 12. ⁷ This evidently refers to the keeping of certain Jewish festivals and fasts, which were not enjoined upon Gentile Christians. 'Rest fully content in his own opinion'; the Greek may also mean, 'have a clear conviction in his own mind'.

he would be Lord both of the dead and of the living. And who art thou, to pass judgement on thy brother? Who art thou, to mock at thy brother? We shall all stand, one day, before the judgement-seat of Christ; (so we read in scripture, As I live, says the Lord, there is no knee but shall bend before me, no tongue but shall pay homage to God);¹ and so each of us will have to give an account of himself before God. Let us cease, then, to lay down rules for one another, and make this rule for ourselves instead, not to trip up or entangle a brother's conscience.

This is my assurance, this is what my conscience tells me in the name of our Lord Jesus, that there is nothing which is unclean in itself; it is only when a man believes a thing to be unclean that it becomes unclean for him.² And if thy brother's peace of mind is disturbed over food, it is because thou art neglecting to follow the rule of charity. Here is a soul for which Christ died; it is not for thee to bring it to perdition with the food thou eatest. We must not allow that which is a good thing for us to be brought into disrepute.³ The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating or drinking this or that; it means rightness of heart, finding our peace and our joy in the Holy Spirit. Such is the badge of Christ's service which wins acceptance with God, and the good opinion of our fellow men. Let our aim, then, be peace, and strengthening one another's faith. It is not for thee to destroy God's work for the sake of a mouthful of food. Nothing is unclean; yet it goes ill with the man who eats to the hurt of his own conscience. Thou dost well if thou refusest to eat meat, or to drink wine, or to do anything in which thy brother can find an occasion of sin, a cause for scandal or scruple.⁴ Thou hast a good conscience? Keep it a matter between thyself

and God; he is fortunate, who can make his own choice without self-questioning. He who hesitates, and eats none the less, is self-condemned; he acts in bad conscience, and wherever there is bad conscience, there is sin.⁵

15 No, we who are bold in our confidence ought to bear with the scruples of those who are timorous; not to insist on having our own way. Each of us ought to give way to his neighbour, where it serves a good purpose by building up his faith. Christ, after all, would not have everything his own way; Was it not uttered against thee, says the scripture, the reproach I bore?⁶ (See how all the words written long ago were written for our instruction; we were to derive hope from that message of endurance and courage which the scriptures bring us.) May God, the author of all endurance and all encouragement, enable you to be all of one mind according to the mind of Christ Jesus, so that you may all have but one heart and one mouth, to glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. You must befriend one another, as Christ has befriended you, for God's honour. I would remind those who are circumcised, that Christ came to relieve their needs; God's fidelity demanded it; he must make good his promises to our fathers. And I would remind the Gentiles to praise God for his mercy. So we read in scripture, I will give thanks to thee for this, and sing of thy praise, in the midst of the Gentiles;⁷ and again it says, You too, Gentiles, rejoice with his own people;⁸ and again, Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the nations of the world do him honour;⁹ and once more Isaiah says, A root shall spring from Jesse, one who shall rise up to rule the Gentiles; the Gentiles, in him, shall find hope.¹⁰

¹ Is. 45. 23. ² Verses 14 and following: St Paul here forbids the Gentile Christians to exercise any kind of pressure upon their Jewish brethren, over food, etc., which would cause them to act against their own conscience out of human respect. It is not clear that he meant the Gentiles to abstain from food which they thought lawful, for fear of scandalizing Jewish Christians who might be watching.

³ That which is a good thing for us; namely, freedom from scruple in matters of food and drink. This is St Anselm's interpretation; others have understood the words 'our good thing' as referring to the Christian faith generally.

⁴ This is more likely to be a general assertion of the importance of avoiding scandal (cf. I Cor. 8. 13) than a direction given to the Roman Christians in these special circumstances.

⁵ 'Wherever there is bad conscience, there is sin'; literally, 'Whatever does not proceed from faith, is sin'. This has been understood by many writers from St Augustine onwards as meaning that all the actions of the heathen have the nature of sin. But such an interpretation is quite wide of the present context; it is plain that here, as in the rest of the chapter, St Paul uses the word 'faith' where we should use the word 'conscience'.

⁶ Ps. 68. 9.

⁷ Ps. 17. 49.

⁸ Deut. 32. 43.

⁹ Ps. 116. 1.

¹⁰ Is. 11. 10.

- 13 May God, the author of our hope, fill you with all joy and peace in your believing; so that you may have hope in abundance, through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not that I have any doubt of you, my brethren; I know that you are full of good will, knowing all you need to know, so that you can give advice to one another if need be; and yet I have written to you, here and there, somewhat freely, by way of refreshing your memory. So much I owe to the grace which God has given me, in making me a priest of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles, with God's gospel for my priestly charge, to make the Gentiles an offering worthy of acceptance, consecrated by the Holy Spirit. I have, then, through Christ Jesus, some reason for confidence in God's sight. It is not for me to give you any account of what Christ has done through agents other than myself to secure the submission of the Gentiles, by word and action,¹ in virtue of wonders and signs, done in the power of the Holy Spirit. My own work has been to complete the preaching of Christ's gospel, in a wide sweep from Jerusalem as far as Illyricum.² It has been a point of honour with me to preach the gospel thus, never in places where Christ's name was already known; I would not build on the foundation another man had laid, but follow the rule of scripture, He shall be seen by those who had had no tidings of him, he shall be made known to those who had never heard of him.³
- 22 This was the chief reason which prevented me from visiting you; it has kept me back until now. But now I can find no further scope in these countries, and I have been eager, these many years past, to find my way to you; as soon, then, as I can set out on my journey to Spain, I hope to see you in passing; and you shall put me on my way, when you have done something to gratify this longing of mine. As I write,

I am making a journey to Jerusalem, with an errand of relief to the saints there. You must know that Macedonia and Achaia have thought fit to give those saints at Jerusalem who are in need some share of their wealth; they have thought fit to do it, I say, and indeed, they are in their debt. The Gentiles, if they have been allowed to share their spiritual gifts, are bound to contribute to their temporal needs in return. When that is done, and I have seen this revenue safely in their hands, you shall be a stage on my journey to Spain; and I am well assured that when I visit you, I shall be able to visit you in the fulness of Christ's blessing. Only, brethren, I entreat you by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Holy Spirit, to give me the help of your prayers to God on my behalf. Pray that I may be kept safe from those who reject the faith in Judaea, and that my mission to Jerusalem may be well received by the saints there; so that I may reach you, God willing, glad at heart, and make holiday with you. May God, the author of peace, be with you all, Amen.

16 I commend our sister Phoebe to you; she has devoted her services to the church at Cenchræ. Make her welcome in the Lord as saints should, and help her in any business where she needs your help; she has been a good friend to many, myself among them. My greetings to Prisca and Aquila, who have worked at my side in the service of Christ Jesus,⁴ and put their heads on the block to save my life; not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles have reason to be grateful to them. My greetings, also, to the church in their household; to my dear Epaenetus, the first offering Asia made to Christ, and to Mary, who has spent so much labour on you. My greetings to Andronicus and Junias, kinsmen and fellow prisoners of

¹ 'Christ has done through agents other than myself'; literally, 'Christ has not done through me'. The verse is usually interpreted as if St Paul meant, 'I will not tell you about anything except what Christ has done through me'; but this is not what St Paul says. He says that it would be impertinent for him to tell the Romans what God has done in the way of reconciling the Gentiles through means other than his own. The miracles, therefore, referred to in the next verse were not performed by St Paul, but by other Christian missionaries.

² St Paul, in his humility, represents his own part in the work of the Church as 'filling up' the gospel, that is, filling in the gaps left by other missionaries. This has led him to take a wide sweep, as far as Illyricum, avoiding Asia and Bithynia (Ac. 16. 6, 7), and other countries already evangelized (cf. I Pet. 1. 1); his principle has been not to build on the foundations laid by other apostles, and that is why he has not visited Rome yet. ³ Is. 52. 15. ⁴ Cf. Ac. 18. 2. Prisca and Aquila, we are there told, had left Rome because of Claudius' edict expelling the Jews; and it seems probable that the other persons to whom St Paul sends his greeting were also, for the most part Jews who had met St Paul in Asia or Greece, upon the same occasion.

mine, who have won repute among the apostles that were in Christ's service before me.¹ My greetings to Amplias, whom I love so well in the Lord; to Urbanus, who helped our work in Christ's cause, and to my dear Stachys; to Apelles, a man tried in Christ's service; and those of Aristobulus' household; to my kinsman Herodion, and to such of Narcissus' household as belong to the Lord. My greetings to Tryphæna and Tryphosa, who have worked for the Lord so well; and dear Persis, too; she has been long in the Lord's service. My greetings to Rufus, a chosen servant of the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me;² to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them; to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympias, and all the saints who are of their company. Greet one another with the kiss of saints; all the churches of Christ send you their greeting.

Brethren, I entreat you to keep a watch on those who are causing dissension and doing hurt to consciences, without regard to the teaching which has been given you; avoid their company. Such men are no servants of Christ our Lord; their own hungry bellies are their masters; but guileless hearts are deceived by their flattering

talk and their pious greetings. You are renowned all over the world for your loyalty to the gospel, and I am proud of you; but I would wish to see you circumspect where there is a good end to be served, innocent only of harmful intent. So God, who is the author of peace, will crush Satan³ under your feet before long. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Timothy, who works at my side, sends you his greeting; so do my kinsmen, Lucius and Jason and Sosipater. (I, Tertius, who have committed this letter to paper, greet you in the name of the Lord.) Greetings to you from my host, Caius, and from all the church;⁴ from Erastus, treasurer of the city, and your brother Quartus. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.

There is one who is able to set your feet firmly in the path of that gospel which I preach, when I herald Jesus Christ; a gospel which reveals the mystery, hidden from us through countless ages, but now made plain, through what the prophets have written; now published, at the eternal God's command, to all the nations, so as to win the homage of their faith. To him, to God who alone is wise, glory be given from age to age, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

¹ Commentators are not agreed whether the word 'kinsmen' means relatives of St Paul, or merely fellow Jews, as in 9. 3 above. But the former explanation seems more likely, if only because several others among the persons addressed must have been of Jewish race; Aquila certainly, and Mary presumably. See last note.

² This Rufus may be the person mentioned in Mk. 15. 21.

³ In mentioning Satan, St Paul probably thinks of him as typified by those *adversaries* who were disturbing the peace of the Roman Church.

⁴ 'And from all the church'; this, according to most manuscripts, should read, 'who is the host, too, of the whole church'.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

PAUL, whom the will of God has called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Sosthenes, who is their brother, send greeting to the church of God at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be holy; with all those who invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in every dependency of theirs, and so of ours.¹ Grace and peace be yours from God, who is our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God continually in your name for that grace of God which has been bestowed upon you in Jesus Christ; that you have become rich, through him, in every way, in eloquence and in knowledge of every sort; so fully has the message of Christ established itself among you. And now there is no gift in which you are still lacking; you have only to look forward to the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will strengthen your resolution to the last, so that no charge will lie against you on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. The God, who has called you into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful to his promise.

Only I entreat you, brethren, as you love the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, use, all of you, the same language. There must be no divisions among you; you must be restored to unity of mind and purpose. The account I have of you, my brethren, from Chloe's household, is that there are dissensions among you; each of you, I mean, has a cry of his own, I am for Paul, I am for Apollo, I am for Cephas, I am for Christ.

What, has Christ been divided up? Was it

Paul that was crucified for you? Was it in Paul's name that you were baptized? Thank God I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius; so that no one can say it was in my name you were baptized. (Yes, and I did baptize the household of Stephanas; I do not know that I baptized anyone else.)

Christ did not send me to baptize; he sent me to preach the gospel; not with an orator's cleverness, for so the cross of Christ might be robbed of its force.² To those who court their own ruin, the message of the cross is but folly; to us, who are on the way to salvation, it is the evidence of God's power. So we read in scripture, I will confound the wisdom of wise men, disappoint the calculations of the prudent.³ What has become of the wise men, the scribes, the philosophers of this age we live in? Must we not say that God has turned our worldly wisdom to folly? When God shewed us his wisdom, the world, with all its wisdom, could not find its way to God;⁴ and now God would use a foolish thing, our preaching, to save those who will believe in it. Here are the Jews asking for signs and wonders, here are the Greeks intent on their philosophy; but what we preach is Christ crucified; to the Jews, a discouragement, to the Gentiles, mere folly; but to us who have been called, Jew and Gentile alike, Christ the power of God, Christ the wisdom of God. So much wiser than men is God's foolishness; so much stronger than men is God's weakness. Consider, brethren, the circumstances of your own calling; not many of you are

¹ The sense appears to be, that St Paul sends greeting to the Christians, not only in Corinth itself, but in the other towns of the province of Achaia (cf. II Cor. 1. 1), which were politically dependent on it. These, it appears, had derived their knowledge of the gospel from it, and so ultimately from the preaching of St Paul. That he associates Sosthenes with himself in this greeting, makes it probable that we should identify him with the person mentioned in Ac. 18. 17. ² Verses 17 and following: It is probable that St Paul is thinking, here, of the comparatively small success which his preaching had in Athens, just before he went to Corinth (Ac. 17). It is possible, also, that some of the Corinthians had contrasted his preaching unfavourably with the eloquence of Apollo (cf. Ac. 18. 24-28).

³ Is. 29. 14. ⁴ 'When God shewed us his wisdom', etc. Others understand this sentence as meaning, 'God's wisdom had decreed that the world, with all its wisdom, should not find its way to God'.

wise, in the world's fashion, not many
 27 powerful, not many well born. No, God
 has chosen what the world holds foolish,
 so as to abash the wise, God has chosen
 what the world holds weak, so as to abash
 28 the strong.¹ God has chosen what the
 world holds base and contemptible, nay,
 has chosen what is nothing, so as to bring
 29 to nothing what is now in being; no human
 creature was to have any ground for boast-
 30 ing, in the presence of God. It is from him
 that you take your origin, through Christ
 Jesus, whom God gave us to be all our
 wisdom, our justification, our sanctifica-
 31 tion, and our atonement; so that the scrip-
 ture might be fulfilled, If anyone boasts,
 let him make his boast in the Lord.²

2 So it was, brethren, that when I came
 to you and preached Christ's message
 to you, I did so without any high preten-
 2 sions to eloquence, or to philosophy. I had
 no thought of bringing you any other
 knowledge than that of Jesus Christ, and
 3 of him as crucified. It was with distrust
 of myself, full of anxious fear, that I ap-
 4 proached you; ³ my preaching, my message
 depended on no persuasive language, de-
 vised by human wisdom, but rather on the
 5 proof I gave you of spiritual power; God's
 power, not man's wisdom, was to be the
 foundation of your faith.

6 There is, to be sure, a wisdom which we
 make known among those who are fully
 grounded; but it is not the wisdom of this
 world, or of this world's rulers, whose
 7 power is to be abrogated. What we make
 known is the wisdom of God, his secret,
 kept hidden till now; so, before the ages,
 God had decreed, reserving glory for us.
 8 (None of the rulers of this world could read
 his secret, or they would not have crucified
 9 him to whom all glory belongs.) So we
 read of, Things no eye has seen, no ear has
 heard, no human heart conceived, the wel-
 come God has prepared for those who love
 10 him.⁴ To us, then, God has made a revela-
 tion of it through his Spirit; there is no

depth in God's nature so deep that the
 Spirit cannot find it out. Who else can
 11 know a man's thoughts, except the man's
 own spirit that is within him? So no one
 else can know God's thoughts, but the
 Spirit of God. And what we have received
 12 is no spirit of worldly wisdom; it is the
 Spirit that comes from God, to make us
 understand God's gifts to us; gifts which
 13 we make known, not in such words as
 human wisdom teaches, but in words
 taught us by the Spirit, matching what is
 14 spiritual with what is spiritual.⁵ Mere man
 with his natural gifts cannot take in the
 thoughts of God's Spirit; they seem mere
 folly to him, and he cannot grasp them,
 because they demand a scrutiny which is
 15 spiritual. Whereas the man who has spir-
 itual gifts can scrutinize everything, with-
 out being subject, himself, to any other
 man's scrutiny.⁶ Who has entered into
 16 the mind of the Lord, so as to be able
 to instruct him? And Christ's mind is
 ours.⁷

3 And when I preached to you, I had to
 approach you as men with natural, not
 with spiritual thoughts. You were little
 children in Christ's nursery, and I gave
 2 you milk, not meat; you were not strong
 enough for it. You are not strong enough
 for it even now; nature still lives in you.
 Do not these rivalries, these dissensions
 3 among you shew that nature is still alive,
 that you are guided by human standards?
 When one of you says, I am for Paul, and
 4 another, I am for Apollo, are not these
 human thoughts? Why, what is Apollo,
 what is Paul? Only the ministers of the
 5 God in whom your faith rests, who have
 brought that faith to each of you in the
 measure God granted.⁸ It was for me to
 6 plant the seed, for Apollo to water it, but
 it was God who gave the increase. And if
 7 so, the man who plants, the man who
 waters, count for nothing; God is every-
 thing, since it is he who gives the increase.
 This man plants, that man waters; it is all
 8

¹ 'What the world holds foolish', etc.; literally, 'the foolish things of the world', etc.

² Jer. 9. 23.

³ 'Distrust of myself'; some would understand this word rather of physical infirmity.

⁴ The words

St Paul uses here seem to be a reminiscence of Is. 64. 4.

⁵ 'Matching what is spiritual with what is spiritual'.

⁶ This

does not mean that the 'spiritual man' need pay no attention to human criticisms of his conduct, but that the wisdom communicated to him is not to be judged by the world's standards.

⁷ Is. 40. 13.

It will be noticed how clearly, in using this quotation, St Paul assumes the divinity of Christ.

⁸ This

is the sense of the Latin; the Greek has, 'Only serving-men, who have brought you faith, brought it to each of you in the measure God granted'.

one. And yet either will receive his own wages, in proportion to his own work. You are a field of God's tilling, a structure of God's design; and we are only his assistants.

10 With what grace God has bestowed on me, I have laid a foundation as a careful architect should; it is left for someone else to build upon it. Only, whoever builds on it must be careful how he builds. The foundation which has been laid is the only one which anybody can lay; I mean Jesus Christ. But on this foundation different men will build in gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, or straw, and each man's workmanship will be plainly seen. It is the day of the Lord that will disclose it, since that day is to reveal itself in fire, and fire will test the quality of each man's workmanship. He will receive a reward, if the building he has added on stands firm; if it is burnt up, he will be the loser; and yet he himself will be saved, though only as men are saved by passing through fire.¹

16 Do you not understand that you are God's temple, and that God's Spirit has his dwelling in you? If anybody desecrates the temple of God, God will bring him to ruin. It is a holy thing, this temple of God which is nothing other than yourselves.²

18 You must not deceive yourselves, any of you, about this. If any of you thinks he is wise, after the fashion of his fellow men, he must turn himself into a fool, so as to be truly wise. This world's wisdom, with God, is but folly. So we read in scripture, I will entrap the wise with their own cunning.³

And again, The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, and how empty they are.⁴ Nobody, therefore, should repose his confidence in men. Everything is for you, whether it be Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or the present, or the future; it is all for you,⁵ and you for Christ, and Christ for God.

4 That is how we ought to be regarded, as Christ's servants, and stewards of God's mysteries. And this is what we look for in choosing a steward; we must find one who is trustworthy. Yet for myself, I make little account of your scrutiny, or of any human audit-day; I am not even at pains to scrutinize my own conduct. My conscience does not, in fact, reproach me; but that is not where my justification lies; it is the Lord's scrutiny I must undergo. You do ill, therefore, to pass judgement prematurely, before the Lord's coming; he will bring to light what is hidden in darkness, and reveal the secrets of men's hearts; then each of us will receive his due award from God.

All this, brethren, I have applied to myself and to Apollo, but it is meant for you. The lesson you must learn from our example is, not to go beyond what is laid down for you, one man slighting another out of partiality for someone else.⁶ After all, friend, who is it that gives thee this pre-eminence? What powers hast thou, that did not come to thee by gift? And if they came to thee by gift, why dost thou boast of them, as if there were no gift in question?⁷

¹ *et.* 10-15: In its immediate reference, this passage seems to imply that we cannot decide yet how much good the influence of any Christian teacher (e.g. Apollo) has done; it is only at the last day that such things will be made known to us. (Cf. 4. 5 below.) But it has always been understood as having a wider application; each one of us is building upon the foundation of Christian faith which has been laid in him, and the merits or demerits of his building will be made known only at his judgement. At the same time, we are to recognize that many whose actions in this world have had little value, will themselves escape condemnation, though only by passing through the fires of Purgatory. ² *et.* 16, 17: Here St Paul, though keeping to the same metaphor, turns to a different subject: the position of those who destroy the unity of the Church by schism. Thus he returns to his main theme, the discussions among the Christians at Corinth. ³ Job 5. 13. ⁴ Ps. 93. 11. ⁵ 'Everything is for you'; that is, you must not say, 'I am for Paul', and 'I am for Apollo', and 'I am for Cephas'; Paul and Apollo and Cephas, like all God's gifts, exist for you.

⁶ St Paul apparently means that all he has been saying (about the account which Christian teachers will have to give of themselves; it is intended as a warning to the heads of the rival factions in Corinth. Out of charity, he does not mention these by name, but uses his own name and that of Apollo to illustrate what he has been saying. ⁷ Not to go beyond what is laid down for you' must have been a proverbial expression; the Corinthians should be content with the general outline of Christian truth which has been handed on to them, instead of quarrelling over rival interpretations of it. ⁸ St Chrysostom thinks that this verse is addressed, not to the Corinthians generally, but to the teachers who were creating divisions in the Church. If this is the true interpretation, the second part of the verse is perhaps meant to remind them, not only that all spiritual gifts come from God, but that the functions which they exercise were conferred on them by St Paul himself (cf. verses 18 and 19 below).

Well, you are already fully content; already you have grown rich; already you have come into your kingdom, without waiting for help from us. Would that you had come into your kingdom indeed; then we should be sharing it with you.¹ As it is, it seems as if God had destined us, his apostles, to be in the lowest place of all, like men under sentence of death; such a spectacle do we present to the whole creation, men and angels alike. We are fools for Christ's sake, you are so wise; we are so helpless, you so stout of heart; you are held in honour, while we are despised. Still, as I write, we go hungry and thirsty and naked; we are mishandled, we have no home to settle in, we are hard put to it, working with our own hands. Men revile us, and we answer with a blessing, persecute us, and we make the best of it, speak ill of us, and we fall to entreaty. We are still the world's refuse; everybody thinks himself well rid of us.² I am not writing this to shame you; you are my dearly loved children, and I would bring you to a better mind. Yes, you may have ten thousand schoolmasters in Christ, but not more than one father; it was I that begot you in Jesus Christ, when I preached the gospel to you. Follow my example, then, I entreat you, as I follow Christ's.³

That is why I have sent Timothy to you, a faithful and dearly loved son of mine in the Lord; he will remind you of the path I tread in Christ Jesus, the lessons I give to all churches alike. Some of you have grown contemptuous, thinking that I would never come to visit you. But I shall be coming to see you soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will test, not the fine words of those who hold me in contempt, but the powers they can shew.⁴ It is power

that builds up the kingdom of God, not words. Choose, then; am I to come to you rod in hand, or lovingly, in a spirit of forbearance?

5 Why, there are reports of incontinence among you, and such incontinence as is not practised even among the heathen; a man taking to himself his father's wife. And you, it seems, have been contumacious over it, instead of deploring it, and expelling the man who has been guilty of such a deed from your company. For myself, though I am not with you in person, I am with you in spirit; and, so present with you, I have already passed sentence on the man who has acted thus. Call an assembly, at which I will be present in spirit, with all the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, hand over the person named to Satan, for the overthrow of his corrupt nature, so that his spirit may find salvation in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵ This good conceit of yourselves is ill grounded. Have you never been told that a little leaven is enough to leaven the whole batch? Rid yourselves of the leaven which remains over, so that you may be a new mixture, still uncontaminated as you are. Has not Christ been sacrificed for us, our paschal victim?⁶ Let us keep the feast, then, not with the leaven of yesterday, that was all vice and mischief, but with unleavened bread, with purity and honesty of intent.

In the letter I wrote to you, I told you to avoid the company of fornicators; not meaning everyone in the world around you who is debauched, or a miser, or an extortioner, or an idolater; to do that, you would have to cut yourselves off from the world

¹ It has generally been held that St Paul here speaks in irony; but it must be confessed that the bearing of this whole passage on the context is somewhat obscure. He may be only contrasting his own sufferings with the privileges which the Corinthians enjoy, by way of reinforcing his appeal to their loyalty.

² 'Thinks himself well rid of us'; the Greek word used here may mean simply, 'offscourings', or may be an allusion to the heathen practice of sacrificing some cheap life, in the hope of averting ill fortune.

³ The words 'as I follow Christ's' are not found in the Greek, or in the best Latin text. ⁴ The powers here referred to are understood by St Chrysostom of miraculous powers; others think that pastoral gifts in general are alluded to.

⁵ *vv.* 3-5: Either St Paul directs the Corinthians to meet, as if in his presence, and condemn the delinquent; or he has already passed sentence, as if in the presence of the Corinthian assembly, and he is only calling upon them to give the sentence its effect. In either case, the authority of the Apostle is strongly emphasized. The punishment inflicted is evidently that of excommunication; and some commentators think that the effect of this was to be physical harm (such as disease) inflicted by Satan on the offender. But this is not certain; St Paul alludes to the destruction or overthrow, not of the body (*corpus*), but of the flesh (*caro*), by which he commonly means the natural (as opposed to the spiritual) principle in man.

⁶ Ex. 12. 15; during the days of unleavened bread, the Jews were not allowed to have any leaven at all in their houses. It is probable that St Paul wrote his letter, or expected it to be received, about Easterday (cf. 16. 8 below).

11 altogether. No, my letter meant that if anyone who is counted among the brethren is debauched, or a miser, or an idolater, or bitter of speech, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, you must avoid his company; you must not even sit at table with him. Why should I claim jurisdiction over those who are without? No, it is for you to pass judgement within your own number, leaving God to judge those who are without. Banish, then, the offender from your company.

6 Are you prepared to go to law before a profane court, when one of you has a quarrel with another, instead of bringing it before the saints? You know well enough that it is the saints who will pass judgement on the world; and if a world is to abide your judgement, are you unfit to take cognizance of trifling matters? You have been told that we shall sit in judgement on angels; how much more, then, over the things of common life? You would do better to appoint the most insignificant of your own number as judges, when you have these common quarrels to decide.¹ That I say to humble you. What, have you really not a single man among you wise enough to decide a claim brought by his own brother? Must two brethren go to law over it, and before a profane court? And indeed, it is a defect in you at the best of times, that you should have quarrels among you at all. How is it that you do not prefer to put up with wrong, prefer to suffer loss? Instead of that you commit wrong, you inflict loss, and at a brother's expense. Yet you know well enough that wrong-doers will not inherit God's kingdom. Make no mistake about it; it is not the debauched, the idolaters, the adul-

terous, it is not the effeminate, the sinners against nature, the dishonest, the misers, the drunkards, the bitter of speech, the extortioners that will inherit the kingdom of God. That is what some of you once were; but now you have been washed clean, now you have been sanctified, now you have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, by the Spirit of the God we serve.

I am free to do what I will; yes, but not everything can be done without harm. I am free to do what I will, but I must not abdicate my own liberty.² Food is meant for our animal nature, and our animal nature claims its food; true enough, but then, God will bring both one and the other to an end. But your bodies are not meant for debauchery, they are meant for the Lord, and the Lord claims your bodies.³ And God, just as he has raised our Lord from the dead, by his great power will raise us up too. Have you never been told that your bodies belong to the body of Christ? And am I to take what belongs to Christ and make it one with a harlot? God forbid. Or did you never hear that the man who unites himself to a harlot becomes one body with her? The two, we are told, will become one flesh.⁴ Whereas the man who unites himself to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Keep clear, then, of debauchery. Any other sin a man commits, leaves the body untouched, but the fornicator is committing a crime against his own body.⁵ Surely you know that your bodies are the shrines of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in you. And he is God's gift to you, so that you are no longer your own masters. A great price was paid to ransom you; glorify God by making your bodies the shrines of his presence.⁶

¹ 'You would do better', etc.; some commentators translate, 'You are appointing as your judges men who have no position at all in the Church', that is, the heathen.

² 'I am free to do what I will'; this phrase is repeated below (10. 23), and looks as if it were a catch-word, perhaps a quotation from St Paul's own lips, by which the Gentiles reminded themselves of their freedom from the ceremonial obligations of the Jewish law. There seems to have been reason to fear that some of the Corinthians were in danger of holding themselves dispensed from its moral obligations as well. The apostles in Ac. 15. 29 were apparently guarding against a similar misconception when they wrote to the Christians of Syria and Cilicia. 'Abdicate my own liberty'; that is, become enslaved to vicious habits.

³ It seems unlikely that there is any reference here to the sin of gluttony. St Paul is citing the prohibition of certain foods by the Mosaic law as an instance of those ceremonial obligations which are morally indifferent, and therefore not binding upon Gentile converts of the Church. Such regulations, he says, refer only to the temporal order of things, and have no significance for eternity; with the moral law it is otherwise.

⁴ Gen. 2. 24.

⁵ 'Leaves the body untouched'; literally, 'is outside the body'. Evidently other sins, that of gluttony, for example, are concerned with the use of our bodily powers, but they do not strike directly at the sanctity of the body, as fornication does.

⁶ 'Glorify God'; etc.; in the Greek, this sentence reads 'Glorify God in your bodies'. The Latin rendering, 'carry God about in your bodies', is probably due to an error in the text.

7 As for the questions raised in your letter; a man does well to abstain from all commerce with women. But, to avoid the danger of fornication, let every man keep his own wife, and every woman her own husband. Let every man give his wife what is her due, and every woman do the same by her husband; he, not she, claims the right over her body, as she, not he, claims the right over his. Do not starve one another, unless perhaps you do so for a time, by mutual consent, to have more freedom for prayer; come together again, or Satan will tempt you, weak as you are. I say this by way of concession; I am not imposing a rule on you. I wish you were all in the same state as myself; but each of us has his own endowment from God, one to live in this way, another in that. To the unmarried, and to the widows, I would say that they will do well to remain in the same state as myself, but if they have not the gift of continence, let them marry; better to marry than to feel the heat of passion. For those who have married already, the precept holds which is the Lord's precept, not mine; the wife is not to leave her husband,¹ (if she has left him, she must either remain unmarried, or go back to her own husband again), and the husband is not to put away his wife.

12 To those others, I give my own instructions, not the Lord's. If any of the brethren has a wife, not a believer, who is well content to live with him, there is no reason why he should put her away, nor is there any reason for a woman to part with her husband, not a believer, if he is content to live with her. The unbelieving husband has shared in his wife's consecration, and the unbelieving wife has shared in the consecration of one who is a brother. Were it otherwise, their offspring would be born under a stain, whereas in fact it is holy.²

On the other hand, if the unbelieving partner is for separating, let them separate; in such a case, the brother or the sister is under no compulsion. It is in a spirit of peace that God's call has come to us.³ There is no knowing whether thou, the wife, wilt save thy husband, whether thou, the husband, wilt save thy wife.⁴ No, the part which God has assigned, the vocation which God has bestowed, is to be the rule in each case. That is the direction which I am giving all through the churches. If a man is already circumcised when he is called, he is not to disguise it; if he is uncircumcised, he is not to undergo circumcision. There is no virtue either in circumcision or in the want of it; it is keeping the commandments of God that signifies. Everyone has his own vocation, in which he has been called; let him keep to it. Hast thou been called as a slave? Do not let it trouble thee; and if thou hast the means to become free, make all the more use of thy opportunity.⁵ If a slave is called to enter Christ's service, he is Christ's freedman; just as the free man, when he is called, becomes the slave of Christ.⁶ A price was paid to redeem you; do not enslave yourselves to human masters. Each of you is to remain, brethren, in the condition in which he was called.

About virgins, I have no command from the Lord; but I give you my opinion, as one who is, under the Lord's mercy, a true counsellor. This, then, I hold to be the best counsel in such times of stress, that this is the best condition for man to be in.⁷ Art thou yoked to a wife? Then, do not go about to free thyself. Art thou free of wedlock? Then do not go about to find a wife. Not that thou dost commit sin if thou marriest; nor, if she marries, has the virgin committed sin. It is only that those who do so will meet with outward distress. But

¹ Mt. 5. 32; 19. 9; Mk. 10. 11; Lk. 16. 18.

² The baptism of wife or husband is here conceived as doing away with whatever defilement a heathen marriage brings with it. It is not to be understood that either the heathen partner or the children receive sanctifying grace as the result of the union. ³ 'In a spirit of peace'; so that the Christian partner is not bound to live in the restless atmosphere of a divided household.

⁴ Commentators are not agreed, whether St Paul means that the Christian partner is free to go away, as having little chance of winning the other's conversion, or that the Christian partner is justified in going on as before, as having some hope of winning the other's conversion. ⁵ 'All the more use of thy opportunity'; that is, according to some, the opportunity of gaining freedom. Others understand it of the opportunity to shew patience in a servile condition, although the opportunity of gaining freedom is present; this view perhaps fits in better with the preceding verse, and with the general context.

⁶ This direction is probably meant in the general sense, that we should think of Christ's service as having a higher claim on us than any human obligation. ⁷ 'This is the best condition'; that is, virginity. Others have thought the phrase means 'Your present condition is the best' (whichever it is).

29 I leave you your freedom.¹ Only, brethren, I would say this; the time is drawing to an end; nothing remains, but for those who have wives to behave as though they had none; those who weep must forget their tears, and those who rejoice their rejoicing, and those who buy must renounce possession; and those who take advantage of what the world offers must not take full advantage of it; the fashion of this world is soon to pass away. And I would have you free from concern. He who is unmarried is concerned with God's claim, asking how he is to please God; whereas the married man is concerned with the world's claim, asking how he is to please his wife; and thus he is at issue with himself. So a woman who is free of wedlock, or a virgin, is concerned with the Lord's claim, intent on holiness, bodily and spiritual; whereas the married woman is concerned with the world's claim, asking how she is to please her husband.

35 I am thinking of your own interest when I say this. It is not that I would hold you in a leash; I am thinking of what is suitable for you, and how you may best attend on the Lord without distraction. And if anyone considers that he is behaving unsuitably towards the girl who is in his charge, on the ground that she is now past her prime, and there is no way of avoiding it, why, let him please himself; there is nothing sinful in it; let her marry.² Whereas, if a man remains fixed in his resolution, and makes up his mind to keep the girl who is in his charge unwed, although there is no necessity for it, and he is free to choose for himself, such a man is well advised.

Thus, a man is well advised to give his ward in marriage, and still better advised not to give her in marriage. As for a wife, she is yoked to her husband as long as he lives; if her husband is dead, she is free to marry anyone she will, so long as she marries in the Lord. But more blessed is she, if she remains as she is, in my judgement; and I, too, claim to have the Spirit of God.

8 And now about meat that has been used in idolatrous worship. We all know, to be sure, what is the truth about it: but knowledge only breeds self-conceit, it is charity that binds the building together. If anybody claims to have superior knowledge, it means that he has not yet attained the knowledge which is true knowledge; it is only when a man loves God that God acknowledges him. About meat, then, used in idolatrous worship, we can be sure of this, that a false god has no existence in the order of things; there is one God, and there can be no other. Whatever gods may be spoken of as existing in heaven or on earth (and there are many such gods, many such lords), for us there is only one God, the Father who is the origin of all things, and the end of our being; only one Lord, Jesus Christ, the creator of all things, who is our way to him.³ But it is not everybody who has this knowledge;⁴ there are those who still think of such meat, while they eat it, as something belonging to idolatrous worship, with the thought of the false god in their minds; their conscience is not easy, and so incurs guilt. And it is not what we eat that gives us our standing in God's sight; we

¹ 'I leave you your freedom'; literally, 'I spare you'. The idea is probably that the Corinthians are to be ridden with a light rein, as in II Cor. 1. 23; 13. 2. Others think St Paul means, 'I omit any further discussion of this point, to spare your feelings'; but it is hardly a probable rendering. ² *cf.* 36 and following: The man who has the virgin in his charge is generally understood to be her father or guardian. Some, however, have suggested that the words refer to an affianced (but not yet married) husband, like St Joseph in Mt. 1. 18. The Greek text in verse 36, which reads 'Let them marry', gives some colour to this interpretation, which would, indeed, make the whole passage run more naturally. But there seems to be no authority for translating the verb in verse 38 'to marry'; it always means 'to give in marriage'; *cf.* Lk. 17. 27, a context which St Paul may have had in mind. ³ 'Who is our way to him'; this can also be rendered 'And our creator too', but it is hard to see why St Paul should have thought the addition necessary. He seems rather to be saying, 'We draw our origin from the Father by way of Christ as Creator; and we must tend back to the Father by way of Christ as Mediator'. ⁴ This is in apparent contradiction with verse 1, where it is said that all Christians have the knowledge in question. Possibly the doubtful consciences to which St Paul refers are those of heathens who are beginning to be attracted towards the faith, yet still retain a half-belief in their false gods. Or possibly 'we all' in verse 1 refers to the Gentile Christians, and the doubtful consciences are those of Jewish Christians, who still feel themselves bound by the rule laid down in Ac. 15. 29; in which case the position here is much the same as that considered in Rom. 14. The principle, in either case, is that a man is bound to follow his own conscience, and we must sometimes abstain from what our own conscience finds harmless, lest our example should give scandal to one whose conscience is differently formed. 'With the thought of the false god in their minds'; some manuscripts in the Greek read 'through being accustomed to (the worship of) false gods'.

gain nothing by eating, lose nothing by
 9 abstaining; it is for you to see that the
 liberty you allow yourselves does not prove
 10 a snare to doubtful consciences. If any of
 them sees one who is better instructed sitting
 down to eat in the temple of a false
 god, will not his conscience, all uneasy as
 it is, be emboldened to approve of eating
 11 idolatrously? And thus, through thy enlighten-
 ment, the doubting soul will be
 lost; thy brother, for whose sake Christ
 12 died. When you thus sin against your
 brethren, by injuring their doubtful con-
 13 sciences, you sin against Christ. Why then,
 if a mouthful of food is an occasion of sin
 to my brother, I will abstain from flesh
 meat perpetually, rather than be the occa-
 sion of my brother's sin.

9 Am I not free to do as I will? Am I
 not an apostle, have I not seen our
 Lord Jesus Christ? Are not you yourselves
 2 my achievement in the Lord? ¹ To others
 I may not be an apostle, but to you at least
 I am; why, you are the sign-manual of my
 3 apostleship in the Lord. This is the answer
 I make to those who call me in question. ²
 4 Have we not a right to be provided with
 5 food and drink; nay, have we not the right
 to travel about with a woman who is a
 sister, as the other apostles do, as the
 6 Lord's brethren do, and Cephas? ³ Must
 I and Barnabas, alone among them, be for-
 7 bidden to do as much? Why, what soldier
 ever fought at his own expense? Who
 would plant a vineyard, and not live on its
 fruits, or tend a flock, and not live on the
 8 milk which the flock yields? This is not a
 plea of man's invention; the law declares

it. When we read in the law of Moses, ⁹
 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads
 out the corn, must we suppose that God
 is making provision for oxen? ⁴ Is it not ¹⁰
 clear that he says it for our sakes? For our
 sakes it was laid down that the ploughman
 has a right to plough, and the thrasher to
 thrash, with the expectation of sharing in
 the crop. Here are we, who have sown in ¹¹
 you a spiritual harvest; is it much to ask,
 that we should reap from you a temporal
 harvest in return? If others claim a share ¹²
 of such rights over you, have not we a
 better claim still? And yet we have never
 availed ourselves of those rights; we bear
 every hardship, sooner than hinder the
 preaching of Christ's gospel. ⁵ You know, ¹³
 surely, that those who do the temple's
 work live on the temple's revenues; that
 those who preside at the altar share the
 altar's offerings. And so it is that the Lord ¹⁴
 has bidden the heralds of the gospel live
 by preaching the gospel. Yet I have not ¹⁵
 availed myself of any such right.

I am not writing thus in the hope of
 being treated otherwise; I would rather
 die than have this boast taken from me.
 When I preach the gospel, I take no credit ¹⁶
 for that; I act under constraint; it would
 go hard with me indeed if I did not preach
 the gospel. I can claim a reward for what ¹⁷
 I do of my own choice; but when I act
 under constraint, I am only executing a
 commission. What title have I, then, to a ¹⁸
 reward? Why, that when I preach the
 gospel I should preach the gospel free of
 charge, not making full use of the rights
 which gospel preaching gives me. ⁶ Thus ¹⁹
 nobody has any claim on me, and yet I have

¹ 'Am I not free to do as I will?' St Paul here alludes to the principle laid down in 6. 12 and 10. 23. He is free to take stipends if he will, but he abstains for fear of giving scandal; the Corinthians, too, must be careful not to give scandal.

² 'This' probably refers, not to what follows, but to what has gone before; when St Paul's apostleship is challenged, he points to the Corinthian church as the proof of it.

³ 'Woman' may also be translated 'wife'; and that may be the sense intended. We know that St Peter was married, and his wife, if she was still alive, may have travelled with him on his missionary journeys. But it is not impossible that he, or other apostles, may have been cared for by pious women, as our Lord himself was (Lk. 8. 3). 'Sister' does not imply any relationship, physical or spiritual; it only means that the woman was a Christian. St Paul is not claiming credit here for avoiding the society of women; he only claims credit for living at his own expense, when other apostles supported not only themselves, but the women who waited on their needs, out of offerings made by the faithful. 'The Lord's brethren'; see p. 13, note 2.

⁴ Deut. 25. 4. ⁵ This verse explains the connexion of the present passage with what has gone before. St Paul cites his own thoughtfulness in the matter of accepting stipends, by way of encouraging the Corinthians to shew a similar thoughtfulness in sparing the consciences of the weaker brethren. We ought to forgo some of our rights, he says, so as not to hinder the preaching of Christ's gospel.

⁶ *vv.* 17, 18: 'I can claim a reward', literally, 'I have a reward'; 'what title have I to a reward', literally, 'what reward have I?' The word 'reward' is thus used in the sense of something which entitles one to a reward in Mt. 5. 46 and 6. 1; no other meaning appears to suit the context here. St Paul takes no credit to himself for preaching, since he is only fulfilling an express command (Lk. 17. 10); he does, however, take credit to himself for preaching Christ free of charge, since he does this 'of his own choice'.

made myself everybody's slave, to win
 20 more souls. With the Jews I lived like a
 21 Jew, to win the Jews; with those who keep
 the law, as one who keeps the law (though
 the law had no claim on me), to win those
 who kept the law; with those who are free
 of the law, like one free of the law (not that
 I disowned all divine law, but it was the
 law of Christ that bound me), to win
 22 those who were free of the law. With the
 scrupulous, I behaved myself like one who
 is scrupulous, to win the scrupulous.
 I have been everything by turns to every-
 body, to bring everybody salvation.
 23 All that I do, I do for the sake of the
 gospel promises, to win myself a share in
 24 them.¹ You know well enough that when
 men run in a race, the race is for all, but
 the prize for one; run, then, for victory.
 25 Every athlete must keep all his appetites
 under control; and he does it to win a
 crown that fades, whereas ours is imperish-
 26 able. So I do not run my course like a man
 in doubt of his goal; I do not fight my
 battle like a man who wastes his blows on
 27 the air. I buffet my own body, and make
 it my slave; or I, who have preached to
 others, may myself be rejected as worth-
 less.²

10 Let me remind you, brethren, of
 this. Our fathers were hidden, all
 of them, under the cloud, and found a
 2 path, all of them, through the sea; all alike,
 in the cloud and in the sea, were baptized
 3 into Moses' fellowship. They all ate the
 4 same prophetic food,³ and all drank the
 same prophetic drink, watered by the same

prophetic rock which bore them company,
 the rock that was Christ.⁴ And for all that,
 God was ill pleased with most of them; see
 how they were laid low in the wilderness.
 It is we that were foreshadowed in these
 events. We were not to set our hearts, as
 some of them set their hearts, on forbidden
 things. You were not to turn idolatrous, as
 some of them did; so we read, The people
 sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to
 take their pleasure.⁵ We were not to com-
 mit fornication, as some of them com-
 mitted fornication, when twenty-three
 thousand of them were killed in one day.⁶
 We were not to try the patience of Christ,
 as some of them tried it, the men who were
 slain by the serpents;⁷ nor were you to
 complain, as some of them complained, till
 the destroying angel slew them.⁸ When all
 this happened to them, it was a symbol;
 the record of it was written as a warning to
 us, in whom history has reached its fulfil-
 ment; and it means that he who thinks he
 stands firmly should beware of a fall.⁹
 I pray that no temptation may come upon
 you that is beyond man's strength.¹⁰ Not
 that God will play you false; he will not
 allow you to be tempted beyond your
 powers. With the temptation itself, he will
 ordain the issue of it, and enable you to
 hold your own.

Keep far away, then, my well beloved,
 from idolatry. I am speaking to you as men
 of good sense; weigh my words for your-
 selves. We have a cup that we bless; is not
 this cup we bless a participation in Christ's
 blood? Is not the bread we break a partici-
 pation in Christ's body? The one bread

¹ *vv.* 23 and following: Here St Paul alters the bearing of his argument. So far, he has been urging the Corinthians to abstain from the contact of idolatry for fear of giving scandal. Now he begins urging them to abstain from it for fear of a relapse into heathen ways. He prefaces this part of the argument by telling them that he himself does not regard his own salvation as assured; it calls for watchfulness.

² 'Rejected', probably in the sense of being a competitor disqualified in a race; the word 'preached' might also be rendered 'been a herald', with the same reference.

³ 'Prophetic'; literally, 'spiritual'. The sense may be merely that of 'supernatural', but it seems more likely that St Paul is regarding the manna, the water, and the rock as types of things to come; cf. Apoc. 11, 8.

⁴ St Paul is no doubt alluding to a Jewish legend, according to which the rock from which the water came was enabled, by a miracle, to accompany the wanderings of the Israelites; he means, perhaps, to attribute this abiding presence to the thing signified rather than to the rock itself.

⁵ Ex. 32, 6. ⁶ Num. 25, 1-9. ⁷ Num. 21, 6. The Greek manuscripts read 'the Lord', not 'Christ'.

⁸ Num. 14, 2; 29, 37. ⁹ *vv.* 1-12: The Jews, St Paul argues, were figuratively baptized when they were hidden by the fiery cloud (Ex. 14, 20) and passed through the Red Sea, as we are mystically associated by baptism with the passage of Christ through the tomb (Rom. 6, 2-4; Col. 3, 3). They became, figuratively, communicants when they ate the bread of angels, the manna, and were nourished from the riven rock (Ex. 17, 6), as we are sacramentally nourished from the riven side of Christ (Jn. 19, 34). Baptized communicants, in this figurative sense, they nevertheless fell away from God and incurred his anger. The Corinthians, then, must not think that they, as baptized communicants, are proof against every temptation; they must avoid the occasions of sin, especially that of idolatry.

¹⁰ According to St Basil, St Paul here looks forward to the persecutions which were soon to bring Christians into grave danger of consenting to idolatry. 'I pray that no temptation may come upon you'; the Greek here has, 'So far, no temptation has befallen you'.

makes us one body, though we are many in number; the same bread is shared by all.¹ Or look at Israel, God's people by nature; do not those who eat their sacrifices associate themselves with the altar of sacrifice? I am not suggesting that anything can really be sacrificed to a false god, or that a false god has any existence; I mean that when the heathen offer sacrifice they are really offering it to evil spirits and not to a God at all. I have no mind to see you associating yourselves with evil spirits. To drink the Lord's cup, and yet to drink the cup of evil spirits, to share the Lord's feast, and to share the feast of evil spirits, is impossible for you. Are we, then, to provoke the Lord to jealousy? Have we powers greater than his?

I am free to do what I will; yes, but not everything can be done without harm. I am free to do what I will, but some things disedify. Each of you ought to study the well-being of others, not his own. When things are sold in the open market, then you may eat them, without making any enquiries to satisfy your consciences; this world, as we know, and all that is in it belongs to the Lord.² If some unbeliever invites you to his table, and you consent to go, then you need not ask questions to satisfy your consciences, you may eat whatever is put before you. But if someone says to you, This has been used in idolatrous worship, then for the sake of your informant, you must refuse to eat; it is a matter of conscience; his conscience, I mean, not yours. There is no reason why I should let my freedom be called in question by another man's conscience. I can

eat such food and be grateful for it; why should I incur reproach for saying grace over it?³ In eating, in drinking, in all that you do, do everything as for God's glory. Give no offence to Jew, or to Greek, or to God's church. That is my own rule, to satisfy all alike, studying the general welfare rather than my own, so as to win their salvation.

11 Follow my example, then, as I follow the example of Christ. I must needs praise you for your constant memory of me, for upholding your traditions just as I handed them on to you. And here is something you must know. The head to which a wife is united is her husband, just as the head to which every man is united is Christ; so, too, the head to which Christ is united is God.⁴ And whereas any man who keeps his head covered when he prays or utters prophecy brings shame upon his head, a woman brings shame upon her head if she uncovers it to pray or prophesy; she is no better than the woman who has her head shaved.⁵ If a woman would go without a veil, why does she not cut her hair short too? If she admits that a woman is disgraced when her hair is cut short or shaved, then let her go veiled. A man has no need to veil his head; he is God's image, the pride of his creation, whereas the wife is the pride of her husband. (The woman takes her origin from the man, not the man from the woman;⁶ and indeed, it was not man that was created for woman's sake, but woman for man's.) And for that reason the woman ought to have authority over her head, for the angels' sake.⁷ (Not

¹ The beginning of this verse may also be translated, 'For we are one bread, one body, though many in number'.

² Ps. 23. 1. ³ vv. 29, 30: It is probable that St Paul means, 'Keep your own interior liberty of conscience, although you abstain out of charity; one man's conscience cannot be the rule for another's'. He may, however, mean, 'Is it worth while to use your own liberty at the price of incurring censure from others?' v. 30: The Greek here may mean, 'Grace lets me eat this food', that is, the liberty of the Gospel, as opposed to the strictness of the Jewish law. 'For saying grace over it'; in the Greek, 'for that over which I say grace'. It is to be observed that the Gospel liberty of which St Paul speaks justified the faithful in eating the food offered them without asking questions, but did not justify them in frequenting feasts held in honour of heathen deities, which is the situation contemplated in verses 16-22, as in 8. 10.

⁴ Cf. Eph. 5. 23. ⁵ vv. 4, 5: 'To bring shame upon one's head' should probably be understood in a double sense; that of treating one's own body with disrespect, and that of disloyalty to one's own spiritual head; the man muffling himself up, as if he were ashamed of Christ to whom he prays, the woman shewing her face in public, and so infringing the rights of her husband. v. 5: It appears that a woman's head was sometimes shaved close by way of branding her as having been guilty of incontinence. This may be the meaning here, or it may refer to shameless women in Corinthian society who shaved their heads to look like men.

⁶ The reference here is probably not to Gen. 2. 21, but to the facts of physical generation; cf. verse 12 below. ⁷ This verse, which is here literally rendered, remains very obscure, in spite of the commentators. The word translated 'authority' may mean authority, or power to do things, or (most commonly in this epistle) liberty of choice. If we understand that the wife ought to wear on her head a symbol of her husband's authority over her, we satisfy the sense, but give a very strained interpretation of the Greek. If we understand that the wife has power

that, in the Lord's service, man has his place apart from woman, or woman hers
 12 apart from man; if woman takes her origin from man, man equally comes to birth through woman. And indeed all things
 13 have their origin in God.) Judge for yourselves; is it fitting that a woman should
 14 offer prayer to God unveiled? Does not nature itself teach you that, whereas it is a disgrace to a man to wear his hair long,
 15 when a woman grows her hair long, it is an added grace to her? That is because her hair has been given her to take the place of
 16 a veil. And if anyone is prepared to argue the matter, he must know that no such custom is found among us, or in any of God's churches.¹

17 And here is a warning I have for you. I can give you no praise for holding your assemblies in a way that does harm, not
 18 good. From the first, when you meet in church, there are divisions among you; so I hear, and in some measure believe it.
 19 Parties there must needs be among you, so that those who are true metal may be distinguished from the rest. And when you assemble together, there is no opportunity
 20 to eat a supper of the Lord; each comes hastens to eat the supper he has brought for himself, so that one man goes hungry,
 22 while another has drunk deep. Have you no homes to eat and drink in, that you should shew contempt to God's church, and shame the poor? Praise you? There
 23 is no room for praise here. The tradition which I received from the Lord, and handed on to you, is that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was being betrayed,
 24 took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, given

up for you. Do this for a commemoration of me.² And so with the cup, when supper was ended, This cup, he said, is the new testament, in my blood. Do this, whenever you drink it, for a commemoration of me. So it is the Lord's death that you are heralding, whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, until he comes. And therefore, if anyone eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily, he will be held to account for the Lord's body and blood. A man must examine himself first, and then eat of that bread and drink of that cup; he is eating and drinking damnation to himself if he eats and drinks unworthily, not recognizing the Lord's body for what it is.³ That is why many of your number want strength and health, and not a few have died.⁴ If we recognized our own fault, we should not incur these judgments; as it is, the Lord judges us and chastises us, so that we may not incur, as this world incurs, damnation. So, brethren, when you assemble to eat together, wait for one another; those who are hungry had best eat at home, for fear that your meeting should bring you condemnation. The other questions I will settle when I come.⁵

12 And now about spiritual gifts; I would not willingly leave you in doubt about these. While you were still heathen, as you can remember well enough, you let yourselves be led away wherever men would lead you, to worship false gods that gave no utterance. That is why I am telling you of this. Just as no one can be speaking through God's Spirit if he calls Jesus accursed, so it is only through the

over her own head, liberty to dispose of it as she likes, the Greek is satisfied, but the whole sense of the context is ignored. Some think that St Paul is here giving a literal translation of a Hebrew word meaning 'veil', derived from a verb which means 'to control'; but it is hard to see why he should have done so. Most commentators understand 'for the angels' sake' as meaning that the angels join with us in worship, and therefore we must be careful to shew all possible reverence in church; some think that St Paul is citing the example of those angels who veil their faces before the presence of God (Is. 6. 2).

¹ *vv.* 3-16: It is not clear why St Paul here appears to regulate the conditions under which women may undertake public utterances, when in 14. 34 below he lays it down that women are not to speak openly in the Christian assembly. If we suppose, as some authors do, that Christian women wore a heavy veil in front of their faces, such as was used in Eastern countries, the difficulty disappears; in forbidding women to speak unveiled the Apostle is forbidding them to speak at all. Others suggest that the prohibition here applies, not to formal assemblies for worship, but to occasional meetings in private houses.

² The words 'Take, eat' are omitted in most Greek and in some Latin manuscripts. ³ The word 'unworthily' is wanting in some of the best Greek manuscripts. ⁴ 'Have died'; literally, 'have fallen asleep'.

⁵ *vv.* 17-34. It is clear that the early Christians met (not literally in a church, for there were then no dedicated buildings) for an *agape* or love-feast, followed by celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This should have been a common meal, to which all contributed; instead of which a rich Corinthian would eat the food he himself had brought, while his poorer neighbour came late (verse 13) so as not to disclose his poverty. This exclusiveness and want of charity meant that when the Eucharist was finally celebrated many of the faithful were in bad dispositions.

Holy Spirit that anyone can say, Jesus is
4 the Lord; and yet there are different kinds
5 of gifts, though it is the same Spirit who
6 gives them, just as there are different kinds
7 of service, though it is the same Lord we
8 serve, and different manifestations of
9 power, though it is the same God who
10 manifests his power everywhere in all of
11 us. The revelation of the Spirit is imparted
12 to each, to make the best advantage of it.
13 One learns to speak with wisdom, by the
14 power of the Spirit, another to speak with
15 knowledge, with the same Spirit for his
16 rule; one, through the same Spirit, is given
17 faith; another, through the same Spirit,
18 powers of healing; one can perform mira-
19 cles, one can prophesy, another can test
20 the spirit of the prophets; one can speak in
21 different tongues, another can interpret the
22 tongues; but all this is the work of one and
23 the same Spirit, who distributes his gifts
24 as he will to each severally.

25 A man's body is all one, though it has
26 a number of different organs; and all this
27 multitude of organs goes to make up one
28 body; so it is with Christ. We too, all of
29 us, have been baptized into a single body
30 by the power of a single Spirit, Jews and
31 Greeks, slaves and free men alike; we have
32 all been given drink at a single source, the
33 one Spirit.¹ The body, after all, consists
34 not of one organ but of many; if the foot
35 should say, I am not the hand, and there-
36 fore I do not belong to the body, does it
37 belong to the body any the less for that?
38 If the ear should say, I am not the eye, and
39 therefore I do not belong to the body, does
40 it belong to the body any the less for that?
41 Where would the power of hearing be, if
42 the body were all eye? Or the power of
43 smell, if the body were all ear? As it is,
44 God has given each one of them its own
45 position in the body, as he would. If the
46 whole were one single organ, what would
47 become of the body? Instead of that, we
48 have a multitude of organs, and one body.
49 The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no
50 need of thee, or the head to the feet, I have
51 no need of you. On the contrary, it is those

parts of our body which seem most con-
52 temptible that are necessary to it; what
53 seems base in our bodies, we surround with
54 special honour, treating with special seem-
55 liness that which is unseemly in us,
56 whereas that which is seemly in us has no
57 need of it. Thus God has established a har-
58 mony in the body, giving special honour to
59 that which needed it most. There was to
60 be no want of unity in the body; all the
61 different parts of it were to make each
62 other's welfare their common care. If one
63 part is suffering, all the rest suffer with it;
64 if one part is treated with honour, all the
65 rest find pleasure in it. And you are
66 Christ's body, organs of it depending upon
67 each other.² God has given us different
68 positions in the church; apostles first, then
69 prophets, and thirdly teachers; then come
70 miraculous powers, then gifts of healing,
71 works of mercy, the management of affairs,
72 speaking with different tongues, and inter-
73 preting prophecy. Are all of us apostles,
74 all prophets, all teachers? Have all mir-
75 aculous powers, or gifts of healing? Can all
76 speak with tongues, can all interpret?

77 Prize the best gifts of heaven. Mean-
78 while, I can shew you a way which is better
79 than any other.³

13 I may speak with every tongue that
80 men and angels use; yet, if I lack
81 charity, I am no better than echoing
82 bronze, or the clash of cymbals. I may
83 have powers of prophecy, no secret hidden
84 from me, no knowledge too deep for me;
85 I may have utter faith, so that I can move
86 mountains; yet if I lack charity, I count for
87 nothing.⁴ I may give away all that I have,
88 to feed the poor; I may give myself up to
89 be burnt at the stake; if I lack charity, it
90 goes for nothing.⁵ Charity is patient, is
91 kind; charity feels no envy; charity is never
92 perverse or proud, never insolent;⁶ does
93 not claim its rights, cannot be provoked,
94 does not brood over an injury; takes no
95 pleasure in wrong-doing, but rejoices at the
96 victory of truth; sustains, believes, hopes,
97 endures, to the last. The time will come
98

¹ 'We have all been given drink'; St Paul is probably referring to the rock which gave out water to the Israelites in the wilderness, cf. 10. 4 above. It is not certain which of the Sacraments he is alluding to.

² There is doubt in this verse both about the text and about the exact rendering of it, but the context seems to make it clear that the general sense is that given here. ³ Charity is itself a gift, and, if it is contrasted with other spiritual gifts, overshadows them all. ⁴ Cf. Mt. 21. 21. ⁵ Some Greek manuscripts have 'in order to boast of it' instead of 'to be burnt at the stake'. ⁶ 'Never insolent'; the Latin word used here means 'ambitious', but the Greek original has rather the sense of 'indecorous'.

when we shall outgrow prophecy, when speaking with tongues will come to an end, when knowledge will be swept away; we shall never have finished with charity.

9 Our knowledge, our prophecy, are only
10 glimpses of the truth; and these glimpses
11 will be swept away when the time of fulfil-
12 ment comes. (Just so, when I was a child,
I talked like a child, I had the intelligence,
the thoughts of a child; since I became a
12 man, I have outgrown childish ways.) At
present, we are looking at a confused reflec-
13 tion in a mirror; then, we shall see face
to face; now, I have only glimpses of knowl-
edge; then, I shall recognize God as he has
13 recognized me. Meanwhile, faith, hope
and charity persist, all three; but the
greatest of them all is charity.¹

14 Make charity your aim, the spiri-
tual gifts your aspiration; and, by
2 preference, the gift of prophecy. The man
who talks in a strange tongue is talking to
God, not to men; nobody understands
3 him, he is holding mysterious converse
with his own spirit; whereas the prophet
4 speaks to edify, to encourage, to comfort
his fellow men. By talking in a strange
tongue, a man may strengthen his own
5 faith; by prophesying he can strengthen
the faith of the church. I would gladly see
you all speaking with strange tongues, but
I would rather you should prophesy, be-
6 cause the prophet ranks higher than the
man who speaks with strange tongues. It
would be different if he could translate
them, to strengthen the faith of the church;
7 but as things are, brethren, what good can
I do you by coming and talking to you in
strange languages, instead of addressing
you with a revelation, or a manifestation of
8 inner knowledge, or a prophecy, or words
of instruction? Senseless things may be
vocal, a flute, for example, or a harp; but
even with these, there must be distinctions
between the sounds they give, or how can
we recognize what melody flute or harp is
8 playing? If a trumpet, for that matter,

gives out an uncertain note, who will arm
himself for battle? So it is with you; how
9 can it be known what your message is, if
you speak in a language whose accents can-
not be understood? Your words will fall
on empty air. No doubt all these different
10 languages exist somewhere in the world,
and each of them has its significance; but
11 if I cannot understand what the language
means, the effect is that I am a foreigner to
the man who is speaking, and he is a
foreigner to me. So the case stands with
12 you. Since you have set your hearts on
spiritual gifts, ask for them in abundant
measure, but only so as to strengthen the
faith of the church; the man who can
13 speak in a strange tongue should pray for
the power to interpret it.

If I use a strange tongue when I offer
14 prayer, my spirit is praying, but my mind
reaps no advantage from it. What, then, is
15 my drift? Why, I mean to use mind as
well as spirit when I offer prayer, use mind
as well as spirit when I sing psalms. If
16 thou dost pronounce a blessing in this
spiritual fashion, how can one who takes
his place among the uninstructed say
Amen to thy thanksgiving? He cannot tell
what thou art saying.² Thou, true enough,
17 art duly giving thanks, but the other's faith
is not strengthened. Thank God, I can
18 speak any of the tongues you use;³ but in
the church, I would rather speak five words
which my mind utters, for your instruc-
19 tion, than ten thousand in a strange tongue.
Brethren, do not be content to think
20 childish thoughts; keep the innocence of
children, with the thoughts of grown men.
We read in the law, I will speak to this
21 people with an unknown tongue, with the
lips of strangers, and even so they will not
listen to me, says the Lord.⁴ Thus talking
22 with a strange tongue is a sign given to
unbelievers, not to the faithful; whereas
prophecy is meant for the faithful, not for
unbelievers. And now, what will happen
23 if the uninstructed or the unbelievers come
in when the whole church has met to-

¹ St Irenaeus and Tertullian, followed by some modern authors, understand this as meaning that all three theological virtues will persist in heaven; but this interpretation would be irrelevant to the present context.

² 'One who takes his place among the uninstructed'; probably in the literal sense of sitting in a particular part of the church. It would seem likely, from a comparison with verse 23, that the uninstructed are the catechumens, as opposed to the baptized Christians. The words 'blessing' and 'thanksgiving' are sometimes used in connexion with the Holy Eucharist, but we can hardly suppose that they have this sense here.

³ The Greek here has 'I can speak with tongues more than any of you'; the Latin 'I can speak with the tongues of all of you'.
⁴ Is. 28. 11; the form of the quotation differs considerably from the Septuagint text.

gether, and find everyone speaking with strange tongues at once? Will they not say you are mad? Whereas, if some unbeliever or some uninstructed person comes in when all alike are prophesying, everyone will read his thoughts, everyone will scrutinize him, all that is kept hidden in his heart will be revealed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, publicly confessing that God is indeed among you.¹

26 What am I urging, then, brethren? Why, when you meet together, each of you with a psalm to sing, or some doctrine to impart, or a revelation to give, or ready to speak in strange tongues, or to interpret them, see that all is done to your spiritual advantage. If there is speaking with strange tongues, do not let more than two speak, or three at the most; let each take his turn, with someone to interpret for him, and if he can find nobody to interpret, let him be silent in the church, conversing with his own spirit and with God. As for the prophets, let two or three of them speak, while the rest sit in judgement on their prophecies. If some revelation comes to another who is sitting by, let him who spoke first keep silence; there is room for you all to prophesy one by one, so that the whole company may receive instruction and comfort; and it is for the prophets to exercise control over their own spiritual gifts. God is the author of peace, not of disorder; such is the teaching I give in all the churches of the saints.² And women are to be silent in the churches; utterance is not permitted to them; let them keep their rank, as the law tells them: if they have any question to raise, let them ask their husbands at home. That a woman should make her voice heard in the church is not seemly. Tell me, was it from you that God's word was sent out? Are you the only people it has reached? If anybody

claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual gifts, let him prove it by recognizing that this message of mine to you is God's commandment. If he does not recognize it, he himself shall receive no recognition.³ Set your hearts, then, brethren, on prophesying; and as for speaking with strange tongues, do not interfere with it. Only let us have everything done suitably, and with right order.

15 Here, brethren, is an account of the gospel I preached to you. It was this that was handed on to you; upon this your faith rests; through this (if you keep in mind the tenor of its preaching) you are in the way of salvation; unless indeed your belief was ill founded.⁴ The chief message I handed on to you, as it was handed on to me, was that Christ, as the scriptures had foretold, died for our sins; that he was buried, and then, as the scriptures had foretold, rose again on the third day. That he was seen by Cephas, then by the eleven apostles, and afterwards by more than five hundred of the brethren at once, most of whom are alive at this day, though some have gone to their rest. Then he was seen by James, then by all the apostles; and last of all, I too saw him, like the last child, that comes to birth unexpectedly.⁵ Of all the apostles, I am the least; nay, I am not fit to be called an apostle, since there was a time when I persecuted the church of God; only, by God's grace, I am what I am, and the grace he has shewn me has not been without fruit; I have worked harder than all of them, or rather, it was not I, but the grace of God working with me. That is our preaching, mine or theirs as you will; that is the faith which has come to you.

If what we preach about Christ, then, is that he rose from the dead, how is it that some of you say the dead do not rise again?

¹ 10. 22-25: The sequence of thought here is difficult; perhaps St Paul means that an outsider might be impressed by hearing one Christian speaking in a language he had never learned, but would only be disgusted by a babel of competing voices. Prophecy, on the other hand, is primarily meant to edify believers; but even an unbeliever might be impressed by finding several people who could read the secrets of his heart. ² Such is the teaching I give in all the churches; according to most Greek manuscripts, the sense is rather 'all the churches of the saints give proof of it'. ³ He himself shall receive no recognition', possibly in the congregation, but more probably in the sight of God (cf. 13. 12 above). Some Greek manuscripts read 'let him go on in his ignorance'. ⁴ 'Unless indeed your belief was ill founded'; some commentators take this as meaning 'Unless your belief has been ineffectual', i.e. 'has not succeeded in forming a true Christian character'. ⁵ St Paul compares himself to a child born prematurely; hence it is difficult to see how there can be any allusion to the comparative lateness of our Lord's appearance to him. He seems to be thinking rather of the sudden, catastrophic manner in which grace came to him. Others think that he compares himself out of humility, to a child born physically weak.

13 If the dead do not rise, then Christ has not
 14 risen either; and if Christ has not risen,
 then our preaching is groundless, and your
 15 faith, too, is groundless. Worse still, we are
 convicted of giving false testimony about
 God; we bore God witness that he had
 raised Christ up from the dead, and he has
 not raised him up, if it is true that the dead
 16 do not rise again. If the dead, I say, do not
 17 rise, then Christ has not risen either; and
 if Christ has not risen, all your faith is a
 18 delusion; you are back in your sins. It
 follows, too, that those who have gone to
 19 their rest in Christ have been lost. If the
 hope we have learned to repose in Christ
 belongs to this world only, then we are
 20 unhappy beyond all other men. But no,
 Christ has risen from the dead, the first-
 fruits of all those who have fallen asleep;
 21 a man had brought us death, and a man
 should bring us resurrection from the
 22 dead; just as all have died with Adam, so
 23 with Christ all will be brought to life. But
 each must rise in his own rank; Christ is
 the first-fruits, and after him follow those
 who belong to him, those who have put
 24 their trust in his return.¹ Full completion
 comes after that, when he places his king-
 ship in the hands of God, his Father,
 having first dispossessed every other sort
 25 of rule, authority, and power; his reign, as
 we know, must continue until he has put
 26 all his enemies under his feet, and the last
 of those enemies to be dispossessed is
 death.² God has put all things in subjection
 27 under his feet; that is, all things have been
 made subject to him, except indeed that
 28 power which made them his subjects. And
 when that subjection is complete, then the
 Son himself will become subject to the
 power which made all things his subjects,
 so that God may be all in all.
 29 Tell me, what can be the use of being
 baptized for the dead, if the dead do not
 rise again? Why should anyone be bap-
 30 tized for them?³ Why do we, for that

matter, face peril hour after hour? I swear
 to you, brethren, by all the pride I take in
 you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 that death is daily at my side. When I
 fought against beasts at Ephesus with all
 my strength, of what use was it, if the dead
 do not rise again? Let us eat and drink,
 since we must die to-morrow.⁴ Do not be
 led into such errors; bad company, they
 say, can corrupt noble minds.⁵ Come back
 to your senses, like right-minded men, and
 sin no longer; there are some, I say it to
 your shame, who lack the knowledge of
 God.

But perhaps someone will ask, How can
 the dead rise up? What kind of body will
 they be wearing when they appear? Poor
 fool, when thou sowest seed in the ground,
 it must die before it can be brought to life;
 and what thou sowest is not the full body
 that is one day to be, it is only bare grain,
 of wheat, it may be, or some other crop;
 it is for God to embody it according to his
 will, each grain in the body that belongs to
 it. Nature is not all one; men have one
 nature, the beasts another, the birds an-
 other, the fishes another; so, too, there are
 bodies that belong to earth and bodies that
 belong to heaven; and heavenly bodies
 have one kind of beauty, earthly bodies
 another. The sun has its own beauty, the
 moon has hers, the stars have theirs, one
 star even differs from another in its beauty.
 So it is with the resurrection of the dead.
 What is sown corruptible, rises incor-
 ruptible; what is sown unhonoured, rises
 in glory; what is sown in weakness, is
 raised in power; what is sown a natural
 body, rises a spiritual body. If there is
 such a thing as a natural body, there must
 be a spiritual body too. Mankind begins
 with the Adam who became, as Scripture
 tells us, a living soul;⁶ it is fulfilled in the
 Adam who has become a life-giving spirit.
 It was not the principle of spiritual life that
 came first; natural life came first, then

¹ 'Those who have put their trust in his return'; most Greek manuscripts have simply 'when he comes'.

² *vv.* 23-26: Probably three stages in the Resurrection are here given, (i) that of our Lord himself, (ii) that of the predestined, or perhaps only that of predestined persons who are still alive; at the Second Coming, (iii) that of the rest of mankind, implied in verse 26.

³ There may be an allusion to the practice of vicarious baptism on behalf of those who had died unchristened, which is known to have existed (though only amongst heretics) in the second century A.D. The other explanations which have been suggested are only conjectures.

⁴ Others would render, 'If it was from human motives that I fought against beasts at Ephesus, of what use was it? If the dead do not rise again, let us eat and drink', etc.

⁵ 'Fighting against beasts' is generally understood of withstanding bitter human persecution. Cf. *Is.* 22. 13.

⁶ 'Bad company', etc.: this was a heathen proverb, which is to be found in the works of the poet Menander.

47 spiritual life; the man who came first came from earth, fashioned of dust, the man who came afterwards came from heaven, and his fashion is heavenly. The nature of that earth-born man is shared by his earthly sons, the nature of the heaven-born man, 48 by his heavenly sons; and it remains for us, who once bore the stamp of earth, to bear 49 the stamp of heaven.¹ What I mean, brethren, is this; the kingdom of God cannot be enjoyed by flesh and blood; the principle of corruption cannot share a life which is incorruptible.²

51 Here is a secret I will make known to you; we shall all rise again, but not all of us will undergo the change I speak of.³ It will happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet sounds; the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise again, free from corruption, and we shall 53 find ourselves changed;⁴ this corruptible nature of ours must be clothed with incorruptible life, this mortal nature with immortality. Then, when this mortal nature wears its immortality, the saying of scripture will come true, Death is swallowed up in victory.⁵ Where then, death, is thy victory; 56 where, death, is thy sting?⁶ It is sin that gives death its sting, just as it is the law that gives sin its power; thanks be to God, then, who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Stand firm, then, my beloved brethren, immovable in your resolve, doing your full share continually in the task the Lord has given you, since you know that your labour in the Lord's service cannot be spent in vain.

16 And now about the collection which is being made for the saints; follow the plan which I have prescribed for the Galatian churches. Each of you should put aside, on the first day of the week, what

he can afford to spare, and save it up, so that there may be no need for a collection at the time of my visit; and when I am with you I will despatch your envoys, with letters of recommendation from you, to convey your charity to Jerusalem. If I find it worth while to make the journey myself, they shall travel with me. I shall be coming to you as soon as I have made the round of Macedonia (I mean to go round Macedonia);⁷ and perhaps stay with you or even pass the winter with you; it will be for you to put me on my way to my next stage, whatever it be. This is no occasion for a mere passing visit to you; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord will let me. Till Pentecost, I shall be staying at Ephesus; a great opportunity lies open to me, plain to view, and strong forces oppose me. If Timothy comes, be sure to make him free of your company; he is doing the Lord's work as I am. He is not to be treated with disrespect; put him on his way in peace so that he reaches me safely; I am awaiting him here with the brethren. As for our brother Apollo, you may be sure I have urged him strongly to accompany the brethren on their journey to you; but no, he will not consent to visit you yet, he will come when he has leisure.

Be on the watch, stand firm in the faith, play the man, be full of courage. And let everything you do be done in a spirit of charity.

This appeal, brethren, I must make to you. You know that the household of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus was the first offering Achaia gave; you know how they have devoted themselves to supplying the needs of the saints;⁸ you must shew deference to such persons, to everyone who shares in the labours of our ministry. I am glad that Stephanas and

¹ 'It remains for us to bear'; the Greek texts here are divided between 'we shall bear' (in heaven) and 'let us bear' (presumably on earth); the Latin versions follow the second reading.

² 'Flesh and blood', that is, flesh and blood as we know it here, under earthly conditions. That St Paul taught the continuity of the Resurrection body with the body which is the soul's partner on earth, is evident from the comparison he uses in verses 36-38 above.

³ The Greek manuscripts are here strangely divided; some read the text given here, but there is better support for the reading 'We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed'. The sense in that case would be, that those of the elect who are still alive at the Day of Judgement will pass into a heavenly existence without undergoing death. According to the text here given, which is that of the Latin versions, the sense is rather that all men will die, but only the elect will be glorified after death. Owing to this textual doubt, the generally received view that those who are alive at the Second Coming will experience physical death is not certain, but only a more probable opinion.

⁴ 'We shall find ourselves changed'; St Paul, it seems, writing as a living man to living men, identifies them and himself with those who will be alive at the time of the Second Coming.

⁵ Is. 25. 8. ⁶ Os. 13. 14. The text here agrees with the Greek Septuagint but not with the Hebrew.

⁷ Cf. Ac. 20. 1. ⁸ The words 'Fortunatus and Achaicus' are not given in the best Greek manuscripts.

18 Fortunatus and Achaicus are here; they
have made up for your absence, bringing
relief to my mind as well as yours. Such
19 men deserve your recognition. A greeting
to you from all the churches of Asia, and
many greetings, in the Lord's name, from
Aquila and Priscilla, as well as the church
in their household; it is with them I am

lodging.¹ All the brethren greet you; greet 20
one another with the kiss of saints. I send 21
you my greetings in my own handwriting,
PAUL. If there is anyone who has no love 22
for the Lord, let him be held accursed; the
Lord is coming. The grace of our Lord 23
Jesus Christ be with you; and my love be 24
with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen.

¹ The words 'it is with them I am lodging' do not appear in the Greek or in the best Latin manuscripts.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

FROM Paul, by God's will an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy, who is their brother, to the Church of God which is at Corinth and to all the saints in the whole of Achaia; grace and peace be yours from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful Father, the God who gives all encouragement. He it is who comforts us in all our trials; and it is this encouragement we ourselves receive from God which enables us to comfort others, whenever they have trials of their own. The sufferings of Christ, it is true, overflow into our lives; but there is overflowing comfort, too, which Christ brings to us. Have we trials to endure? It all makes for your encouragement, for your salvation. Are we comforted? It is so that you may be comforted. [Are we encouraged? It is for your encouragement, for your salvation.] And the effect of this appears in your willingness to undergo the sufferings we too undergo; making our hopes of you all the more confident; partners of our sufferings, you will be partners of our encouragement too.

Make no mistake, brethren, about the trial which has been befalling us in Asia; it was something that overburdened us beyond our strength, so that we despaired of life itself.² Indeed, for ourselves we could find no outcome but death; so God would have us learn to trust, not in ourselves, but in him who raises the dead to life. It is he who has preserved us, and is preserving us, from such deadly peril; and we have learned to have confidence that he will preserve us still. Only you, too, must help us with your prayers. So thanks will be given by many on our behalf, and in the name of

many persons, for the favour God has shewn to us.

It is our boast, made in all good conscience, that we have behaved in the world, and towards you especially, with single-heartedness and sincerity in God's sight, not using human wisdom, but the light of God's grace. And we mean by our letters nothing else than what you read in them, and understand us to mean. I hope that you will come to understand us better, as you do already in some measure; are we not your chief pride, as you are our chief pride, in the day when our Lord Jesus Christ comes? It was with this confidence in you that I had made up my mind to give you a double opportunity of spiritual profit, coming to you first, then passing through Corinth to Macedonia, and so from Macedonia back to you; and you were to put me on my way to Judaea. When I thus made up my mind, do you suppose I did it lightly? Can it be said of me that the plans I form are formed by motives of human prudence, so that it is first Yes, I will, and then, No, I will not, with me? As God is faithful, the message we delivered to you is not one which hesitates between Yes and No. It was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that I, that Silvanus and Timothy preached to you; and that preaching did not hesitate between Yes and No; in him all is affirmed with certainty. In him all the promises of God become certain; that is why, when we give glory to God, it is through him that we say our Amen. It is God who gives both us and you our certainty in Christ; it is he who has anointed us, just as it is he who has put his seal on us, and given us the foretaste of his Spirit in our hearts.³

With my soul as the forfeit I call this

¹ Neither the text nor the precise bearing of this passage can be established beyond dispute. The words printed in square brackets are probably not genuine; they are absent from the Greek and from the best Latin manuscripts.

² It is not known what affliction St Paul here refers to. 'We despaired of life' in the Latin is 'we were weary of living', but in the Greek 'we were doubtful whether we should live'.

³ This probably refers to the Sacrament of Confirmation, as completing Baptism.

God to witness that if I did not, after all, visit you at Corinth, it was to give you a fresh chance. (Not that we would domineer over your faith; rather, we would help you to achieve happiness. And indeed, in your faith you stand firm enough.)¹

2 On this I was resolved in my own mind, that I would not pay you a second visit on a sad errand.² Was I to make you sorry? It meant bringing sorrow on those who are my own best source of comfort. And those were the very terms in which I wrote to you: I would not come, if it meant finding fresh cause for sorrow where I might have expected to find cause for happiness. I felt confidence in you all, I knew that what made me happy would make you happy too.³ When I wrote to you, I wrote in great anguish and distress of mind, with many tears. I did not wish to bring sorrow on you, only to assure you of the love I bear you, so abundantly. Well, if someone has caused distress, it is not myself that he has distressed but, in some measure, all of you, so that I must not be too hard on him.⁴ This punishment inflicted on him by so many of you is punishment enough for the man I speak of, and now you must think rather of shewing him indulgence, and comforting him; you must not let him be overwhelmed by excess of grief. Let me entreat you, then, to give him assurance of your good will. The reason why I wrote to you, after all, was to test your loyalty, by seeing whether you would obey me in full. If you shew in-

dulgence to anybody, so do I too; I myself, wherever I have shewn indulgence, have done so in the person of Christ for your sakes, for fear that Satan should get the advantage over us; we know well enough how resourceful he is.

I went to Troas, then, to preach Christ's gospel there, and found a great opportunity open to me in the Lord's service; but still I had no peace of mind, because I had not yet seen my brother Titus; so I took my leave of them all, and pressed on into Macedonia. I give thanks to God, that he is always exhibiting us as the captives in the triumph of Christ Jesus,⁶ and through us spreading abroad everywhere, like a perfume, the knowledge of himself. We are Christ's incense offered to God, making manifest both those who are achieving salvation and those who are on the road to ruin; as a deadly fume where it finds death, as a life-giving perfume where it finds life. Who can prove himself worthy of such a calling? We do not, like so many others, adulterate the word of God, we preach it in all its purity, as God gave it to us, standing before God's presence in Christ.

3 You will say, perhaps, that we are making a fresh attempt to recommend ourselves to your favour. What, do we need letters of recommendation to you, or from you, as some others do?⁷ Why, you yourselves are the letter we carry about with us, written in our hearts, for all to recognize and to read. You are an open letter from Christ, promulgated through us; a message

¹ *vs.* 12-23: In I Cor. 16. 5 St Paul's plan is to come round by land from Ephesus through Macedonia to Corinth. It seems, however, that he must later have proposed a direct journey across the Aegean Sea from Ephesus to Corinth, with a mere excursion from Corinth into Macedonia. But this visit never took effect. The Corinthians appear to have accused him of inconsistency in altering his plans, and perhaps of cowardice (4. 1 below). In fact he had delayed his visit, he says, so as to give the Corinthians more time to repent of their disorders. *v.* 23: Some would translate the last words of this verse, as in Rom. 11. 20, 'it is by faith that you are established' (as Christians); but this thought seems irrelevant here.

² This may mean that St Paul determined not to pay his second visit (the first being that recorded in Ac. 18. 1) while he had faults to find with the Christians at Corinth. Or it may mean that he determined not to pay a second *fault-finding* visit; in which case we have no record of the other. ³ St Paul seems to be quoting here from a letter he had written to the Corinthians, now lost. ⁴ *vs.* 5 and following: It is generally supposed that the unnamed delinquent here alluded to is the person mentioned at the beginning of I Cor. 5. But if another letter had been written since, some other delinquent may have been mentioned in it, of whose offences we have no knowledge. 'So that I must not be too hard on him'; these words are generally translated 'that I may not be a burden to you', but it is hard to see what sense can be attached to this rendering. It seems clear from the context that the Apostle is appealing for the remission, in part, of a canonical penalty imposed on the offender by the Corinthian Church.

⁵ Instead of crossing by sea to Corinth, St Paul went to Troas, in the North of Asia Minor, hoping that Titus would bring him news there about the dispositions of the Corinthian Church; and at last, in order to meet him the sooner, he crossed over into Macedonia, so anxious was he to be assured of their loyalty. ⁶ Some commentators would translate, 'causing us to triumph', but there is no authority at all for giving such a meaning to the words. ⁷ 'A fresh attempt'; St Paul must have been accused, or must have thought that he was being accused, of dwelling too much on what he had done for the Corinthians.

written not in ink, but in the Spirit of the living God, with human hearts, instead of stone, to carry it. Such, through Christ, is the confidence in which we make our appeal to God. Not that, left to ourselves, we are able to frame any thought as coming from ourselves; all our ability comes from God, since it is he who has enabled us to promulgate his new law to men. It is a spiritual, not a written law; the written law inflicts death, whereas the spiritual law brings life. We know how that sentence of death, engraved in writing upon stone, was promulgated to men in a dazzling cloud, so that the people of Israel could not look Moses in the face, for the brightness of it, although that brightness soon passed away. How much more dazzling, then, must be the brightness in which the spiritual law is promulgated to them! If there is a splendour in the proclamation of our guilt, there must be more splendour yet in the proclamation of our acquittal; and indeed, what once seemed resplendent seems by comparison resplendent no longer, so much does the greater splendour outshine it.¹ What passed away passed in a flash of glory; what remains, remains instead in a blaze of glory.

Such is the ground of our confidence, and we speak out boldly enough. It is not for us to use veiled language, as Moses veiled his face. He did it, so that the people of Israel might not go on gazing at the features of the old order, which was passing away. But in spite of that, dullness has crept over their senses, and to this day the reading of the old law is muffled with the same veil; no revelation tells them that it has been abrogated in Christ. To this day, I say, when the law of Moses is read out, a veil hangs over their hearts.² There must be a turning to the Lord first, and then the

veil will be taken away. The Spirit we have been speaking of is the Lord; and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. It is given to us, all alike, to catch the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, with faces unveiled; and so we become transfigured into the same likeness, borrowing glory from that glory, as the Spirit of the Lord enables us.³

4 Being entrusted, then, by God's mercy, with this ministry, we do not play the coward; we renounce all shameful concealment, there must be no crooked ways, no falsifying of God's word; it is by making the truth publicly known that we recommend ourselves to the honest judgement of mankind, as in God's sight. Our gospel is a mystery, yes, but it is only a mystery to those who are on the road to perdition; those whose unbelieving minds have been blinded by the god this world worships, so that the glorious gospel of Christ, God's image, cannot reach them with the rays of its illumination.⁵ After all, it is not ourselves we proclaim; we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. The same God who bade light shine out of darkness has kindled a light in our hearts, whose shining is to make known his glory as he has revealed it in the features of Jesus Christ.

We have a treasure, then, in our keeping, but its shell is of perishable earthenware; it must be God, and not anything in ourselves, that gives it its sovereign power. For ourselves, we are being hampered everywhere, yet still have room to breathe, are hard put to it, but never at a loss; persecution does not leave us unbefriended, nor crushing blows destroy us; we carry about continually in our bodies the dying

¹ 'By comparison'; literally, 'in this part', i.e. this partial manifestation. ² *vv.* 5-15: St Paul compares the position of the Christian missionary, announcing the new law of life, that is, the Gospel, with that of Moses announcing to the Jews the old law, by which sinners are condemned. Moses received the law on tables of stone; the Gospel must be thought of as engraved upon men's hearts. We are told in Ex. 34. 29-35 that Moses' face shone with an unearthly radiance after he had conversed with God on Mount Sinai; for a time, he had to wear a veil, because the Israelites could not bear to look on this brightness. How much more do the faces of Christ's ministers shine with the reflection of his glory! But they do not throw any veil over the glory they have witnessed; they grow in likeness to Christ. It is the Jews who wear a veil over their faces, listening to the law of Moses sabbath after sabbath and never learning to see the glory of Christ revealed there.

³ *vv.* 17-18. Many different renderings have been given of these two verses, and it is perhaps impossible for us to ascertain the exact sense in which St Paul wrote them. It is not certain, in the Greek, whether 'catch' means 'catch sight of', or 'reflect'.

⁴ St Paul seems to imply that his opponents accused him of being ashamed of his message, and veiling it in an atmosphere of mystery.

⁵ 'The god this world worships'; that is, the devil, or Mammon. Some commentators, however, have understood 'the God of this world' as an allusion to Almighty God himself.

state of Jesus, so that the living power of Jesus may be manifested in our bodies too.

- 11 Always we, alive as we are, are being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the living power of Jesus may be manifested in this mortal nature of ours. So death makes
12 itself felt in us, and life in you. I spoke my mind, says the scripture, with full confidence, and we too speak our minds with full confidence, sharing that same spirit of
13 faith,¹ and knowing that he who raised Jesus from the dead will raise us too, and
14 summon us, like you, before him. It is all for your sakes, so that grace made manifold in many lives may increase the sum of gratitude which is offered to God's glory. No, we do not play the coward; though the outward part of our nature is being worn down, our inner life is refreshed from day
15 to day. This light and momentary affliction brings with it a reward multiplied every
16 way, loading us with everlasting glory; if only we will fix our eyes on what is unseen, not on what we can see. What we can see, lasts but for a moment; what is unseen is eternal.

- 5 Once this earthly tent-dwelling of ours has come to an end, God, we are sure, has a solid building waiting for us, a dwelling not made with hands, that will
2 last eternally in heaven.² And indeed, it is for this that we sigh, longing for the shelter
3 of that home which heaven will give us, if death, when it comes, is to find us sheltered, not defenceless against the winds.
4 Yes, if we tent-dwellers here go sighing and heavy-hearted, it is not because we would be stripped of something; rather, we would clothe ourselves afresh; our mortal nature must be swallowed up in life.
5 For this, nothing else, God was preparing us, when he gave us the foretaste of his

Spirit. We take heart, then, continually, since we recognize that our spirits are exiled from the Lord's presence so long as they are at home in the body, with faith, instead of a clear view, to guide our steps. We take heart, I say, and have a mind rather to be exiled from the body, and at home with the Lord; to that end, at home or in exile, our ambition is to win his favour. All of us have a scrutiny to undergo before Christ's judgement-seat, for each to reap what his mortal life has earned, good or ill, according to his deeds.

It is, then, with the fear of the Lord before our minds that we try to win men over by persuasion; God recognizes us for what we are, and so I hope, does your better judgement.³ No, we are not trying to recommend ourselves to your favour afresh; we are shewing you how to find material for boasting of us, to those who have so much to boast of outwardly, and nothing inwardly. Are these wild words? Then take them as addressed to God. Or sober sense? Then take them as addressed to yourselves.⁴ With us, Christ's love is a compelling motive, and this is the conviction we have reached; if one man died on behalf of all, then all thereby became dead men; Christ died for us all, so that being alive should no longer mean living with our own life, but with his life who died for us and has risen again; and therefore, henceforward, we do not think of anybody in a merely human fashion; even if we used to think of Christ in a human fashion, we do so no longer; it follows, in fact, that when a man becomes a new creature in Christ, his old life has disappeared, everything has become new about him.⁵ This, as always, is God's doing; it is he who, through Christ, has reconciled us to himself, and allowed us to minister thus

¹ 'Sharing that same spirit of faith'; in the Hebrew, Ps. 115 is continuous with the psalm which precedes it, the last verse of which seems to be a prophecy of the Resurrection. ² There may be an allusion here to the contrast between the tabernacle in the wilderness and the more solidly built temple which afterwards replaced it. Cf. Heb. 11, 9, 10. ³ The precise bearing of this verse is very doubtful, the general sense seems to be that God knows, without any need of persuasion, how sincere the Apostle's intentions are, and the Corinthians ought, by this time, to be in the same position. ⁴ Many interpretations are given of this verse, which reads literally, 'Whether we are out of our senses, it is to God, or whether we are in our right mind, it is to you'.

⁵ 'We do not know anybody according to the flesh'. St Paul seems to contrast himself here with the persons mentioned in verse 12, who judge everything by outward appearances; for him, all outward considerations of nationality, kinship, etc., disappear in the new unity of the Christian family. It is not easy to suppose that St Paul knew Christ 'after the flesh' in the sense of the knowing him before the Ascension; it is possible, however, that when he says 'we' he is thinking of the other apostles, who had known Christ as a friend and a teacher, some of them as a kinsman. ⁶ The Greek here may also be rendered, 'When a man is in Christ, he has become a new creature; his old life has disappeared', etc.

19 reconciliation of his to others. Yes, God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, establishing in our hearts his message of reconciliation, instead of holding men to account for their sins.

20 We are Christ's ambassadors, then, and God appeals to you through us; we entreat you in Christ's name, make your peace with God. Christ never knew sin, and God made him into sin for us, so that in him we might be turned into the holiness of God.

6 And now, to further that work, we entreat you not to offer God's grace an ineffectual welcome. (I have answered thy prayer, he says, in a time of pardon, I have brought thee help in a day of salvation. And here is the time of pardon; the day of salvation has come already.)¹ We are careful not to give offence to anybody, lest we should bring discredit on our ministry; as God's ministers, we must do everything to make ourselves acceptable. We have to shew great patience, in times of affliction, of need, of difficulty; under the lash, in prison, in the midst of tumult; when we are tired out, sleepless, and fasting. We have to be pure-minded, enlightened, forgiving and gracious to others; we have to rely on the Holy Spirit, on unaffected love, on the truth of our message, on the power of God. To right and to left we must be armed with innocence; now honoured, now slighted, now traduced, now flattered. They call us deceivers, and we tell the truth; unknown, and we are fully acknowledged;² dying men, and see, we live; punished, yes, but not doomed to die; sad men, that rejoice continually; beggars, that bring riches to many; disinherited, and the world is ours.

11 We are speaking freely to you, Corinthians; we throw our hearts wide open to you. It is not our fault, it is the fault of your own affections, that you feel constraint with us. Pay us back in the same coin (I am speaking to you as to my children); open your hearts wide too.³ You

must not consent to be yokefellows with unbelievers. What has innocence to do with lawlessness? What is there in common between light and darkness? What harmony between Christ and Belial? How can a believer throw in his lot with an infidel? How can the temple of God have any commerce with idols? And you are the temple of the living God; God has told us so; I will live and move among them, and be their God, and they shall be my people.⁴ Come out, then, from among them, the Lord says to us, separate yourselves from them, and do not even touch what is unclear; then I will make you welcome.⁵ I will be your Father, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord, the Almighty.⁶

7 Such are the promises, beloved, that await us. Why then, let us purge ourselves clean from every defilement of flesh and of spirit, achieving the work of our sanctification in the fear of God. Be generous with us; it is not as if any of you could say that we had wronged him, or done him harm, or taken undue advantage of him. I am not finding fault with you when I say this; I have told you before now, we hold you so close in our hearts that nothing in life or in death can part us from you.

With what confidence I speak to you, what pride I take in you! I am full of encouragement, nay, I cannot contain myself for happiness, in the midst of all these trials of mine. By the time we had reached Macedonia, our human weakness could find no means of rest; all was conflict without, all was anxiety within. But there is one who never fails to comfort those who are brought low; God gave us comfort, as soon as Titus came. It was not only that he came; he inspired us with that courage he had derived from you. He told us how you longed for my presence, how you grieved over what had happened, how you took my part, till I was more than ever

¹ The first half of this verse is a quotation from Is. 49. 8. The whole verse is here printed as a parenthesis, because it interrupts the sequence of thought; St Paul is speaking of the qualifications needed in Christ's ambassadors.

² 'Acknowledged', probably in the sense of being acknowledged by God as his own. This sense is frequent in the New Testament; cf. I Cor. 13. 12.

³ 'As to my children', or possibly 'as to children', indicating that he is using schoolroom language to them.

⁴ Lev. 26. 12.

⁵ Is. 52. 11.

⁶ *vs.* 14-18: These verses and the first verse of ch. 7 appear to interrupt the sequence of thought; but no doubt there was some special difficulty to which St Paul alludes here, and we have lost the clue to it. Some think that marriage between Christians and heathens is in question. *v.* 18: This quotation does not occur verbally in the Old Testament.

8 rejoiced. Yes, even if I caused you pain by
 my letter, I am not sorry for it. Perhaps
 I was tempted to feel sorry, when I saw
 how my letter had caused you even mo-
 9 mentary pain,¹ but now I am glad; not glad
 of the pain, but glad of the repentance the
 pain brought with it. Yours was a super-
 natural remorse, so that you were not in
 any way the losers through what we had
 10 done. Supernatural remorse leads to an
 abiding and salutary change of heart,
 whereas the world's remorse leads to
 11 death. See what devotion has been bred in
 you now by this supernatural remorse;
 how you disowned the guilt; the indigna-
 tion you felt, the fear that overcame you;
 how you missed me, how you took my
 part, how you righted the wrong done.
 You have done everything to prove your-
 12 selves free from guilt in this matter. So,
 then, I had written you a letter, and it was
 neither the wrong-doer nor the injured
 party that was to be the gainer by it; it was
 to have the effect of shewing you our de-
 13 votion to your welfare² in God's sight. It
 was this that brought us comfort; and be-
 sides this comfort, we had still greater
 cause for rejoicing in the joy which Titus
 felt, with his heart refreshed by the wel-
 14 come you all gave him. I had boasted to
 Titus of the confidence I felt in you, and
 you did not play me false; no, the boast I
 had made to Titus proved true, as true as
 the message which I had delivered to you.
 15 He bears a most affectionate memory of
 you, of the submissiveness you all shewed,
 of the anxious fear with which you received
 16 him. I am rejoiced that I can repose such
 full confidence in you.

8 And now, brethren, we must tell you
 about the grace which God has lav-
 ished upon the churches of Macedonia:³
 2 how well they have stood the test of dis-
 tress, how abundantly they have rejoiced
 over it, how abject is their poverty, and
 how the crown of all this has been a rich

measure of generosity in them.⁴ I can
 3 testify that of their own accord they under-
 took to do all they could, and more than
 they could; they begged us, most urgently,
 4 to allow them the privilege of helping to
 supply the needs of the saints. And their
 5 gift went beyond our hopes; they gave
 their own services to the Lord, which
 meant, as God willed, to us; so that we
 6 were able to ask Titus to visit you again,
 and finish this gracious task he had begun,
 as part of his mission.⁵ You excel in so
 7 much already, in faith, in power of utter-
 ance, in knowledge of the truth, in devo-
 tion of every kind, in your loving treatment
 of us; may this gracious excellence be
 yours too. I say this, not to lay any injunc-
 8 tion on you, but only to make sure that
 your charity rings true by telling you about
 the eagerness of others. (You do not need
 9 to be reminded how gracious our Lord
 Jesus Christ was; how he impoverished
 himself for your sakes, when he was so
 rich, so that you might become rich
 through his poverty), I am only giving you
 10 my advice, then, in this matter; you can
 claim that as your due, since it was you who
 led the way, not only in acting, but in pro-
 posing to act, as early as last year. It
 11 remains for you now to complete your
 action; readiness of the will must be com-
 pleted by deeds, as far as your means
 allow. We value a man's readiness of will
 12 according to the means he has, not accord-
 ing to the means he might have, but has
 not; and there is no intention that others
 13 should be relieved at the price of your dis-
 tress. No, a balance is to be struck, and
 14 what you can spare now is to make up for
 what they want; so that what they can
 spare may, in its turn, make up for your
 want, and thus the balance will be re-
 dressed. So we read in scripture, He who
 15 had gathered much had nothing left over,
 and he who had gathered little, no lack.⁶

I thank God for inspiring the heart of
 Titus, your representative, with the same

¹ Commentators, as before, are divided over the question whether this letter was the First Epistle to the Corinthians, or a later one now lost; and whether the wrong-doer here referred to is the person mentioned in I Cor. 5. 1 or not. ² The best Greek manuscripts here read 'your devotion to us' instead of 'our devotion to you'. ³ *vs.* 1 and following: St Paul returns here, as in I Cor. 16 to the collection he was making in Macedonia and Achaia for the needs of the impoverished church at Jerusalem. It seems likely that in Macedonia (verses 2 and 3) and perhaps also in Achaia (verses 12 and 13) there had been hard times, and the Apostle is anxious not to appear as if he were making an unreasonable demand.

⁴ 'Generosity' literally, 'simplicity', both here and in the following chapter. ⁵ *vs.* 5; 6: The Greek perhaps implies that certain Macedonians offered their own services to St Paul with the expressed intention of setting Titus free to visit Corinth again. ⁶ *Ex.* 16. 18.

17 eagerness.¹ He has accepted our invitation; but indeed, of his own choice he was
 18 eager to visit you. And we are sending with him that brother of ours, who has won the praise of all the churches by his proclamation of the gospel; he, too, is the man whom the churches have appointed to be our companion in this gracious ministry of ours, to further the Lord's glory and our own resolve. They were anxious that no suspicion should be aroused against us, with these great sums to handle; it is not only in the Lord's sight, but in the sight of men, that we have to study our behaviour.
 19 And, to accompany these, we are sending a brother of whose eagerness we have had good proof, in many ways and upon many occasions; now he is more eager than ever, such is the confidence he feels in you. As for Titus, he is my partner and has shared my work among you; as for these brethren of ours, they are the envoys of the churches, the glory of Christ: give them proof, then, of your charity, and of the good reason we have to be proud of you, for all the churches to see.

9 And indeed, to write and tell you about the collection for the saints would be waste of time; I know well your eagerness, which has made me boast to the Macedonians that Achaia has been ready ever since last year, and this challenge of yours has stirred up others beside yourselves. If I am sending the brethren, it is only for fear that the boast we made of you should prove false in this particular; as I told you, I would have you quite ready; or else, when some of the Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we, and you too for that matter, will be put to the blush over this confidence of ours. That is why I have thought it necessary to ask the brethren to visit you first, and see that the free offering you have already promised is prepared beforehand. Only it is to be a free offering, not a grudging tribute.
 6 I would remind you of this, He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly; he who sows

freely will reap freely too. Each of you should carry out the purpose he has formed in his heart, not with any painful effort; it is the cheerful giver God loves. God has the power to supply you abundantly with every kind of blessing, so that, with all your needs well supplied at all times, you may have something to spare for every work of mercy. So we read, He has spent largely, and given to the poor; his charity lives on for ever.² He who puts grain into the sower's hand, and gives us food to eat, will supply you with seed and multiply it, and enrich the harvest of your charity; so that you will have abundant means of every kind for all that generosity which gives proof of our gratitude towards God. The administration, remember, of this public service does more than supply the needs of the saints; it yields, besides, a rich harvest of thanksgiving in the name of the Lord. This administration makes men praise God for the spirit of obedience which you shew in confessing the gospel of Christ, and the generosity which you shew in sharing your goods with these and with all men; and they will intercede, too, on your behalf, as the abundant measure of grace which God bestows on you warms their hearts towards you. Thanks be to God for his unutterable bounty to us.

10 And now, here is Paul, the man who is so diffident when he meets you face to face, and deals so boldly with you at a distance, making an appeal to you by the gentleness and the courtesy of Christ.³ What I ask is, that you will not force me to deal boldly with you when we meet. I have my own grounds for confidence, and with these I may well be counted a match for those who think we rely on merely human powers. Human indeed we are, but it is in no human strength that we fight our battles. The weapons we fight with are not human weapons; they are divinely powerful, ready to pull down strongholds. Yes, we can pull

¹ 'Titus, your representative, with the same eagerness' (as yourselves); others would understand the meaning to be 'Titus with the same eagerness for your welfare' (as myself). ² Ps. 111. 9. The word rendered 'charity' in this and the following verse is literally 'justice'; i.e. compliance with the Law as laid down in Deut. 15. 11 and elsewhere, cf. Mt. 6. 1. ³ *ev.* 1 and following: In spite of the Apostle's general satisfaction with the state of the Church at Corinth, there was evidently a party there still attached to certain teachers who opposed his influence; and the remaining chapters of the epistle shew that he means to combat them with all the power of his apostleship.

5 down the conceits of men, every barrier of pride which sets itself up against the true knowledge of God; we make every mind
6 surrender to Christ's service, and are prepared to punish rebellion from any quarter, once your own submission is complete.¹

7 Wait and see what happens when we meet.² There may be someone who takes credit to himself for being the champion of Christ; if so, let him reflect further that we belong to Christ's cause no less than himself; and indeed, I might boast of the powers I have, powers which the Lord has given me so as to build up your faith, not so as to crush your spirits, and I should
9 not be put in the wrong. It must not be thought that I try to overawe you when I
10 write. His letters, some people say, are powerful and carry weight, but his presence in person lacks dignity, he is but a
11 poor orator. I warn those who speak thus that, when we visit you, our actions will not belie the impression which our letters
12 make when we are at a distance. It is not for us to intrude, or challenge comparison with others who claim credit for themselves; we are content to go by our own measure, to compare ourselves with our
13 own standard of achievement.³ Yes, we may boast, but our boasting will not be disproportionate; it will be in proportion to the province which God has assigned to
14 us, one which reaches as far as you. Nobody can say that we are encroaching, that you lie beyond our orbit; our journeys in preaching Christ's gospel took us all the
15 way to you.⁴ Ours, then, is no disproportionate boasting, founded on other men's labours; on the contrary, as your faith bears increase, we hope to attain still further vantage-points through you, without
16 going beyond our province, and preach the gospel further afield, without boasting of ready-made conquests in a province that

belongs to another. He who boasts, should make his boast in the Lord; it is the man whom God accredits, not the man who takes credit to himself, that proves himself to be true metal.

11 If you would only bear with my vanity for a little! Pray be patient with me; after all, my jealousy on your behalf is the jealousy of God himself: I have betrothed you to Christ, so that no other but he should claim you, his bride without spot, and now I am anxious about you. The serpent beguiled Eve with his cunning; what if your minds should be corrupted, and lose that innocence which is yours in Christ? Some newcomer preaches to you a different Christ, not the one we preached to you; he brings you a spirit other than the spirit you had from us, a gospel other than the gospel you received; you would do well, then, to be patient with me.⁵

I claim to have done no less than the very greatest of the apostles. I may be unexperienced in speaking, but I am not so in my knowledge of the truth; everybody knows what we have been in every way to you. Unless perhaps you think I did wrong to honour you by abasing myself, since I preached God's gospel to you at no charge to yourselves? Why, I impoverished other churches, taking pay from them so as to be at your service. I was penniless when I visited you, but I would not cripple any of you with expenses; the brethren came from Macedonia to relieve my necessities: I would not, and I will not, put any burden on you. As the truth of Christ lives in me, no one in all the country of Achaia shall silence this boast of mine. Why is that? Because I have no love for you? God knows I have. No, I shall continue to do as I have done, so as to cut away the ground from those who would gladly boast that they are

¹ He wishes to bring as many as possible of his critics to a better mind by reasoning, before he proceeds to punishment.

² What happens when we meet'; literally, 'the things that are face to face', see verse 1 above. Some would translate 'the obvious facts', but this rendering does justice neither to the Greek nor to the context. The Greek may also be rendered 'You think too much of appearances'. 'Being the champion of Christ'; literally, 'belonging to Christ', cf. I Cor. 1. 12.

³ *iv.* 12 and following: Some Greek manuscripts read 'take credit to themselves, content to take their own measure and compare themselves with their own standard of achievement. But as for us, we may boast', etc. It seems clear from this and the following verses that St Paul, who was careful not to build on the foundation other men had laid (Rom. 15. 20), felt hurt that some of the Corinthians should pay more attention to later missionaries than to himself (cf. I Cor. 4. 15).

⁴ 'Took us all the way to you'; the Greek might also mean, 'made us the first to reach you'.
⁵ 'To be patient with me' as in verse 1; the more ordinary rendering is 'to be patient with him', but it is difficult to see how St Paul could have written this, even in irony.

13 no different from myself. Such men are
 14 false apostles, dishonest workmen, that
 15 pass for apostles of Christ. And no wonder;
 16 Satan himself can pass for an angel
 17 of light, and his servants have no difficulty
 18 in passing for servants of holiness;
 19 but their end will be what their life has
 20 deserved.

21 Once more I appeal to you, let none of
 22 you think me vain; or, if it must be so,
 23 give me a hearing in spite of my vanity, and
 24 let me boast a little in my turn. When I
 25 boast with such confidence, I am not deliv-
 26 ering a message to you from God; it is
 27 part of my vanity if you will. If so many
 28 others boast of their natural advantages,
 29 I must be allowed to boast too. You find
 30 it easy to be patient with the vanity of
 31 others, you who are so full of good sense.
 32 Why, you let other people tyrannize over
 33 you, prey upon you, take advantage of you,
 34 vaunt their power over you, browbeat
 35 you! I say this without taking credit to
 36 myself, I say it as if we had had no power
 37 to play such a part; yet in fact—here my
 38 vanity speaks—I can claim all that others
 39 claim. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are
 40 they Israelites? So am I. Are they de-
 41 scended from Abraham? So am I. Are
 42 they Christ's servants? These are wild
 43 words; I am something more. I have toiled
 44 harder, spent longer days in prison, been
 45 beaten so cruelly, so often looked death in
 46 the face. Five times the Jews scourged me,
 47 and spared me but one lash in the forty;
 48 three times I was beaten with rods, once
 49 I was stoned; I have been shipwrecked
 50 three times, I have spent a night and a day
 51 as a castaway at sea. What journeys I have
 52 undertaken, in danger from rivers, in danger
 53 from robbers, in danger from my own
 54 people, in danger from the Gentiles; danger
 55 in cities; danger in the wilderness,
 56 danger in the sea, danger among false
 57 brethren! I have met with toil and weariness,
 58 so often been sleepless, hungry and thirsty;
 59 so often denied myself food, gone cold and

60 naked. And all this, over and above some-
 61 thing else which I do not count; I mean the
 62 burden I carry every day, my anxious care
 63 for all the churches; does anyone feel a
 64 scruple? I share it; is anyone's conscience
 65 hurt? I am ablaze with indignation. If I
 66 must needs boast, I will boast of the things
 67 which humiliate me; the God who is
 68 Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, blessed
 69 be his name for ever, knows that I am
 70 telling the truth. When I was at Damascus,
 71 the agent of king Aretas was keeping guard
 72 over the city of the Damascenes, intent on
 73 seizing me,³ and to escape from his hands
 74 I had to be let down through a window
 75 along the wall, in a hamper.

12 If we are to boast (although boasting
 is out of place), I will go on to
 the visions and revelations the Lord has
 granted me. There is a man I know who
 was carried out of himself in Christ, four-
 teen years since; was his spirit in his body?
 I cannot tell. Was it apart from his body?
 I cannot tell; God knows. This man, at
 least, was carried up into the third heaven.³
 I can only tell you that this man, with his
 spirit in his body, or with his spirit apart
 from his body, God knows which, not I,
 was carried up into Paradise, and heard
 mysteries which man is not allowed to
 utter. That is the man about whom I will
 boast; I will not boast about myself, except
 to tell you of my humiliations. It would
 not be vanity, if I had a mind to boast about
 such a man as that; I should only be telling
 the truth. But I will spare you the telling
 of it; I have no mind that anybody should
 think of me except as he sees me, as he
 hears me talking to him. And indeed, for
 fear that these surpassing revelations
 should make me proud, I was given a sting
 to distress my outward nature, an angel of
 Satan sent to rebuff me. Three times it
 made me entreat the Lord to rid me of it;⁴
 but he told me, My grace is enough for
 thee; my strength finds its full scope in thy

¹ *vs.* 19, 20: The sense of this passage seems to be, that the Corinthians ought not to complain of St Paul's vanity, since they did not complain of the unscrupulous treatment they often received from his rivals.

² *Ac.* 9. 25. Aretas was king of the Nabateans, and there is no reason to think that he ruled in Damascus at the time of St Paul's conversion. His 'ethnarch' was more probably a representative, a 'consul', as we should call it nowadays.

³ We have no other record of this ecstasy, unless it be that mentioned in *Ac.* 22. 17. ⁴ A sting to distress my outward nature; this is often understood as referring to temptations against purity, but some of the earliest Fathers would interpret it rather of those persecutions which were stirred up against the Apostle by his fellow countrymen. Other commentators have supposed that St Paul is speaking of some bodily disease or deficiency. If we see here a reference to *Num.* 33. 55, the second of the explanations given above is to be preferred.

weakness. More than ever, then, I delight to boast of the weaknesses that humiliate me, so that the strength of Christ may enshrine itself in me. I am well content with these humiliations of mine, with the insults, the hardships, the persecutions, the times of difficulty I undergo for Christ; when I am weakest, then I am strongest of all.

- 11 I have given way to vanity; it was you that drove me to it; you ought to have given me credentials, instead of asking for them. No, I have done no less than the very greatest of the apostles, worthless as I am; I have earned the character of apostleship among you, by all the trials I have undergone, by signs and wonders and deeds of miracle. What injustice did I do you, as compared with the other churches, except that to you, of my own choice, I refused to make myself a burden? Forgive me, if I wronged you there. This is the third time I have made preparations for visiting you,¹ and I do not intend to cripple you with expenses: what I claim is yourselves, not anything you can give; it is the parents that should save for their children, not the children for their parents. For my own part, I will gladly spend and be spent on your souls' behalf, though you should love me too little for loving you too well.
- 12 Ah, you say, that may be; I did not lay any charge on you myself, but I preyed upon you by roundabout means, like the knave I am. What, those envoys I sent you, did I take advantage of you through any of them? I asked Titus to visit you, and there was the brother I sent with him; did Titus take any advantage of you? Did we not all follow the same course, and in the same spirit?

- 13 You have been telling one another, all this while, that we are defending our conduct to you. Rather, we have been uttering our thoughts as in God's presence, in

Christ; yet always, beloved, so as to build up your faith. I have the fear that perhaps, when I reach you, I shall find in you unwelcome hosts, and you in me an unwelcome visitor; that there will be dissension, rivalry, ill humour, factiousness, backbiting, gossip, self-conceit, disharmony. I have the fear that on this new visit God has humiliation in store for me when we meet; that I shall have tears to shed over many of you, sinners of old and still unrepentant, with a tale of impure, adulterous, and wanton living.

13 This will be the third time I have been on my way to see you. Every question, we read, must be settled by the voice of two or of three witnesses. I give you now, still absent, the warning of my second visit; I have told you before, and tell you now, both those who have sinned already and all the rest of you, that I will shew no leniency next time I come.² Must you have proof that it is Christ who speaks through me? In him at least you will find no weakness; he still exerts his power among you. Weakness brought him to the cross, but the power of God brought him life; and though it is in our weakness that we are united to him, you will find us too, as he is, alive with God's power. It is your own selves you should be testing, to make sure you are still true to your faith; it is your own selves you must put to the proof. Surely your own conscience will tell you that Christ Jesus is alive in you, unless, somehow, you fail at the test; I think you will recognize that we have not failed at ours. When we pray God to keep you from wrong, it is not that we wish to prove successful; our desire is that you should do what is right, even though we seem to have failed. The powers we have are used in support of the truth, not against it;³ and we are best pleased when we have no power

¹ This may mean that the Apostle had already visited Corinth twice (in which case we have no record in the Acts of his second visit), or it may mean this is the third time the idea of revisiting it has occurred to him during his absence. The language of 13. 1, below, is somewhat in favour of the former view. See also p. 182, note 2.

² vs. 1 and 2: The former of these verses suggests, though it does not necessarily imply, that St Paul had visited Corinth twice already. The second, however, seems rather to indicate that the visit which he now proposes to make is only his second visit. Neither view can claim any certain preference; see 12. 14 above. ³ Next time I come may refer to the approaching visit; but the Greek is better understood of some further visit, at an unspecified time, which would have to be made if the delinquents at Corinth should prove contumacious. The quotation from Deut. 19. 15 may be intended to suggest that each visit is a 'witness' as to the dispositions of those at Corinth; or it may be simply an intimation that, in judging their disorders, St Paul will not act on any unsupported evidence.

³ The meaning seems to be, that St Paul hopes his visit will not be marked by any use of his apostolic authority; it will not be called into exercise, if there are no disorders left to correct.

A final Warning, and a friendly Valediction

II CORINTHIANS

against you, and you are powerful yourselves. That is what we pray for, your perfection. I write this in absence, in the hope that, when I come, I may not have to deal severely with you, in the exercise of that authority which the Lord has given me to build up your faith, not to crush your spirits.

11 Finally, brethren, we wish you all joy.

Perfect your lives, listen to the appeal we make, think the same thoughts, keep peace among yourselves; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with the kiss of saints. All the saints send you their greeting. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the imparting of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

PAUL, an apostle not holding his commission from men, not appointed by man's means, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him
2 from the dead, sends his greeting, and greeting from all the brethren who are with
3 him, to the churches of Galatia. Grace and peace be yours from God the Father, and
4 from our Lord Jesus Christ. He it is who has given himself up for our sins, to rescue us from the evil world that surrounds us, according to the will of God, who is our
5 Father; to him be glory for ever and ever,
• Amen.

6 I am astounded that you should be so quick to desert one who called you to the grace of Christ, and go over to another
7 gospel; this can only mean, that certain people are causing disquiet among you, in their eagerness to pervert the gospel of
8 Christ.¹ Friends, though it were we ourselves, though it were an angel from heaven that should preach to you a gospel other than the gospel we preached to you, a
9 curse upon him! I repeat now the warning we gave you before it happened, if anyone preaches to you what is contrary to the tradition you received, a curse upon him!
10 Do you think it is man's favour, or God's, that I am trying to win now? Shall I be told, now, that I am courting the good will of men? If, after all these years, I were still courting the favour of men, I should not be what I am, the slave of Christ.

11 Let me tell you this, brethren; the gospel I preached to you is not a thing of man's
12 dictation; it was not from man that I inherited or learned it, it came to me by a
13 revelation from Jesus Christ. You have been told how I bore myself in my Jewish days, how I persecuted God's Church be-

yond measure and tried to destroy it, going
further in my zeal as a Jew than many of my own age and race, so fierce a champion was I of the traditions handed down by my forefathers. And then, he who had set me
15 apart from the day of my birth, and called me by his grace, saw fit to make his Son
16 known in me, so that I could preach his gospel among the Gentiles. My first thought was not to hold any consultations with any human creature; I did not go up
17 to Jerusalem to see those who had been apostles longer than myself; no, I went off into Arabia, and when I came back, it was to Damascus. Then, when three years had
18 passed, I did go up to Jerusalem, to visit Peter, and I stayed a fortnight there in his company;² but I did not see any of the
19 other apostles, except James, the Lord's brother. Such is my history; as God sees
20 me, I am telling you the plain truth. Afterwards, I travelled into other parts of the world, Syria and Cilicia; and all the time
22 I was not even known by sight to the Christian churches of Judaea; they only
23 knew by hearsay, The man who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy, and they praised
24 God for what he had done in me.

2 Then, after an interval of fourteen years, once again I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas; and Titus also accompanied me.³ I went up in obedience
1 to a revelation, and there I communicated to them (only in private, to men of repute)
2 the gospel I always preach among the Gentiles; was it possible that the course I had taken and was taking was useless? And it
3 is not even true to say that they insisted on my companion Titus, who was a Greek,

¹ Some commentators would translate here, 'Not a different gospel, no; it is only that certain people are causing disquiet'. ² This may mean three years after St Paul's return to Damascus, or three years after his conversion. See Ac. 9. 26.

³ As before, the fourteen years may be dated either from St Paul's conversion, or from his return to Damascus. Some commentators, accordingly, would identify this visit with that mentioned in Ac. 11. 30; others identify it with that of Ac. 15, and suppose that the Apostle left the earlier visit unrecorded, through forgetfulness or some other cause.

4 being circumcised; we were only thinking of those false brethren who had insinuated themselves into our company so as to spy on the liberty which we enjoy in Christ
 5 Jesus, meaning to make slaves of us. To these we did not give ground for a moment by way of obedience; we were resolved that the true principles of the gospel should remain undisturbed in your possession.¹
 6 But as for what I owe to those who were of some repute—it matters little to me who or what they were, God makes no distinction between man and man—these men of repute, I say, had nothing to communicate
 7 to me.² On the contrary, those who were reputed to be the main support of the Church, James and Cephas and John, saw plainly that I was commissioned to preach to the uncircumcised, as Peter was to the
 8 circumcised; he whose power had enabled Peter to become the apostle of the circumcised, had enabled me to become the
 9 apostle of the Gentiles. And so, recognizing the grace God had given me, they joined their right hands in fellowship with Barnabas and myself; the Gentiles were to be our province, the circumcised theirs.
 10 Only we were to remember the poor; which was the very thing I had set myself to do.³
 11 Afterwards, when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him openly; he stood self-condemned. He had been eating with the
 12 Gentiles, until we were visited by certain delegates from James; but when these came, he began to draw back and hold himself aloof, overawed by the supporters
 13 of circumcision. The rest of the Jews were no less false to their principles; Barnabas himself was carried away by their insincerity. So, when I found that they were
 14 not following the true path of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, Since thou, who art a born Jew, dost follow the Gentile, not the Jewish way of life, by what right dost thou bind the Gentiles to live

like Jews? We are Jews by right of nature, 15 we do not come from the guilty stock of the Gentiles; yet we found out that it is 16 through faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law, that a man is justified. We, like anyone else, had to learn to believe in Jesus Christ, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, not by observance of the law. Observance of the law cannot win acceptance for a single human creature.⁴

By putting our hopes of justification in 17 Christ, we took our rank as guilty creatures like the rest. Does that mean that Christ brings us guilt? That is not to be thought of; do I put myself in the wrong, when 18 I destroy and then rebuild?⁵ Through the law, my old self has become dead to the law, so that I may live to God; with Christ I hang upon the cross, and yet I am alive; 20 or rather, not I; it is Christ that lives in me. True, I am living, here and now, this mortal life; but my real life is the faith I have in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not spurn the 21 grace of God. If we can be justified through the law, then Christ's death was needless.

3 Senseless Galatians, who is it that has cast a spell on you, that you should refuse your loyalty to the truth, you, before whom Jesus Christ has been exposed to view on his cross? Let me be content with 2 asking you one question, Was it from observance of the law that the Spirit came to you, or from obeying the call of faith? Are 3 you so far out of your right senses? You dedicated your first beginnings to the spirit; and can you now find your completion in outward things? Was it to no 4 purpose that you went through so much? Since it seems it was to no purpose. When 5 God lavishes his Spirit on you and enables you to perform miracles, what is the reason for it? Your observance of the law, or your obedience to the call of faith? Remember 6

¹ *vv.* 3-5: The simplest explanation of these verses is that St Paul did have Titus circumcised, but not because anybody insisted on it, only so as to avoid giving any scandal to the Judaizing brethren. (Cf. Ac. 16. 3, where the phrase used is exactly the same.) It was not (he adds in verse 5) by way of obedience to any demands from them, as the Galatians had perhaps been told. Other commentators reject this idea as inconsistent with St Paul's principles, and explain that St Paul forgot to finish the sentence he began in verse 4. ² 'Those who were of some repute', perhaps including the apostles, but evidently others too, who are left unnamed.

³ Cf. Ac. 11. 30, if that is the occasion referred to. ⁴ The end of this verse refers to Ps. 142. 2. ⁵ That is, when I deny the doctrine of being justified through the law, but assert instead that of being justified by faith. The more usual interpretation, which makes the sentence a statement, not a question, is explained as meaning: 'It is not by breaking the law that a man becomes a transgressor, but by going back, like Peter, to the old observances he has abandoned'.

how Abraham put his faith in God, and it was reckoned virtue in him.¹ You must recognize, then, that Abraham's real children are the children of his faith. There is a passage in scripture which, long beforehand, brings to Abraham the good news, Through thee all the nations shall be blessed; and that passage looks forward to God's justification of the Gentiles by faith.² It is those, then, who take their stand on faith that share the blessing Abraham's faithfulness won. Those who take their stand on observance of the law are all under a curse; Cursed be everyone (we read) who does not persist in carrying out all that this book of the law prescribes.³ And indeed, that the law cannot make a man acceptable to God is clear enough; It is faith, we are told, that brings life to the just man; whereas the law does not depend on faith; no, we are told it is the man who carries out the commandments that will find life in them.⁴ From this curse invoked by the law Christ has ransomed us, by himself becoming, for our sakes, an accursed thing; we read that, There is a curse on the man who hangs on a gibbet.⁵ Thus, in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham was to be imparted to the Gentiles, so that we, through faith, might receive the promised gift of the Spirit.

Brethren, let me take an argument from common life. A valid legal disposition made by an ordinary human being cannot afterwards be set aside; no one can make fresh provisions in it.⁶ The promises you know of were made to Abraham and his offspring; (it does not, by the way, say, To

thy descendants, as if it meant a number of people; it says, To thy offspring, in the singular, meaning Christ).⁷ And this is my contention; the law, coming into being four hundred and thirty years afterwards, cannot unmake the disposition which God made so long ago, and cancel the promise. If our inheritance depends on observing the law, then it is not the inheritance secured to us by promise; that was promised to Abraham as a free gift.

What, then, is the purpose of the law? It was brought in to make room for transgression, while we waited for the coming of that posterity, to whom the promise had been made. Its terms were dictated by angels, acting through a spokesman; (a spokesman represents more than one, and there is only one God). Is the law an infringement, then, of God's promises? That is not to be thought of. Doubtless, if a law had been given that was capable of imparting life to us, it would have been for the law to bring us justification. But in fact scripture represents us as all under the bondage of sin; it was faith in Jesus Christ that was to impart the promised blessing to all those who believe in him.⁸ Until faith came, we were all being kept in bondage to the law, waiting for the faith that was one day to be revealed. So that the law was our tutor, bringing us to Christ, to find in faith our justification.⁹ When faith comes, then we are no longer under the rule of a tutor: through faith in Christ Jesus you are all now God's sons. All you who have been baptized in Christ's name have put on the person of Christ;¹¹ no more Jew or Gentile.

¹ Gen. 15. 6. ² Gen. 12. 3; 18. 18.

³ Deut. 21. 23. ⁴ Deut. 27. 26. ⁵ Hab. 2. 4; Lev. 18. 5

⁶ 'Legal disposition'; the Greek word here used has often the sense of a last will and testament, rarely the sense of a compact between two persons, in the heathen writers. In the Bible it has often the sense of a compact or covenant, rarely the sense of a will (Heb. 9. 16). Here, though St Paul is referring to the covenant God made with Abraham, he seems to be thinking, not of contracts, but of binding legal documents in general. 'No one'; that is, no one else; the Law is treated, in pursuance of the metaphor, as if it had been given to Moses by the angels rather than by God himself. ⁷ Gen. 22. 18.

⁸ 'To make room for transgression'; that is, either to discourage transgression, or (more probably) to turn our sins into transgressions, make us conscious of them as the breach of a divine law, and therefore of our need for redemption. It was a Jewish tradition that angels gave the law to Moses on Sinai (Ac. 7. 53, Heb. 2. 2). 'A spokesman'; literally a mediator or go-between, probably referring to Moses. The mediator who negotiates between two sides in a dispute is so often, at the same time, the spokesman or representative of a body of persons, that the two meanings 'mediator' and 'representative' slide off into one another; (cf. I Kg. 17. 4, where the Hebrew and some of the Greek versions use the word 'mediator' of Goliath, as being the representative or champion of the Philistines). In this passage, it is difficult to find any meaning for verse 20 unless we suppose that the Apostle refers to Moses as the spokesman of the angels; God, being a single Agent, would have no need of a spokesman to represent him, and did not employ any spokesman when he made the promises to Abraham. Thus the promises have a higher dignity than the law, as communicated to us directly from God. 'Its terms were dictated'; the same Greek word is used as in verse 15 above. ⁹ Probably an allusion to Ps. 142. 2, as quoted in 2. 10 above. ¹⁰ 'Our tutor'; the Greek word means a slave who took his master's children to school.

¹¹ 'Have put on the person of Christ'; literally, 'have put on Christ', as in Rom. 13. 14; here, St Paul refers to that obliteration of distinctions between man and man which results from our incorporation into Christ.

no more slave and freeman, no more male and female; you are all one person in Jesus Christ. And if you belong to Christ, then you are indeed Abraham's children; the promised inheritance is yours.

4 Consider this; one who comes into his property while he is still a child has no more liberty than one of the servants, though all the estate is his; he is under the control of guardians and trustees, until he reaches the age prescribed by his father. So it was with us; in those childish days of ours we toiled away at the schoolroom tasks which the world gave us,¹ till the appointed time came. Then God sent out his Son on a mission to us. He took birth from a woman, took birth as a subject of the law, so as to ransom those who were subject to the law, and make us sons by adoption. To prove that you are sons,² God has sent out the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying out in us, Abba, Father. No longer, then, art thou a slave, thou art a son; and because thou art a son, thou hast, by divine appointment, the son's right of inheritance. Formerly you had no knowledge of God; you lived as the slaves of deities who were in truth no deities at all. Now you have recognized the true God, or rather, the true God has recognized you. How is it that you are going back to those old schoolroom tasks of yours, so abject, so ineffectual, eager to begin your drudgery all over again? You have begun to observe special days and months, special seasons and years.³ I am anxious over you; has all the labour I have spent on you been useless?

Stand by me; I have taken my stand with you. I appeal to you, brethren. You have never treated me amiss.⁴ Why, when I preached the gospel to you in the first instance, it was, you remember, because of outward circumstances which were humiliating to me.⁵ Those outward circumstances of mine were a test for you, which you did not meet with contempt or dislike; you welcomed me as God's angel, as Christ Jesus.⁶ What has become now of the blessing that once was yours? In those days, I assure you, you would have plucked out your eyes, if you had had the chance, and given them to me. Have I made enemies of you, then, by telling you the truth? Oh, they are jealous over you, but for a dishonourable purpose; their aim is to shut you out from their company, so that you may be jealous of them. Your jealousy should be for the honourable gifts you see in a man of honour; always, not only when I am at your side.⁷ My little children, I am in travail over you afresh, until I can see Christ's image formed in you! I wish I were at your side now, and could speak to you in a different tone; I am bewildered at you.

Tell me, you who are so eager to have the law for your master, have you never read the law? You will find it written there, that Abraham had two sons; one had a slave for his mother, and one a free woman.⁸ The child of the slave was born in the course of nature; the free woman's, by the power of God's promise. All that is an allegory; the two women stand for the two dispensations. Agar stands for the old dispensation, which brings up its children to

¹ 'Schoolroom tasks'; the same word is used in Greek of the elements of nature, or of the sun, moon, etc., and some commentators think that this is the sense here; the Apostle is reminding the Galatians of the heathen gods they used to serve.

² The rendering given follows St Chrysostom; others would translate 'because you are sons'.

³ This will refer to the Hebrew sabbaths and other observances, which are here represented as a bondage no lighter than that which was imposed by the rules of heathen worship.

⁴ That is, abandon the Jewish customs for my sake, as I abandoned them for yours.

⁵ 'In the first instance'; some commentators think this means 'on the earlier of my two visits'; others would take the phrase generally, holding that this letter was written before the visit mentioned in Ac. 15.

⁶ 'Outward circumstances which were humiliating to me'; literally, 'infirmity of the flesh'. It does not seem likely, however, that illness would have made St Paul preach to the heathens in Galatia, or that this illness would have been a test for them, or that they would have been tempted by it to despise and dislike him. Many of the Fathers, therefore, understand this phrase of the persecutions which St Paul suffered at the hands of the Jews; cf. Ac. 13. 45 and following. It is certain that St Paul speaks of 'the flesh' when he is referring to disappointments and controversies (II Cor. 7. 5), and that 'infirmity' for him can mean any kind of humiliation (II Cor. 11. 30). He also speaks of 'the flesh' in special reference to the Jews, his kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. 11. 14).

⁷ 'God's angel'; in the Greek, this might mean, 'God's messenger'. It is perhaps worth noting that when St Paul healed a cripple at Lystra, the heathen mistook him for Mercury, the messenger of the gods. In the next verse, 'that blessing' perhaps means 'that occasion on which you called me blessed', the Greek word being one especially used in addresses to the pagan gods.

⁸ The Greek here has 'It is honourable in you to be jealous for what is honourable'; the sense of the words is in any case uncertain.

⁸ Cf. Gen. 16 and 21.

bondage, the dispensation which comes to us from mount Sinai. Mount Sinai, in Arabia, has the same meaning in the allegory as Jerusalem, the Jerusalem which exists here and now; an enslaved city, whose children are slaves.¹ Whereas our mother is the heavenly Jerusalem, a city of freedom. So it is that we read, Rejoice, thou barren woman that hast never borne child, break out into song and cry aloud, thou that hast never known travail; the deserted one has more children than she whose husband is with her.² It is we, brethren, that are children of the promise, as Isaac was. Now, as then, the son who was born in the course of nature persecutes the son whose birth is a spiritual birth. But what does our passage in scripture say? Rid thyself of the slave and her son; it cannot be that the son of a slave should divide the inheritance with the son of a free woman.³

You see, then, brethren, that we are sons of the free woman, not of the slave; such is the freedom Christ has won for us.

5 Stand fast, and do not let yourselves be caught again in the yoke of slavery. The word of Paul is your warrant for this; if you are for being circumcised, Christ is of no value to you at all. Once again I would warn anyone who is accepting circumcision that he thereby engages himself to keep all the precepts of the law. You who look to the law for your justification have cancelled your bond with Christ, you have forfeited grace. All our hope of justification lies in the spirit; it rests on our faith; once we are in Christ, circumcision means nothing, and the want of it means nothing; the faith that finds its expression in love is all that matters. Till now, you had been shaping your course well; who is it that has come between you and your loyalty to the truth? Not he who called you; this pressure comes from elsewhere.⁴ It takes but a little leaven to leaven the whole batch. I am

fully confident in the Lord that you will be of the same mind with me, leaving the disturbers of your peace, be they who they may, to answer for it. As for myself, brethren, if it is true that I preach the need of circumcision, why am I persecuted? If I did, the preaching of the cross would no longer give offence.⁵ I would rather they should lose their own manhood, these authors of your unrest.

Yes, brethren, freedom claimed you when you were called. Only, do not let this freedom give a foothold to corrupt nature; you must be servants still, serving one another in a spirit of charity. After all, the whole of the law is summed up in one phrase, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;⁶ if you are always backbiting and worrying each other, it is to be feared you will wear each other out in the end. Let me say this; learn to live and move in the spirit; then there is no danger of your giving way to the impulses of corrupt nature. The impulses of nature and the impulses of the spirit are at war with one another; either is clean contrary to the other, and that is why you cannot do all that your will approves. It is by letting the spirit lead you that you free yourselves from the yoke of the law. It is easy to see what effects proceed from corrupt nature; they are such things as adultery, impurity, incontinence, luxury, idolatry, witchcraft, feuds, quarrels, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, dissensions, factions, spite, murder, drunkenness, and debauchery. I warn you, as I have warned you before, that those who live in such a way will not inherit God's kingdom. Whereas the spirit yields a harvest of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, forbearance, gentleness, faith, courtesy, temperateness, purity.⁷ No law can touch lives such as these; those who belong to Christ have crucified nature, with all its passions, all its impulses. Since we live by the spirit, let the spirit be our rule of life; we must

¹ Many Greek manuscripts here have 'Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia', perhaps referring to some local name. It is in any case Agar, not Sinai, that is represented as corresponding to the earthly Jerusalem, in the Greek manuscripts. ² Is. 54. 1. ³ Gen. 21. 10. ⁴ Here, as in 1. 6, 'he who called you' refers to Almighty God, not to St Paul himself. ⁵ It would appear from this verse that the authors of confusion in the Galatian church represented St Paul himself as recommending circumcision to his Gentile converts. It is difficult to understand how they can have found any colour for such statements, if this letter was written *after* the deliberations mentioned in Act. 15; cf. Act. 16. 4. ⁶ Lev. 19. 18. ⁷ The Greek only mentions nine of the Twelve Fruits; viz., the first six, together with gentleness, faith, and temperateness. It is possible that the Latin version has accidentally included, in some cases, two renderings of the same Greek word.

not indulge vain ambitions, envying one another and provoking one another to envy.

6 Brethren, if a man is found guilty of some fault, you, who are spiritually minded, ought to shew a spirit of gentleness in correcting him. Have an eye upon thyself; thou too wilt perhaps encounter temptation. Bear the burden of one another's failings; then you will be fulfilling the law of Christ.¹ The man who thinks he is of some worth, when in truth he is worth nothing at all, is merely deluding himself. 4 Everyone should examine his own conduct; then he will be able to take the measure of his own worth; no need to compare himself with others. Each of us, then, will have his own load to carry. 6 Your teachers are to have a share in all that their disciples have to bestow. Make no mistake about it; you cannot cheat God. 8 A man will reap what he sows; if nature is his seed-ground, nature will give him a perishable harvest, if his seed-ground is the spirit, it will give him a harvest of eternal life. Let us not be discouraged, then, over our acts of charity; we shall reap when the time comes, if we persevere in

them. Let us practise generosity to all, while the opportunity is ours; and above all, to those who are of one family with us in the faith.

Here is some bold lettering for you, written in my own hand.² Who are they, these people who insist on your being circumcised? They are men, all of them, who are determined to keep up outward appearances, so that the cross of Christ may not bring persecution on them. Why, they do not even observe the law, although they adopt circumcision; they are for having you circumcised, so as to make a display of your outward conformity.³ God forbid that I should make a display of anything, except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world stands crucified to me, and I to the world. Circumcision means nothing, the want of it means nothing; when a man is in Christ Jesus, there has been a new creation. Peace and pardon to all those who follow this rule, to God's true Israel.⁴ Spare me, all of you, any further anxieties; already I bear the scars of the Lord Jesus printed on my body.⁵ Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

¹ 'The burden of one another's failings'; this is the meaning preferred by St Chrysostom and others (cf. *The Imitation of Christ*, i. 16 and 2. 3). The more usual interpretation of the passage, which understands 'the burdens of one another' to mean the misfortunes of others, which we are to bear by our sympathy, does not agree well with the context which goes before, or with that which follows. For 'the law of Christ', cf. Mat. 6. 14; 18. 35. In concluding this epistle, which is concerned with the Jewish law and the burdens it imposed, St Paul explains what burdens we ought to carry, what law we ought to obey.

² It seems probable that these last eight verses were all written in autograph, and some part of them in large writing, as if to attract special attention to them. The rendering, 'See what a long letter I have written to you in my own hand', would suit the Latin equally well, but it is not certain that it conforms with the Greek.

³ This suggests that the agitators in Galatia were Gentiles, rather than Jews, by birth.

⁴ 'God's true Israel' may mean the Church in general, or the believing Jews in particular.

⁵ The 'scars of the Lord Jesus' were, according to the common interpretation, the marks left on St Paul's body by the persecutions he had endured.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS

PAUL, by God's will an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those saints, the faithful in Jesus Christ, who dwell at Ephesus; Grace and peace be yours from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be that God, that Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us, in Christ, with every spiritual blessing, higher than heaven itself. He has chosen us out, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to be saints, to be blameless in his sight, for love of him;¹ marking us out beforehand (so his will decreed) to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ. Thus he would manifest the splendour of that grace by which he has taken us into his favour in the person of his beloved Son. It is in him and through his blood that we enjoy redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. So rich is God's grace, that has overflowed upon us in a full stream of wisdom and discernment, to make known to us the hidden purpose of his will. It was his loving design, centred in Christ, to give history its fulfilment by resuming everything in him, all that is in heaven, all that is on earth, summed up in him. In him it was our lot to be called, singled out beforehand to suit his purpose (for it is he who is at work everywhere, carrying out the designs of his will); we were to manifest his glory, we who were the first to set our hope in Christ; in him you too were called, when you listened to the preaching of the truth, that gospel which is your salvation. In him you too learned to believe, and had the seal set on your faith by the promised gift of the Holy Spirit; a pledge of the inheritance which is ours, to redeem it for us and bring us into possession of it, and so manifest God's glory.

¹ 'For love of him'; or perhaps, 'in his love'.
² It is not certain whether this means that we are God's inheritance (cf. Deut. 32. 9) or that God gives us an inheritance, as in verse 14 above.

If our inheritance is meant, 'redemption' is perhaps best understood as implying that our inheritance is redeemed for us (cf. Lev. 25. 25).
⁴ The Greek here has 'to be the head of the Church above everything else', the Latin, 'to be head over the whole Church'.
⁵ 'Who... is complete'; the Greek verb used here may mean this, or it may mean 'who completes all things in all men (or in all things)'.

Well then, I too play my part; I have been told of your faith in the Lord Jesus, of the love you shew towards all the saints;² and I never cease to offer thanks on your behalf, or to remember you in my prayers. So may he who is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father to whom glory belongs, grant you a spirit of wisdom and insight, to give you fuller knowledge of himself. May your inward eye be enlightened, so that you may understand to what hopes he has called you, how rich in glory is that inheritance of his found among the saints,³ what surpassing virtue there is in his dealings with us, who believe. Measure it by that mighty exercise of power which he shewed when he raised Christ from the dead, and bade him sit on his right hand above the heavens, high above all principalities and powers and virtues and dominations, and every name that is known, not in this world only, but in the world to come. He has put everything under his dominion, and made him the head to which the whole Church is joined,⁴ so that the Church is his body, the completion of him who everywhere and in all things is complete.⁵

2 He found you dead men; such were your transgressions, such were the sinful ways you lived in. That was when you followed the fashion of this world, when you owned a prince whose domain is in the lower air, that spirit whose influence is still at work among the unbelievers. We too, all of us, were once of their company; our life was bounded by natural appetites, and we did what corrupt nature or our own calculation would have us do, with God's displeasure for our birthright, like other

² Some Greek manuscripts omit the words 'of the love'.
³ It is not certain whether this means that we are God's inheritance (cf. Deut. 32. 9) or that God gives us an inheritance, as in verse 14 above.

If our inheritance is meant, 'redemption' is perhaps best understood as implying that our inheritance is redeemed for us (cf. Lev. 25. 25).
⁴ The Greek here has 'to be the head of the Church above everything else', the Latin, 'to be head over the whole Church'.
⁵ 'Who... is complete'; the Greek verb used here may mean this, or it may mean 'who completes all things in all men (or in all things)'.

men. How rich God is in mercy, with what an excess of love he loved us! Our sins had made dead men of us, and he, in giving life to Christ, gave life to us too; it is his grace that has saved you; raised us up too, enthroned us too above the heavens, in Christ Jesus. He would have all future ages see, in that clemency which he shewed us in Christ Jesus, the surpassing richness of his grace. Yes, it was grace that saved you, with faith for its instrument; it did not come from yourselves, it was God's gift, not from any action of yours, or there would be room for pride. No, we are his design; God has created us in Christ Jesus, pledged to such good actions as he has prepared beforehand, to be the employment of our lives.

Remember, then, what you once were, the Gentiles, according to all outward reckoning; those who claim an outward circumcision which is man's handiwork call you the uncircumcised. In those days there was no Christ for you; you were outlaws from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to every covenant, with no promise to hope for, with the world about you, and no God.¹ But now you are in Christ Jesus; now, through the blood of Christ, you have been brought close, you who were once so far away. He is our bond of peace; he has made the two nations one, breaking down the wall that was a barrier between us, the enmity there was between us, in his own mortal nature. He has put an end to the law with its decrees, so as to make peace, remaking the two human creatures as one in himself; both sides, united in a single body, he would reconcile to God through his cross, inflicting death, in his own person, upon the feud. So he came, and his message was of peace for you who were far off, peace for those who were near;² far off or near, united in the same Spirit, we have access through him to the Father. You are no longer exiles, then, or aliens; the saints are your fellow citizens, you belong to God's household. Apostles and prophets are the foundation on which

you were built, and the chief corner-stone of it is Jesus Christ himself. In him the whole fabric is bound together, as it grows into a temple, dedicated to the Lord; in him you too are being built in with the rest, so that God may find in you a dwelling-place for his Spirit.³

3 With this in mind, I fall on my knees; I, Paul, of whom Jesus Christ has made a prisoner for the love of you Gentiles.⁴ You will have been told how God planned to give me a special grace for preaching to you; how a revelation taught me the secret I have been setting out briefly here;⁵ briefly, yet so as to let you see how well I have mastered this secret of Christ's. It was never made known to any human being in past ages, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets, and it is this: that through the gospel preaching the Gentiles are to win the same inheritance, to be made part of the same body, to share the same divine promise, in Christ Jesus. With what grace God gives me (and he gives it in all the effectiveness of his power), I am a minister of that gospel; on me, least as I am of all the saints, he has bestowed this privilege, of making known to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, of publishing to the world the plan of this mystery, kept hidden from the beginning of time in the all-creating mind of God. The principalities and powers of heaven are to see, now, made manifest in the Church, the subtlety of God's wisdom; such is his eternal purpose, centred in Christ Jesus our Lord, who gives us all our confidence, bids us come forward, emboldened by our faith in him. Let there be no discouragement, then, over the affliction I undergo on your behalf; it is an honour done to you.⁶

With this in mind, then, I fall on my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that Father from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth takes its title.⁷ May he, out of the rich treasury of his glory, strengthen you through his Spirit

¹ Some would divide this verse differently, 'strangers to every dispensation of the promise, with nothing to hope for'. ² *vv.* 13-17: The references to 'peace', 'you who were far off', 'those who were near', are a reminiscence of Is. 57. 19. ³ 'A dwelling-place for his Spirit'; or perhaps, 'a spiritual dwelling-place'. ⁴ This sentence, in the original, has no verb in it; the words 'fall on my knees' have to be supplied from verse 14 below, where the Apostle picks up the thread of his sentence again.

⁵ 'I have been setting out'; in the last two chapters, especially in 2. 11-22. ⁶ 'On your behalf', in the sense that St Paul has brought persecution on himself by befriending the cause of the Gentiles; cf. Ac. 21. 28. ⁷ 'All fatherhood'; this can also be rendered, from the Greek, 'every family'.

with a power that reaches your innermost
 17 being. May Christ find a dwelling-place,
 through faith, in your hearts; may your
 lives be rooted in love, founded on love.
 18 May you and all the saints be enabled to
 measure, in all its breadth and length and
 19 height and depth,¹ the love of Christ, to
 know what passes knowledge. May you be
 filled with all the completion God has to
 20 give. He whose power is at work in us is
 powerful enough, and more than powerful
 enough, to carry out his purpose beyond all
 21 our hopes and dreams; may he be glorified
 in the Church, and in Christ Jesus, to the
 last generation of eternity. Amen.

4 Here, then, is one who wears chains
 in the Lord's service, pleading with
 you to live as befits men called to such a
 2 vocation as yours. You must be always
 humble, always gentle; patient, too, in
 bearing with one another's faults, as
 3 charity bids; eager to preserve that unity
 the Spirit gives you, whose bond is peace.
 4 You are one body, with a single Spirit;
 each of you, when he was called, called in
 5 the same hope; with the same Lord, the
 6 same faith, the same baptism; with the
 same God, the same Father, all of us, who
 is above all beings, pervades all things, and
 7 lives in all of us.² But each of us has re-
 ceived his own special grace, dealt out to
 8 him by Christ's gift. (That is why we are
 told, He has mounted up on high; he has
 captured his spoil; he has brought gifts to
 9 men.³ The words, He has gone up, must
 mean that he had gone down, first, to the
 10 lower regions of earth. And he who so
 went down is no other than he who has
 gone up, high above all the heavens, to fill

creation with his presence.⁴) Some he has
 11 appointed to be apostles, others to be pro-
 phets, others to be evangelists, or pastors,
 or teachers. They are to order the lives of
 the faithful, minister to their needs, build
 12 up the frame of Christ's body, until we all
 realize our common unity through faith in
 the Son of God, and fuller knowledge of
 him. So we shall reach perfect manhood,
 that maturity which is proportioned to the
 completed growth of Christ;⁵ we are no
 14 longer to be children, no longer to be like
 storm-tossed sailors, driven before the
 wind of each new doctrine that human
 subtlety, human skill in fabricating lies,
 may propound. We are to follow the truth,
 15 in a spirit of charity, and so grow up, in
 everything, into a due proportion with
 Christ, who is our head.⁶ On him all the
 16 body depends; it is organized and unified
 by each contact with the source which sup-
 plies it; and thus, each limb receiving the
 active power it needs, it achieves its natural
 growth, building itself up through charity.

This, then, is my message to you; I call
 17 upon you in the Lord's name not to live
 like the Gentiles, who make vain fancies
 their rule of life. Their minds are clouded
 18 with darkness; the hardness of their hearts
 breeds in them an ignorance, which
 estranges them from the divine life; and
 19 so, in despair, they have given themselves
 up to incontinence, to selfish habits of im-
 purity.⁷ This is not the lesson you have
 20 learned in making Christ your study, if you
 have really listened to him. If true know-
 ledge is to be found in Jesus, you will have
 21 learned in his school that you must be quit,
 now, of the old self whose way of life you
 remember, the self that wasted its aim on

¹ Literally, 'may you, with all the saints, be able to understand what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ'.

² Some of the best Greek manuscripts omit the word 'us' at the end of the sentence; nor does the Greek text make it clear whether the reference in the last three clauses is to men or to things.

³ Ps. 67. 19: The Hebrew should more probably be rendered, 'he has received gifts among men'.

⁴ vv. 9 and 10: The exact sense of this passage is much disputed. If we understand 'the lower regions of earth' as meaning simply 'this lower earth', St Paul is saying that our Lord's Ascension presupposes his coming down to earth at his Incarnation. If we understand 'the lower regions of earth' as meaning the grave, or the *Limbus Patrum*, then St Paul is saying (verse 9) that the Descent into Hell is presupposed by the Resurrection, after which our Lord gave gifts to men (Mk. 16. 17; Jn. 20. 22); it is only in verse 10 that he refers to the Ascension. Some manuscripts and versions omit the word 'first' in verse 9; if we adopt that reading, a third interpretation becomes possible, namely, that St Paul speaks of our Lord as going up in his Ascension, and coming down in the Mission of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. v. 10: 'To fill creation with his presence'; others would translate 'to bring all things (i.e. prophecies) to fulfilment'.

⁵ The last clause of this verse is variously interpreted. But the thought seems to be, that as Christ, who is our head, grew up to the perfect age of manhood when Incarnate, so his Church has to grow up to a corresponding perfection of holiness. ⁶ Into a due proportion with Christ; the Latin here has simply 'in Christ', but it seems probable that St Paul is continuing his metaphor (taken from nature) of the body which grows up to the scale of its head. ⁷ 'In despair'; the best Greek manuscripts read 'past all feeling'.

23 false dreams.¹ There must be a renewal in
24 the inner life of your minds; you must be
clothed in the new self, which is created
in God's image, justified and sanctified
through the truth.

25 Away with falsehood, then; let everyone
speak out the truth to his neighbour;
membership of the body binds us to one
26 another. Do not let resentment lead you
into sin; the sunset must not find you still
27 angry.² Do not give the devil his oppor-
28 tunity. The man who was a thief must be
a thief no longer; let him work instead, and
earn by his own labour the blessings he
will be able to share with those who are in
29 need. No base talk must cross your lips;
only what will serve to build up the faith,
and bring a grace to those who are listen-
30 ing;³ do not distress God's holy Spirit,
whose seal you bear until the day of your
31 redemption comes. There must be no trace
of bitterness among you, of passion, resent-
ment, quarrelling, insulting talk, or
32 spite of any kind; be kind and tender to one
another, each of you generous to all, as
God in Christ has been generous to you.

5 As God's favoured children, you must
2 be like him. Order your lives in
charity, upon the model of that charity
which Christ shewed to us, when he gave
himself up on our behalf, a sacrifice
breathing out fragrance as he offered it to
3 God. As for debauchery, and impurity of
every kind, and covetousness, there must
be no whisper of it among you; it would ill
4 become saints; no indecent behaviour, no
ribaldry or smartness in talk; that is not
your business, your business is to give
5 thanks to God. This you must know well
enough, that nobody can claim a share in
Christ's kingdom, God's kingdom, if he is
debauched, or impure, or has that love of
6 money which makes a man an idolater. Do
not allow anyone to cheat you with empty
promises; these are the very things which
bring down God's anger on the unbe-

liervers; you do ill to throw in your lot with
7 them. Once you were all darkness; now,
8 in the Lord, you are all daylight. You must
live as men native to the light; where the
9 light has its effect, all is goodness, and
holiness, and truth; your lives must be the
10 manifestation of God's will.⁴ As for the
thankless deeds men do in the dark, you
must not take any part in them; rather,
your conduct must be a rebuke to them;
11 their secret actions are too shameful even
to bear speaking of. It is the light that
12 rebukes such things and shews them up for
what they are; only light shews up.⁵ That
13 is the meaning of the words, Awake, thou
that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and
Christ shall give thee light.⁶

See then, brethren, how carefully you
15 have to tread, not as fools, but as wise men
do, hoarding the opportunity that is given
16 you, in evil times like these. No, you can-
not afford to be reckless; you must grasp
17 what the Lord's will is for you. Do not
besot yourselves with wine; that leads to
ruin. Let your contentment be in the Holy
18 Spirit; your tongues unloosed in psalms
and hymns and spiritual music, as you sing
and give praise to the Lord in your hearts.
19 Give thanks continually to God, who is our
Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus
20 Christ; and, as you stand in awe of Christ,
submit to each other's rights. Wives must
21 obey their husbands as they would obey
the Lord. The man is the head to which the
22 woman's body is united, just as Christ is
the head of the Church, he, the Saviour on
whom the safety of his body depends; and
23 women must owe obedience at all points to
their husbands, as the Church does to
Christ. You who are husbands must shew
24 love to your wives, as Christ shewed love
to the Church when he gave himself up on
its behalf. He would hallow it, purify it by
25 bathing it in the water to which his word
gave life; he would summon it into his own
26 presence, the Church in all its beauty, no
stain, no wrinkle, no such disfigurement;

¹ 'Wasted its aim on false dreams'; literally, 'became corrupt according to the appetites of error', a phrase which is variously interpreted. ² Ps. 4, 5. ³ 'To build up the faith'; some Greek manuscripts read 'to edify others as opportunity arises'.

⁴ 'Manifestation'; the sense of the word is 'to prove by experiment', usually in the sense of convincing oneself. The context here suggests that the verb is for the benefit of others, as in I Cor. 3, 13. ⁵ 'Only light shews up'; the Latin takes the prof in the sense of 'to be manifest', but the Greek allows of rendering it 'to make (other things) manifest', which is here more suitable to the context. Throughout this passage, St Paul is explaining that the witness of a Christian life, enlightened by grace, rebukes the wickedness of the surrounding world as inevitably as light reveals darkness.

⁶ These words do not appear in Scripture, and some have thought that St Paul is quoting from a very early baptismal hymn.

28 it was to be holy, it was to be spotless. And that is how husband ought to love wife, as if she were his own body; in loving his
29 wife, a man is but loving himself. It is unheard of, that a man should bear ill-will to his own flesh and blood; no, he keeps it fed and warmed; and so it is with Christ and his Church; we are limbs of his body; flesh
30 and bone, we belong to him.¹ That is why a man will leave his father and mother and will cling to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. Yes, those words are a high mystery, and I am applying them here to
31 Christ and his Church.² Meanwhile, each of you is to love his wife as he would love himself, and the wife is to pay reverence to her husband.

6 You who are children must shew obedience in the Lord to your
2 parents; it is your duty; Honour thy father and thy mother—that is the first commandment which has a promise attached
3 to it, So it shall go well with thee, and thou shalt live long to enjoy the land. You who are fathers, do not rouse your children to resentment; the training, the discipline in which you bring them up must come from
5 the Lord. You who are slaves, give your human masters the obedience you owe to Christ, in anxious fear, single-mindedly;
6 not with that show of service which tries to win human favour, but in the character of Christ's slaves, who do what is God's
7 will with all their heart. Yours must be a slavery of love, not to men, but to the
8 Lord; you know well that each of us, slave or free, will be repaid by the Lord for every
9 task well done. And you who are masters, deal with them accordingly; there is no need to threaten them; you know well enough that you and they have a Master in heaven, who makes no distinction between man and man.

¹ The words 'flesh and bone, we belong to him' are omitted by some Greek manuscripts, probably through the carelessness of an early transcriber. They are evidently an inexact quotation from Gen. 2. 23, the next verse being quoted from Gen. 2. 24. ² The exact bearing of this verse on the argument has been much disputed. It seems probable that the sense is, 'These words, even as they occur in Genesis, convey an important revelation (about the meaning of human love); for us Christians they have a still deeper meaning (since human love illustrates our relation to Christ)'. ³ 'Readiness to publish the gospel of peace'; other renderings have been suggested here, but it seems most probable that St Paul, with characteristic independence of his metaphor, is recalling the language of Is. 52. 7. ⁴ *cf.* 14-17: Cf. Is. 11. 5; 59. 17; Wis. 5. 19. *e.* 17: It is not certain whether the clause 'which is God's utterance' refers to the 'sword of the spirit', or whether we should print 'Spirit' with a capital, and understand St Paul to describe the Holy Spirit as God's utterance. If we take 'the spirit' as meaning 'the spiritual life' in general, it is possible that he is telling the Ephesians to arm themselves with the word (or message) of God, which acts upon the spirit like a sword (cf. Heb. 4. 12). But the sense of interpreters is greatly at variance over this passage. ⁵ Here again it would be possible to print 'in the Spirit'; if so, 'keep awake to that end' might also be rendered, 'keep watchful in him'.

I have no more to say, brethren, except
10 this; draw your strength from the Lord, from that mastery which his power supplies. You must wear all the weapons in
11 God's armour, if you would find strength to resist the cunning of the devil. It is not
12 against flesh and blood that we enter the lists; we have to do with principedoms and powers, with those who have mastery of the world in these dark days, with malign influences in an order higher than ours. Take up all God's armour, then; so you
13 will be able to stand your ground when the evil time comes, and be found still on your feet, when all the task is over. Stand fast,
14 your loins girt with truth, the breastplate of justice fitted on, and your feet shod in
15 readiness to publish the gospel of peace.³ With all this, take up the shield of faith,
16 with which you will be able to quench all the fire-tipped arrows of your wicked enemy; make the helmet of salvation your
17 own, and the sword of the spirit, God's word.⁴ Use every kind of prayer and supplication; pray at all times in the spirit;⁵ keep awake to that end with all perseverance; offer your supplication for all the saints. Pray for me too, that I may be
19 given words to speak my mind boldly, in making known the gospel revelation, for
20 which I am an ambassador in chains; that I may have boldness to speak as I ought. If you would know more of my circumstances, my occupations, you may learn all that from Tychicus, my dearly loved brother and faithful servant in the Lord; that
22 is the reason why I have sent him, to let you have news of me, and to bring courage to your hearts. Peace to the brethren, and love joined with faith, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with
24 all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an immortal love. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

PAUL and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with their pastors and deacons;¹
2 Grace and peace be yours from God who is our Father, and from the Lord Jesus
3 Christ. I give thanks to my God for all my
4 memories of you,² happy at all times in all
5 the prayer I offer for all of you; so full a
6 part have you taken in the work of Christ's
7 gospel, from the day when it first reached
8 you till now. Nor am I less confident, that
9 he who has inspired this generosity in you
10 will bring it to perfection, ready for the day
11 when Jesus Christ comes.³ It is only fitting
12 that I should entertain such hopes for
13 you; you are close to my heart, and I know
14 that you all share my happiness in being a
15 prisoner, and being able to defend and
16 assert the truth of the gospel.⁴ God knows
17 how I long for you all, with the tenderness
18 of Jesus Christ himself. And this is my
19 prayer for you; may your love grow richer
20 and richer yet, in the fulness of its know-
21 ledge and the depth of its perception, so
22 that you may learn to prize what is of
23 value; may nothing cloud your consciences
24 or hinder your progress till the day when
25 Christ comes; may you reap, through Jesus
26 Christ, the full harvest of your justification
27 to God's glory and praise.⁵
28 I hasten to assure you, brethren, that
29 my circumstances here have only had the
30 effect of spreading the gospel further; so
31 widely has my imprisonment become
32 known, in Christ's honour, throughout the
33 praetorium and to all the world beyond.⁶

And most of the brethren, deriving fresh
14 confidence in the Lord from my imprison-
15 ment, are making bold to preach God's
16 word with more freedom than ever. Some
17 of them, it is true, for no better reason than
18 rivalry or jealousy; but there are others
19 who really proclaim Christ out of good
20 will. Some, I mean, are moved by charity,
21 because they recognize that I am here to
22 defend the gospel, others by party spirit,
23 proclaiming Christ from wrong motives,
24 just because they hope to make my chains
25 gall me worse. What matter, so long as
26 either way, for private ends or in all
27 honesty, Christ is proclaimed? Of that I
28 am glad now; yes, and I shall be glad here-
29 after; I am well assured that this will make
30 for my soul's health, with you to pray for
31 me, and Jesus Christ to supply my needs
32 with his Spirit. This is my earnest longing
33 and my hope, that I shall never be put to
34 the blush; that I shall speak with entire
35 freedom, and so this body of mine will do
36 Christ honour, now as always, in life or in
37 death. For me, life means Christ; death is
38 a prize to be won. But what if living on in
39 this mortal body is the only way to harvest
40 what I have sown? Thus I cannot tell
41 what to choose; I am hemmed in on both
42 sides. I long to have done with it, and be
43 with Christ, a better thing, much more
44 than a better thing; and yet, for your sakes,
45 that I should wait in the body is more
46 urgent still. I am certain of that, and I do
47 not doubt that I shall wait, and wait upon
48 you all, to the happy furtherance of your
49 faith. Yes, you shall be prouder of me than

¹ The word here translated 'pastors' is *episcopi*, that is, bishops. But, here as in Ac. 20. 28, it is difficult to see how St Paul can have been addressing more than one 'bishop' in the modern sense; and it is the opinion of St Chrysostom that the title is used loosely so as to include the presbyters of Philippi.

² 'For all my memories of you'; the Greek here might, however, mean 'for all your mindfulness of me'.

³ 'Inspired this generosity in you'; literally, 'begun a good work in you', but it seems likely that the work referred to is not God's own operation, but the charitable work of the Philippians themselves, as shewn by the contribution they had made to St Paul's own needs (cf. II Cor. 8. 6, where the same verbs are used). ⁴ 'You are close to my heart'; the Greek might mean 'I am close to your heart'.

⁵ 'The full harvest of your justification'; or perhaps, 'a full harvest of holiness'. ⁶ 'Praetorium'; it is not certain who were St Paul's gaolers at Rome, but the word *praetorium* seems to mean a body of soldiers, or their barracks, not the palace of the Roman Emperor.

ever in Christ Jesus, when I come once again to visit you.

- 27 Only, you must play a part worthy of Christ's gospel; whether I come to see you, or only hear about you at a distance, this must be my news of you, that you are standing fast in a common unity of spirit, with the faith of the gospel for your common cause. Shew a bold front at all points to your adversaries; that is the seal of their perdition, of your salvation, and it comes
28 from God; the grace that has been granted you is that of suffering for Christ's sake,
29 not merely believing in him. Your battle is my own battle; you saw how I fought it once, and you have heard how I am fighting it now.

- 2 If anything is meant by encouragement in Christ, by loving sympathy, by common fellowship in the spirit, by
2 feelings of tenderness and pity, fill up my cup of happiness by thinking with the same mind, cherishing the same bond of charity, soul knit to soul in a common unity of
3 thought. You must never act in a spirit of factiousness, or of ambition; each of you must have the humility to think others
4 better men than himself, and study the welfare of others, not his own. Yours is to be the same mind which Christ Jesus
6 shewed. His nature is, from the first, divine, and yet he did not see, in the rank of
7 Godhead, a prize to be coveted;¹ he dispossessed himself, and took the nature of a slave, fashioned in the likeness of men, and presenting himself to us in human
8 form; and then he lowered his own dignity, accepted an obedience which brought him
9 to death, death on a cross. That is why God has raised him to such a height, given him that name which is greater than any other
10 name; so that everything in heaven and on earth and under the earth must bend the
11 knee before the name of Jesus, and every tongue must confess Jesus Christ as the Lord, dwelling in the glory of God the Father.²
12 Beloved, you have always shewn yourselves obedient; and now that I am at a

distance, not less but much more than when I am present, you must work to earn your salvation, in anxious fear. Both the
11 will to do it and the accomplishment of that will are something which God accomplishes in you, to carry out his loving purpose. Do all that lies in you, never
12 complaining, never hesitating, to shew yourselves innocent and single-minded, God's children, bringing no reproach on his name. You live in an age that is twisted out of its true pattern, and among such people you shine out, beacons to the world, upholding the message of life. Thus, when
11 the day of Christ comes, I shall be able to boast of a life not spent in vain, of labours not vainly undergone. Meanwhile, though
11 your faith should prove to be a sacrifice which cannot be duly made without my blood for its drink-offering, I congratulate myself and all of you over that; on your side, you too must congratulate yourselves and me.

It is my hope in the Lord Jesus that I shall be sending Timothy to visit you before long; then I shall be able to refresh myself with news of you; I have no one else here who shares my thoughts as he does, no one who will concern himself so unaffectedly with your affairs;³ one and all have their own interest at heart, not Christ's; his worth is well tried, you must
2 know that he has shared my task of preaching the gospel like a son helping his father.⁴ Him, then, I hope to send without
2 delay, when I have had time to see how I stand; and I am persuaded in the Lord that I myself shall be coming to you before long. Meanwhile, here is Epaphroditus,
2 my brother, my companion in so many labours and battles, your own delegate, who has provided for my needs. I felt that I must send him to you, so great was his
2 longing to see you, and his distress that you should have heard about his illness. Ill he
2 certainly was, and in near danger of death; but God had pity on him, and not only on him but on me too; he would not let me have anxiety added to anxiety. So I am
2 hastening to send him back to you; it will

¹ 'Did not see, in the rank of Godhead, a prize to be coveted'; others would render, 'thought it no usurpation to claim the rank of Godhead'. ² 'Dwelling in the glory'; the Greek is perhaps more naturally rendered 'to the glory'. ³ 'Who shares my thoughts as he does'; the Greek would also bear the meaning, 'who has a heart like his'. ⁴ 'You must know'; the Latin represents this as if the Apostle were informing the Philippians of something they did not know, but the Greek may equally well imply that it was something they knew already.

be a happiness for you to see him again,
 29 and I shall be anxious no longer. Welcome
 him, then, in the Lord gladly, and do
 30 honour to such a man as he is; one who
 came close to death's door on Christ's
 errand, risking life itself to do me that kind-
 ness, which was all your kindness left to be
 desired.

3 And now, brethren, joy to you in the
 Lord. I find no difficulty in always
 writing the same message to you, and it is
 2 your safeguard. Beware of these prowling
 dogs, beware of their evil practices, of their
 3 disfigurement.¹ As for circumcision, it is
 we who practise it, we who serve God with
 the spirit, and take pride in Christ Jesus,
 instead of putting our trust in outward
 4 observances. Not that I have no outward
 claims to give me confidence; if others put
 their trust in outward claims, I can do so
 5 with better reason. I was circumcised
 seven days after I was born; I come from
 the stock of Israel, from the tribe of Ben-
 jamin, Hebrew-speaking as my parents
 were before me. Over the law, I was a
 6 Pharisee; to prove my loyalty, I persecuted
 the Church of God; in observing what the
 law commands, I was beyond reproach.
 7 And all this, which once stood to my credit,
 I now write down as loss, for the love of
 8 Christ. For that matter, there is nothing
 I do not write down as loss compared with
 the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus,
 my Lord; for love of him I have lost every-
 thing, treat everything else as refuse, if I
 9 may have Christ to my credit. In him I
 would render my account,² not claiming
 any justification that is my own work,
 given me by the law, but the justifica-
 tion that comes from believing in Jesus
 Christ, God's gift on condition of our
 10 faith. Him I would learn to know, and
 the virtue of his resurrection, and what
 it means to share his sufferings, moulded
 11 into the pattern of his death, in the

hope of achieving resurrection from the
 dead.

Not that I have already won the prize,³
 12 already reached fulfilment. I only press
 on, in hope of winning the mastery, as
 Christ Jesus has won the mastery over me.³
 No, brethren, I do not claim to have the
 mastery already, but this at least I do; for-
 getting what I have left behind, intent on
 what lies before me, I press on with the
 goal in view, eager for the prize, God's
 14 heavenly summons in Christ Jesus. All of
 us who are fully grounded must be of this
 mind, and God will make it known to you,
 if you are of a different mind at present.
 Meanwhile, let us all be of the same mind,
 16 all follow the same rule, according to the
 progress we have made.⁴ Be content, bre-
 17 thren, to follow my example, and mark
 well those who live by the pattern we have
 given them; I have told you often, and now
 18 tell you again with tears, that there are
 many whose lives make them the enemies
 of Christ's cross. Perdition is the end that
 19 awaits them, their own hungry bellies are
 the god they worship, their own shameful
 doings are their pride; their minds are set
 on the things of earth; whereas we find our
 20 true home in heaven. It is to heaven that
 we look expectantly for the coming of our
 Lord Jesus Christ to save us; he will form
 21 this humbled body of ours anew, moulding
 it into the image of his glorified body, so
 effective is his power to make all things
 obey him.

4 Then, O my brethren, so greatly loved
 and longed for, all my delight and
 prize, stand firmly in the Lord, beloved,
 as I bid you. I call upon thee, Evodia, and
 2 I call upon thee, Syntyche, to make com-
 mon cause in the Lord. Yes, and I ask thee,
 3 who sharest the yoke so loyally, to take
 part with them; they have worked for the
 gospel at my side, as much as Clement and
 those other fellow labourers of mine,

¹ *vs.* 1, 2: The Apostle seems here to embark on a farewell salutation (cf. II Cor. 13, 11), as if the remaining two chapters of the epistle were an afterthought. It seems to be implied here that he had written to the Philippians before, and in doing so had used the curious formula given in verse 2. This becomes more easily intelligible if we suppose that verse 2 was written in autograph (cf. I Cor. 16, 21; Gal. 6, 11). It warns the Philippians against those who were trying to impose the rite of circumcision on the Gentiles; circumcision, as being a merely outward ceremony, is contemptuously referred to under the name of 'disfigurement', a heathen usage forbidden by the Jewish law (Lev. 21, 5). ² 'I would render my account'; literally, 'I would be discovered', cf. I Cor. 4, 2. ³ 'Has won the mastery over me'; this is generally understood as meaning 'taken possession of me', which seems to be the sense of the Latin. The Greek might also be translated 'has overtaken me', in the sense that our Lord has led the way in undergoing death and attaining resurrection. ⁴ The words 'all be of the same mind' do not appear in the best Greek manuscripts.

whose names are recorded in the book of
 4 life.¹ Joy to you in the Lord at all times;
 5 once again I wish you joy. Give proof to
 all of your courtesy. The Lord is near.²
 6 Nothing must make you anxious; in every
 need make your requests known to God,
 praying and beseeching him, and giving
 7 him thanks as well. So may the peace of
 God, which surpasses all our thinking,
 watch over your hearts and minds in Christ
 8 Jesus. And now, brethren, all that rings
 true, all that commands reverence, and all
 that makes for right; all that is pure, all
 that is lovely, all that is gracious in the
 telling; virtue and merit, wherever virtue
 and merit are found—let this be the argu-
 9 ment of your thoughts. The lessons I
 taught you, the traditions I handed on to
 you, all you have heard and seen of my way
 of living—let this be your rule of conduct.
 Then the God of peace will be with you.
 10 It has been a great happiness to me in the
 Lord that your remembrance of me should
 have blossomed out afresh. It has flowered
 late, but then, you had never forgotten me;
 it was only that you lacked opportunity.
 11 I am not thinking of my own want; I have
 learned by now to be content with my cir-
 12 cumstances as they are. I know what it is
 to be brought low, and what it is to have

abundant means; I have been apprenticed
 to everything, having my fill and going
 hungry, living in plenty and living in want;
 nothing is beyond my powers, thanks to
 the strength God gives me. No, but it was
 13 kindness in you to share my hardships in
 this way. You remember, Philippians, as
 14 well as I do, that when I left Macedonia in
 those early days of gospel preaching, yours
 was the only church whose sympathy with
 me meant alms given and received; not
 15 once but twice, when I was at Thessa-
 lonica, you contributed to my needs. It is
 16 not that I set store by your alms; I set store
 by the rich increase that stands to your
 credit. I am content, more than content; 18
 I am fully endowed, ever since Epaphro-
 ditus brought me your gift, a sacrifice that
 breathes out fragrance, winning favour
 with God. So may he, the God I serve,
 19 supply every need of yours; he has treas-
 ures of glory laid up in Christ Jesus.
 Glory to God, who is our Father, for ever
 and ever, Amen. Greet all the saints in
 20 Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with
 me send you their greeting; greeting, too,
 21 from all the saints, especially those who
 belong to the Emperor's household. The
 22 grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with
 your spirit, Amen. 23

¹ The 'yoke-fellow' may possibly have been the husband of Evodia or of Syntyche; but more probably it means either Epaphroditus, who carried the letter, or some leading Christian among the Apostle's readers. ² 'The Lord is near'; this phrase, which does not fit in closely with the context, was perhaps a kind of Christian pass-word, that might be recalled in writing the last lines of a letter, cf. 1 Cor. 16. 22.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

FROM Paul, by God's purpose an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy who is their brother, to the saints at Colossae, our brethren who believe in Jesus Christ; Grace be yours and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, continually in our prayers for you, when we are told of your faith in Jesus Christ, and the love which you shew to all the saints; such hope have you of what awaits you in heaven. Hope was the lesson you learned from that truth-giving message of the Gospel which has reached you, which now bears fruit and thrives in you, as it does all the world over, since the day when you heard of God's grace and recognized it for what it is. Your teacher was Epaphras, for us, a well-loved fellow bondsman, and for you a loyal minister of Jesus Christ; ¹ and it is he who has told us of this love which you cherish in the Spirit. So, ever since the news reached us, we have been praying for you in return, unceasingly. Our prayer is, that you may be filled with that closer knowledge of God's will which brings all wisdom and all spiritual insight with it. May you live as befits his servants, waiting continually on his pleasure; may the closer knowledge of God bring you fruitfulness and growth in all good. May you be inspired, as his glorious power can inspire you, with full strength to be patient and to endure; to endure joyfully, thanking God our Father for making us fit to share the light which saints inherit, ² for rescuing us

from the power of darkness, and transferring us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

In the Son of God, in his blood, we find the redemption that sets us free from our sins. He is the true likeness of the God we cannot see; his is that first birth which precedes every act of creation. ³ Yes, in him all created things took their being, heavenly and earthly, visible and invisible; what are thrones and dominions, what are principedoms and powers? They were all created through him and in him; he takes precedence of all, and in him all subsist. ⁴ He too is that head whose body is the Church; it begins with him, since his was the first birth out of death; thus in every way the primacy was to become his. ⁵ It was God's good pleasure to let all completeness dwell in him, ⁶ and through him to win back all things, whether on earth or in heaven, into union with himself, making peace with them through his blood, shed on the cross. ⁷ You, too, were once estranged from him; your minds were alienated from him by a life of sin; but now he has used Christ's natural body to win you back through his death, and so to bring you into his presence, holy, and spotless, and unproved. But that means that you must be true to your faith, grounded in it, firmly established in it; nothing must shift you away from the hope you found in the gospel you once listened to. It is a gospel which has been preached to all creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have been brought into its service.

¹ 'Fellow bondsman'; that is, probably, in the service of Christ, but the word may imply that Epaphras was sharing, in a manner, the Apostle's imprisonment. ² 'Fit', according to the Latin, means 'worthy', but the Greek has rather the sense of 'capable'. ³ 'His is that first birth'; literally, 'he is the first-born of all (or, every) creation'; the rendering given assumes that St Paul is talking of Christ as God. It is possible he meant that Christ as Man enjoys primacy over the rest of creation. ⁴ 'In him', at the end of the verse, should rather be translated 'for him' (literally 'into him') if we follow the Greek. ⁵ 'His was the first birth out of death'; literally, 'he is the first-born from the dead'. Christ as Man is the Head of a new creation, the Church of the redeemed. ⁶ 'All completeness'; it is not certain whether we should understand this of the Divine essence, or of a plenitude of graces, or of mankind, and indeed creation as a whole, as mystically identified with Christ. ⁷ 'With himself' may refer to God the Father, or (like the other pronouns in the sentence) to our Lord.

24 Even as I write, I am glad of my sufferings on your behalf, as, in this mortal frame of mine, I help to pay off the debt which the afflictions of Christ still leave to be paid, for the sake of his body, the Church.¹

25 When I entered its service I received a commission from God for the benefit of you Gentiles, to complete the preaching of his word among you.² This was the secret that had been hidden from all the ages and generations of the past; now, he has revealed it to his saints, wishing to make known the manifold splendour of this secret among the Gentiles—Christ among you, your hope of glory.³ Him, then, we proclaim, warning every human being and instructing every human being as wisely as we may, so as to exhibit every human being perfect in Christ Jesus. It is for this that I labour, for this that I strive so anxiously; and with effect, so effectually does his power manifest itself in me.

2 And indeed, I must let you know what anxiety I feel over you, and the Laodiceans, and those others who have never seen me in person. I would bring courage to their hearts; I would see them well ordered in love, enriched in every way with fuller understanding, so as to penetrate the secret revealed to us by God the Father, and by Jesus Christ,⁴ in whom the whole treasury of wisdom and knowledge is stored up. I tell you this, for fear that somebody may lead you astray with high-

flown talk. In person, I am far away from you, but I am with you in spirit; and I rejoice to see how well disciplined you are, how firm is your faith in Christ. Go on, then, ordering your lives in Christ Jesus our Lord, according to the tradition you have received of him. You are to be rooted in him, built up on him, your faith established in the teaching you have received, overflowing with gratitude.⁵ Take care not to let anyone cheat you with his philosophizings, with empty phantasies drawn from human tradition, from worldly principles; they were never Christ's teaching.⁶ In Christ the whole plenitude of Deity is embodied, and dwells in him, and it is in him that you find your completion; he is the fountain head from which all dominion and power proceed. In him you have been circumcised with a circumcision that was not man's handiwork. It was effected, not by despoiling the natural body, but by Christ's circumcision;⁷ you, by baptism, have been united with his burial, united, too, with his resurrection, through your faith in that exercise of power by which God raised him from the dead. And in giving life to him, he gave life to you too, when you lay dead in your sins, with nature all uncircumcised in you. He condoned all your sins; cancelled the deed which excluded us, the decree made to our prejudice, swept it out of the way, by nailing it to the cross; and the dominions and powers he robbed of their prey, put them to an open shame, led them away in

¹ 'The afflictions of Christ' have been understood by some commentators as being those which he suffers in his members, i.e. the Church (cf. Ac. 9. 4), and particularly in St Paul himself. But the Greek verb shows that St Paul only represents himself as taking a *share* in the afflictions here referred to; and probably the metaphor is that of a poor man *contributing* to pay off a sum which a richer man has paid in advance. Thus the obvious meaning is that Christ's sufferings, although fully satisfactory on behalf of our sins, leave us under a debt of honour, as it were, to repay them by sufferings of our own. ² The word 'Gentiles' is not expressed in the Greek or in the Latin, but has been supplied here in order to bring out what is clearly the sense; St Paul is not thinking of the Colossians in particular, who were not his own converts. ³ To complete the preaching', that is, to supplement the teaching of other missionaries, who had gone to the Jews only; cf. Rom. 15. 19.

⁴ The Greek here is usually rendered 'to whom he wished to make known the manifold splendour of this secret among the Gentiles'; but this is to repeat what has already been said in the preceding verse, and the words 'among the Gentiles' have no real force, since the secret (that of the universality of Christ's Church) obviously applied to them, not to anybody else. The same Greek words may also be taken as meaning '(the saints) whom he wished to publish among the Gentiles the manifold splendour of this secret', which seems to give a better sense. ⁵ At the end of this verse, some Latin manuscripts add the words 'in him'; others 'in it' (meaning the faith), which is the sense of the Greek.

⁶ 'Worldly principles'; cf. p. 195, note 1. Here, as there, some commentators hold that St Paul is referring to the *elements* (the sun, moon, stars, etc.) which were worshipped by the heathen; others, with more probability, that he is thinking of Jewish ordinances, like circumcision, as the first rudimentary lessons which mankind took in religion. But the reference, here and in verse 20 below, may be more general.

⁷ 'By Christ's circumcision'; that is, either the circumcision of our Lord in his infancy, here regarded as mystically efficacious on our behalf, or the spiritual circumcision which he bestows on us by Baptism into his Death. The Greek manuscripts have 'It was effected by the despoiling of the natural body, by the circumcision of Christ'; it is not clear in what sense.

16 triumph, through him.¹ So no one must be allowed to take you to task over what you eat or drink, or in the matter of observing feasts, and new moons, and sabbath days; all these were but shadows cast by future events, the reality is found in Christ. You must not allow anyone to cheat you by insisting on a false humility which addresses its worship to angels. Such a man takes his stand upon false visions; his is the ill-founded confidence that comes of human speculation. He is not united to that head of ours, on whom all the body depends, supplied and unified by joint and ligament, and so growing up with a growth which is divine. If, by dying with Christ, you have parted company with worldly principles, why do you live by these prescriptions, as if the world were still your element? Prescriptions against touching or tasting, or handling those creatures which vanish altogether as we enjoy them, all based on the will and the word of men? They will win you, no doubt, the name of philosophers, for being so full of scruple, so submissive, so unsparing of your bodies; but they are all forgotten, when nature asks to be gratified.²

3 Risen, then, with Christ, you must lift your thoughts above, where Christ now sits at the right hand of God. You must be heavenly-minded, not earthly-minded; you have undergone death, and your life is hidden away now with Christ in God. Christ is your life, and when he is made manifest, you too will be made manifest in glory with him. You must deaden, then, those passions in you which belong to earth, fornication and impurity, lust and evil desire, and that love of money which is an idolatry. These are what bring down God's vengeance on the unbelievers, and such was your own behaviour, too, while you lived among them. Now it is your turn

to have done with it all, resentment, anger, spite, insults, foul-mouthed utterance; and do not tell lies at one another's expense.³ You must be quit of the old self, and the habits that went with it; you must be clothed in the new self, that is being refitted all the time for closer knowledge, so that the image of the God who created it is its pattern. Here is no more Gentile and Jew, no more circumcised and uncircumcised; no one is barbarian, or Scythian, no one is slave or free man; there is nothing but Christ in any of us. You are God's chosen people, holy and well beloved; the livery you wear must be tender compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; you must bear with one another's faults, be generous to each other, where somebody has given grounds for complaint; the Lord's generosity to you must be the model of yours. And, to crown all this, charity; that is the bond which makes us perfect. So may the peace of Christ, the very condition of your calling as members of a single body, reign in your hearts. Learn, too, to be grateful. May all the wealth of Christ's inspiration have its shrine among you;⁴ now you will have instruction and advice for one another, full of wisdom, now there will be psalms, and hymns, and spiritual music, as you sing with gratitude in your hearts to God. Whatever you are about, in word and action alike, invoke always the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, offering your thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives must be submissive to their husbands, as the service of the Lord demands; and you, husbands, treat your wives lovingly, do not grow harsh with them. Children must be obedient to their parents in every way; it is a gracious sign of serving the Lord; and you, parents, must not rouse your children to resentment, or you will break their spirits. You who are slaves, give

¹ *vv.* 14 and 15: It is not certain whether the subject here is meant to be God, or Christ himself; the translation given assumes that the former view is right. The 'deed which excluded us' is the ceremonial law of Moses, which now no longer stands as a barrier between Jew and Gentile (cf. Eph. 2. 15). This law was mediated by angels (Gal. 3. 19), and these angels, whom the false teachers at Colossae worship as 'dominions and powers', are here represented as having been relieved of their duty as its custodians, and deputed to attend, instead, on the triumphal progress of the risen Christ. 'Through him' at the end of verse 15 might (according to the Greek) be translated 'through it', i.e. the Cross. ² It is possible to understand this verse in the Greek quite differently, 'They are in accordance with right reason, when they shew a willing piety, a true humility, a determination not to spare the body; but often the motive is simply to gratify natural vanity'.

³ It is not certain whether St Paul is thinking here of deceiving people, or of taking away their characters.

⁴ Some take 'Christ's inspiration' as referring to the gospel; but it seems more likely that the Apostle is thinking of Christ as inspiring the utterances of the faithful.

your human masters full obedience, not with that show of service which tries to win human favour, but single-mindedly, in
 23 fear of the Lord. Work at all your tasks with a will, reminding yourselves that you
 24 are doing it for the Lord, not for men; and you may be sure that the Lord will give the portion he has allotted you in return. Be
 25 slaves with Christ for your Master. Whoever does wrong will be requited for the wrong done; there are no human preferences with God.

4 And you who are masters, give your slaves just and equitable treatment; you know well enough that you, too, have a Master in heaven.

2 Persevere in prayer, and keep wakeful over it with thankful hearts. Pray, too, for us; ask God to afford us an opening for preaching the revelation of Christ, which
 4 is the very cause of my imprisonment, and to give me the right utterance for making
 5 it known. Be prudent in your behaviour towards those who are not of your company; it is an opportunity you must eagerly
 6 grasp. Your manner of speaking must always be gracious, with an edge of liveliness, ready to give each questioner the
 7 right answer.¹ You will hear how things go with me from Tychicus, my dearly loved brother and faithful servant, my fellow
 8 bondsman in the Lord; that is the reason why I have sent him, to give me news of

you, and to bring courage to your hearts;² from Onesimus, too, a brother faithful and well beloved, who is of your own number; they will tell you how things stand here.³

Greetings to you from my fellow prisoner Aristarchus, and from Mark, the kinsman of Barnabas, about whom you have been given instructions; if he visits you, make him welcome; from Jesus, too, whom they call Justus. These are the only Jews who have helped me to preach God's kingdom; they have been a comfort to me.⁴ Your own fellow countryman Epaphras sends you his greeting, a servant of Jesus Christ who ever remembers you anxiously in his prayers, hoping that you will stand firm in the perfect achievement of all that is God's will for you; I can vouch for him as one who is greatly concerned over you, and those others at Laodicea and Hierapolis. Greetings from my beloved Luke, the physician, and from Demas. Greet the brethren at Laodicea, and Nymphas, with the church that is in his household. When this letter has been read out to you, see that it is read out to the Laodicean church too, and that you read the letter they have received at Laodicea. Give this message to Archippus; Be careful to fulfil the duty which has been committed to thee in the Lord's service. Here is a greeting for you from Paul in his own hand; do not forget that he is a prisoner. Grace be with you. Amen.

¹ 'With an edge of liveliness'; literally, 'seasoned with salt', that being the ancient expression for conversation, etc., which was not dull or insipid.

² 'To give me news of you'; according to some manuscripts, 'to let you have news of me'.
³ For Onesimus, cf. the letter to Philemon.
⁴ 'The only Jews'; literally, 'the only persons belonging to the circumcision', but the phrase is evidently not used here, as it is used in Gal. 2. 12, to mean Christians who wished the Gentiles to be circumcised when they joined the Church.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

PAUL and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church assembled at Thessalonica in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; Grace be yours and peace. We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you continually in our prayers; such memories we have of your active faith, your unwearied love, and that hope in our Lord Jesus Christ which gives you endurance, in the sight of him who is our God and Father. Brethren, God loves you, and we are sure that he has made choice of you. Our preaching to you did not depend upon mere argument; power was there, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, and an effect of full conviction; you can testify what we were to you and what we did for you. And on your side, you followed our example, the Lord's example. There was great persecution, and yet you welcomed our message, rejoicing in the Holy Spirit; and now you have become a model to all the believers throughout Macedonia and Achaia. Yes, the Lord's message has echoed out from you, and not only in Macedonia and Achaia; your faith in God has overflowed everywhere,¹ so that we do not need to speak a word; our friends² themselves tell the story of our journey, and how we first came among you. They describe how you have turned away from idolatry to the worship of God, so as to serve a living God, a God who really exists, and to wait for the

appearing of his Son from heaven, Jesus, whom he raised from the dead, our Saviour from the vengeance that is to come.

2 Yes, brethren, you yourselves can testify that when we arrived among you, it proved to be no fruitless visit. We had been ill treated and insulted, as you know, at Philippi, but our God gave us courage to preach the divine gospel to you with great earnestness.³ Our appeal to you was not based on any false or degraded notions, was not backed by cajolery. We have passed God's scrutiny, and he has seen fit to entrust us with the work of preaching; when we speak, it is with this in view; we would earn God's good opinion, not man's, since it is God who scrutinizes our hearts. We never used the language of flattery, you will bear us out in that; nor was it, God knows, an excuse for enriching ourselves; we have never asked for human praise, yours or another's, although, as apostles of Christ, we might have made heavy demands on you. No, you found us innocent as babes in your company; no nursing mother ever cherished her children more;⁴ in our great longing for you, we desired nothing better than to offer you our own lives, as well as God's gospel, so greatly had we learned to love you. Brethren, you can remember how we toiled and laboured, all the time we were preaching God's gospel to you,

¹ 'Everywhere'; that is, in Thessaly, and perhaps also in Epirus and Illyricum (Rom. 15. 19); in continuing his journey towards 'the coast', St Paul may well have travelled in those parts before he reached Athens (Ac. 17. 15).

² 'Our friends'; in the original simply 'they', but evidently the Apostle has some definite persons in mind. It seems simplest to suppose that these were the Christians from Macedonia who escorted him on the journey which finished up at Athens (Ac. 17. 15). It is usually understood to mean 'people' generally in Thessaly, etc.; but it is difficult to see how these persons should have heard the story of St Paul's earlier travels, or why they should have been at pains to describe them to St Paul himself. It is more natural to suppose that it was friends from Thessalonica, travelling in St Paul's company, who spread the story of his earlier preaching wherever they went. Two Thessalonians are St Paul's travelling companions in Ac. 20. 4.

³ 'With great earnestness'; the Greek might also mean, 'amid much opposition', cf. Ac. 17. 13.

⁴ 'Made heavy demands on you'; some think the Greek means 'claimed importance among you'. 'Innocent as babes'; this is the sense of the Latin, but some of the best Greek manuscripts have 'gentle'.

working day and night so as not to burden
 10 you with expense. Both you and God can
 witness how upright and honest and fault-
 11 less was our conduct towards you be-
 lievers; it is within your knowledge that we
 12 treated every one of you as a father treats
 his children, encouraging you, comforting
 you, imploring you to lead a life worthy of
 13 the God who now invites you to the glory
 of his kingdom. This is why we give thanks
 to God unceasingly that, when we deliv-
 14 ered the divine message to you, you
 recognized it for what it is, God's message,
 not man's; it is God, after all, who mani-
 15 fests his power in you that have learned to
 believe. You took for your model, bre-
 16 thren, the churches of God which are
 assembled in Judaea in the name of Christ
 Jesus. You were treated by your own fellow
 countrymen as those churches were treated
 17 by the Jews, the men who killed the Lord
 Jesus and the prophets, and persecuted us;
 the men who displease God and shew
 18 themselves the enemies of mankind, when
 they try to hinder us from preaching sal-
 19 vation to the Gentiles. They must always
 be filling up the measure of their sins, and
 now it is God's final vengeance that has
 fallen upon them.
 20 Finding ourselves separated from you,
 brethren, even for a little while, though
 only in person, not in spirit, we conceived
 an overwhelming desire to visit you in
 person, such was our longing for you; and
 we planned a journey to you, I myself,
 Paul, more than once; but Satan has put
 21 obstacles in our way. What hope or delight
 have we, what prize to boast of before our
 Lord Jesus Christ when he comes, if not
 22 you? All our pride, all our delight is in
 you.

3 At last we could not bear it any longer,
 and decided to remain at Athens by
 2 ourselves,¹ while we sent our brother
 Timothy, who exercises God's ministry in
 preaching the gospel of Christ, to confirm
 your resolution, and give you the en-
 3 couragement your faith needed. There
 must be no wavering amidst these trials;
 you know well enough that this is our

appointed lot. Indeed, when we visited
 4 you we told you that trials were to befall
 us; now you can see for yourselves that it
 was true. That was my reason for sending
 5 him, when I could bear it no longer, to
 make sure of your faith; it might be that
 the tempter of souls had been tempting
 you, and that all our labour would go for
 nothing. Now that Timothy has come
 6 back to us from seeing you, and told us
 about your faith and love, and the kind
 remembrance you have of us all the while,
 longing for our company as we long for
 yours, your faith has brought us comfort,
 7 brethren, amidst all our difficulties and
 trials. If only you stand firm in the Lord,
 it brings fresh life to us. What thanks can
 8 we return to God for you, to express all the
 joy we feel in rejoicing over you in the pre-
 9 sence of our God, as we pray more than
 10 ever, night and day, for the opportunity of
 seeing you face to face, and making good
 whatever your faith still lacks? May he
 11 himself, our God and our Father, may our
 Lord Jesus Christ speed us on our journey
 to you; and as for you, may the Lord give
 12 you a rich and an ever richer love for one
 another and for all men, like ours for you.
 So, when our Lord Jesus Christ comes
 13 with all his saints, may you stand boldly
 before the presence of God, our Father, in
 holiness unreprieved. Amen.

4 And now, brethren, this is what we
 ask, this is our appeal to you in the
 name of the Lord Jesus. We gave you a
 pattern of how you ought to live so as to
 please God; live by that pattern, and make
 more of it than ever. You have not for-
 1 gotten the warnings we have handed on to
 you by the command of the Lord Jesus.
 What God asks of you is that you should
 1 sanctify yourselves, and keep clear of for-
 nication. Each of you must learn to control
 2 his own body, as something holy and held
 in honour,² not yielding to the promptings
 3 of passion, as the heathen do in their igno-
 4 rance of God. None of you is to be
 5 exorbitant, and take advantage of his bro-
 6 ther, in his business dealings. For all such
 wrong-doing God exacts punishment; we

¹ It is doubtful whether this visit to Athens is the same as that mentioned in Ac. 17. 16. ² 'To control his own body'; literally, 'to take possession of his own vessel'. Some commentators think that the 'vessel' means a wife, and that St Paul is encouraging the young men at Thessalonica to marry, instead of indulging their passions illicitly.

have told you so already, in solemn warning.¹ The life to which God has called us is not one of incontinence, it is a life of holiness, and to despise it is to despise, not man, but God, the God who has implanted his Holy Spirit in us. As for love of the brethren, there is no need to send you any message; you have learned for yourselves God's lesson about the charity we ought to shew to one another, or you could not practise it as you do towards all the brethren throughout Macedonia. We would only ask you, brethren, to make more of it than ever. Let it be a point of honour with you to keep calm and to go on looking after your affairs, working with your hands as we bade you; thus your life will win respect from the world around you, and you will not need to depend on others.²

Make no mistake, brethren, about those who have gone to their rest; you are not to lament over them, as the rest of the world does, with no hope to live by. We believe, after all, that Jesus underwent death and rose again; just so, when Jesus comes back, God will bring back those who have found rest through him. This we can tell you as a message from the Lord himself; those of us who are still left alive to greet the Lord's coming will not reach the goal before those who have gone to their rest.³ No, the Lord himself will come down from heaven to summon us, with an archangel crying aloud and the trumpet of God sounding; and first of all the dead will rise up, those who died in Christ. Only after that shall we, who are still left alive, be taken up into the clouds, be swept away to meet Christ in the air, and they will bear us company. And so we shall be with the Lord for ever.⁴ Tell one another this for your consolation.

5 There is no need, brethren, to write to you about the times and the seasons of all this; you are keeping it clearly in

mind, without being told, that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. It is just when men are saying, All quiet, all safe, that doom will fall upon them suddenly, like the pangs that come to a woman in travail, and there will be no escape from it. Whereas you, brethren, are not living in the darkness, for the day to take you by surprise, like a thief; no, you are all born to the light, born to the day; we do not belong to the night and its darkness. We must not sleep on, then, like the rest of the world, we must watch and keep sober; night is the sleeper's time for sleeping, the drunkard's time for drinking; we must keep sober, like men of the daylight. We must put on our breastplate, the breastplate of faith and love, our helmet, which is the hope of salvation. God has not destined us for vengeance; he means us to win salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has died for our sakes, that we, waking or sleeping, may find life with him. Go on, then, encouraging one another and building up one another's faith.

Brethren, we would ask you to pay deference to those who work among you, those who have charge of you in the Lord, and give you directions; make it a rule of charity to hold them in special esteem, in honour of the duty they perform, and maintain unity with them.⁵ And, brethren, let us make this appeal to you; warn the vagabonds, encourage the faint-hearted, support the waverers, be patient towards all. See to it that nobody repays injury with injury; you must aim always at what is best, for one another and for all around you.⁶ Joy be with you always. Never cease praying. Give thanks upon all occasions; this is what God expects of you all in Christ Jesus. Do not stifle the utterances of the Spirit, do not hold prophecy in low esteem; and yet you must scrutinize it all carefully, retaining only what is good,

¹ It is probable that the Apostle here goes on to another class of sins, those of fraud, but some think that he is still discussing the same subject, and has the sin of adultery in mind, 'None of you is to commit transgression and to defraud his brother in this matter'.

² It seems likely from this verse that some of the Thessalonians, anticipating the immediate return of Christ, were not only giving away their possessions, but ceasing to carry on their ordinary business, for that reason (cf. II Thess. 3. 12). 'To depend on others'; the Greek might also be translated, 'you will not stand in need of anything'.

³ St Paul uses the word 'we' here, not as implying that he or any of those to whom he is writing will necessarily be alive to witness the Second Coming; he means by 'we' the living, at any given moment of history.

⁴ This verse gives possibility, though not certainty, to the view that those who are alive at the Second Coming will not experience death.

⁵ 'Maintain unity with them'; some Greek manuscripts read, 'among yourselves'.

⁶ *vv.* 14, 15: These verses are perhaps particularly directed to the authorities of the church, just mentioned.

22 and rejecting all that has a look of evil about it.¹ So may the God of peace sanctify you wholly, keep spirit and soul and body unimpaired, to greet the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ without reproach. The God who called you is true to his promise; he will not fail you. Brethren, pray for us. 25 Greet all the brethren with the kiss of saints. I adjure you in the Lord's name to see that this letter is read out to all our holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen. 28

¹ *vv.* 21, 22: These verses probably refer to the utterances of the prophets in the Thessalonian church (cf. I Cor. 14: 29), but their sense may be more general.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

PAUL and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church assembled at Thessalonica in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; From God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, grace be yours and peace. We owe a constant debt of thanksgiving to God, brethren, on your behalf; we have good reason for it, when your faith thrives so well, and your love for one another exceeds all measure; our own boasting, as we visit the churches of God, is of your perseverance and your faith amidst all the persecutions and trials which you have to endure. It will be a proof of the just award God makes, when he finds you worthy of a place in his kingdom, the kingdom for which you are prepared to suffer. Or do you doubt that there is justice with God, to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and you, the afflicted, with that rest which will be ours too? But that is for the day when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven, with angels to proclaim his power; with fire flaming about him, as he pours out vengeance on those who do not acknowledge God, on those who refuse obedience to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The presence of the Lord, and the majesty of his power, will condemn them to eternal punishment,¹ when he comes to shew how glorious he is in his saints, how marvellously he has

dealt with all the faithful, that our witness should have reached you Gentiles, and found belief! Yes, there will be justice when that day comes.² It is with this in view that we are always praying for you, praying that God may find you worthy of your vocation, and ripen by his influence all your love of well-doing, all the activity of your faith. So may the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified in you, and you glorified in him, through the grace given you by our God and by the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 But there is one entreaty we would make of you, brethren, as you look forward to the time when our Lord Jesus Christ will come, and gather us in to himself.³ Do not be terrified out of your senses all at once, and thrown into confusion, by any spiritual utterance, any message or letter purporting to come from us, which suggests that the day of the Lord is close at hand. Do not let anyone find the means of leading you astray. The apostasy must come first; the champion of wickedness must appear first, destined to inherit perdition.⁴ This is the rebel who is to lift up his head above every divine name, above all that men hold in reverence, till at last he enthrones himself in God's temple, and proclaims himself as God.⁵ Do not you

¹ Some commentators would prefer the rendering, 'They will be condemned to eternal punishment, far from the presence of the Lord, and the majesty of his power'. ² 'Yes, there will be justice when that day comes'; the text has simply 'in that day'; but it seems clear that these words are meant to resume the sense of verses 6 and 7 above (verses 6 to 10 forming a single sentence in the original). 'Our witness should have reached you Gentiles, and found belief'; literally, in the Greek, 'our witness has been believed as far as you'. The construction seems to be that of Ac. 8. 40, 'Philip was found as far as Azotus', meaning that Philip had reached Azotus before he was heard of again. It is difficult to believe that the conversion of the Thessalonians as such can be referred to in this very general context; more probably we ought to understand 'you' as meaning 'you Gentiles'; cf. Col. 1. 25. ³ 'As you look forward to'; the Latin here has 'in the name of', the Greek more probably means 'in connexion with'. ⁴ There has been much speculation, what person or what influence in his own day St Paul is here identifying as Antichrist. But it may be observed that he neither expects the Thessalonians to know, nor claims to know himself, anything about the nature of this Rebel who has not yet appeared; all he tells us (in verse 7) is that an influence which makes for evil is already at work in the world; and this does not need to be particularly identified. ⁵ Dan. 11. 36.

remember my telling you of this, before I
 6 left your company? At present there is a
 power (you know what I mean) which
 holds him in check, so that he may not
 shew himself before the time appointed to
 7 him;¹ meanwhile, the conspiracy of revolt
 is already at work; only, he who checks it
 now will be able to check it, until he is
 8 removed from the enemy's path. Then it
 is that the rebel will shew himself; and the
 Lord Jesus will destroy him with the
 breath of his mouth, overwhelming him
 9 with the brightness of his presence. He
 will come, when he comes, with all Satan's
 influence to aid him; there will be no lack
 of power, of counterfeit signs and won-
 10 ders; and his wickedness will deceive the
 souls that are doomed, to punish them for
 refusing that fellowship in the truth which
 would have saved them. That is why God
 is letting loose among them a deceiving
 influence, so that they give credit to false-
 11 hood; he will single out for judgement all
 those who refused credence to the truth,
 and took their pleasure in wrong-doing.

12 We must always give thanks in your
 name, brethren whom the Lord has so
 favoured. God has picked you out as the
 first-fruits in the harvest of salvation, by
 sanctifying your spirits and convincing
 13 you of his truth;² he has called you,
 through our preaching, to attain the glory
 14 of our Lord Jesus Christ. Stand firm, then,
 brethren, and hold by the traditions you
 have learned, in word or in writing, from
 15 us. So may our Lord Jesus Christ himself,
 so may God, our Father, who has shewn
 such love to us, giving us unailing comfort
 16 and welcome hope through his grace, en-
 courage your hearts, and confirm you in
 every right habit of action and speech.

3 And now, brethren, let us have your
 prayers, that the word of the Lord
 may run its course triumphantly with us,

as it does with you; and that we may be
 2 preserved from malicious interference; the
 faith does not reach all hearts.³ But the
 3 Lord keeps faith with us; he will strengthen
 you, and keep you from all harm. We are
 4 sure of you in the Lord, sure that you are
 doing and will do as we bid you; may the
 5 Lord direct you where the love of God and
 the patience of Christ shew you the way.
 Only, brethren, we charge you in the name
 6 of our Lord Jesus Christ to have nothing to
 do with any brother who lives a vagabond
 life, contrary to the tradition which we
 handed on;⁴ you do not need to be re-
 7 minded how, on our visit, we set you an
 example to be imitated; we were no vaga-
 8 bonds ourselves. We would not even be
 indebted to you for our daily bread, we
 earned it in weariness and toil, working
 with our hands, night and day, so as not
 9 to be a burden to any of you; not that we
 are obliged to do so, but as a model for
 your own behaviour; you were to follow
 10 our example. The charge we gave you on
 our visit was that the man who refuses to
 work must be left to starve. And now we
 11 are told that there are those among you
 who live in idleness, neglecting their own
 business to mind other people's. We charge
 12 all such, we appeal to them in the Lord
 Jesus Christ, to earn their bread by going
 on calmly with their work. For yourselves,
 13 brethren, never weary of doing good. If
 14 anybody refuses to listen to what we have
 said in our letter, he is to be a marked man;
 avoid his company till he is ashamed of
 himself, correcting him like a brother, not
 15 treating him as an enemy. And may the
 16 Lord of peace grant you peace everywhere
 and at all times; the Lord be with you all.
 Here is Paul's greeting in his own hand;
 17 the signature which is to be found in all
 my letters; this is my handwriting. The
 18 grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you
 all, Amen.

¹ The power which holds evil in check and defers the appearance of Antichrist may be a human influence, or perhaps that of St Michael or some other angel (cf. Dan. 10. 13, 21). ² 'Picked you out as the first-fruits in the harvest of salvation'; some Greek manuscripts have 'chosen you out for salvation from the beginning'. ³ 'The faith does not reach all hearts'; or possibly, 'faith is not to be found in all hearts'. ⁴ 'Vagabond'; literally, 'disorderly', but the context shews that the Apostle is referring to those who would not work—probably because they were expecting the Second Coming of our Lord to take place immediately; see I Thess. 5. 14, and p. 213, note 2.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO TIMOTHY

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the appointment of God our Saviour, and of Jesus Christ who is our hope, to Timothy, my own son in the faith; Grace be thine, and mercy, and peace, from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ, as thou fulfillest the charge I gave thee, when I passed on into Macedonia, to stay behind at Ephesus. There were some who needed to be warned against teaching strange doctrines, against occupying their minds with legends and interminable pedigrees, which breed controversy, instead of building up God's house, as the faith does.¹ The end at which our warning aims is charity, based on purity of heart, on a good conscience and a sincere faith. There are some who have missed this mark, branching off into vain speculations; who now claim to be expounding the law, without understanding the meaning of their own words, or the subject on which they pronounce so positively. The law? It is an excellent thing, where it is applied legitimately; but it must be remembered that the law is not meant for those who live innocent lives. It is meant for the lawless and the refractory; for the godless and the sinner, the unholy and the profane; for those who lay violent hands on father or mother, for murderers, for those who commit fornication or sin against nature, the slave-dealer, the liar, the perjurer. All this and much else is the very opposite of the sound doctrine contained in the gospel I have been entrusted with, that tells us of the blessed God and his glory.² How I thank our Lord Christ Jesus, the source of all my strength, for

shewing confidence in me by appointing me his minister, me, a blasphemer till then, a persecutor, a man of violence, author of outrage, and yet he had mercy on me, because I was acting in the ignorance of unbelief. The grace of the Lord came upon me in a full tide of faith and love, the love that is in Christ Jesus. How true is that saying, and what a welcome it deserves, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I was the worst of all, and yet I was pardoned, so that in me first of all Christ Jesus might give the extreme example of his patience; I was to be the pattern of all those who will ever believe in him, to win eternal life. Honour and glory through endless ages to the king of all the ages, the immortal, the invisible, who alone is God, Amen. This charge, then, I give into thy hands, my son Timothy, remembering how prophecy singled thee out, long ago. Serve, as it bade thee, in this honourable warfare, with faith and a good conscience to aid thee. Some, through refusing this duty, have made shipwreck of the faith; among them, Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have made over to Satan, till they are cured of their blasphemy.³

2 This, first of all, I ask; that petition, prayer, entreaty and thanksgiving should be offered for all mankind, especially for kings and others in high station, so that we can live a calm and tranquil life, as dutifully and decently as we may.⁴ Such prayer is our duty, it is what God, our Saviour, expects of us, since it is his will that all men should be saved, and be led to recognize the truth; there is only one God,

¹ The teaching here referred to may, like that prevalent at Colossae, have been akin to the Gnostic heresy. The Gnostics maintained that the creator of the material universe was the last in a long line of angelic beings; and some think that these hierarchies of angels are the 'genealogies' here alluded to. But it is more commonly held that St Paul is thinking of Jewish speculations, which grafted legends and spurious pedigrees on to the narrative of the Old Testament.

² *vv. 7-11*: These verses suggest that the false teachers at Ephesus concerned themselves with legalistic expositions of the Ten Commandments; Christians ought to live by the law of charity.

³ The reference would seem to be to some not irrevocable form of excommunication; cf. I Cor. 5. 5.

⁴ 'Decently'; in the Greek, 'with dignity', in the Latin, 'with holiness' (or perhaps 'chastity').

and only one mediator between God and men, Jesus Christ, who is a man, like them, and gave himself as a ransom for them all. At the appointed time, he bore his witness, and of that witness I am the chosen herald, sent as an apostle (I make no false claims, I am only recalling the truth) to be a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.¹

It is my wish that prayer should everywhere be offered by the men; they are to lift up hands that are sanctified, free from all anger and dispute.² So, too, with the women; they are to dress themselves modestly and with restraint in befitting attire; no plaited hair, no gold ornaments, or pearls, or rich clothes; a virtuous life is the best adornment for women who lay claim to piety. Women are to keep silence, and take their place, with all submissiveness, as learners; a woman shall have no leave from me to teach, and issue commands to her husband; her part is to be silent. It was Adam that was created first, and Eve later, nor was it Adam that went astray; woman was led astray, and was involved in transgression. Yet woman will find her salvation in child-bearing, if she will but remain true to faith and love and holy living.³

3 It is well said, When a man aspires to a bishopric, it is no mean employ that he covets. The man who is to be a bishop, then, must be one with whom no fault can be found; faithful to one wife, sober, discreet, modest, well behaved, hospitable, experienced in teaching,⁴ no lover of wine or of brawling, courteous, neither quarrelsome nor grasping. He must be one

who is a good head to his own family, and keeps his children in order by winning their full respect;⁵ if a man has not learned how to manage his own household, will he know how to govern God's church? He must not be a new convert, or he may be carried away by vanity, and incur Satan's doom. He must bear a good character, too, in the world's eyes; or he may fall into disrepute, and become a prey to the False Accuser.⁶

Deacons, in the same way, must be men of decent behaviour, men of their word, not given to deep drinking or to money-getting, keeping true, in all sincerity of conscience, to the faith that has been revealed. These, in their turn, must first undergo probation, and only be allowed to serve as deacons if no charge is brought against them. The women-folk, too, should be modest, not fond of slanderous talk; they must be sober, and in every way worthy of trust.⁷ The deacon must be faithful to one wife, good at looking after his own family and household. Those who have served well in the diaconate will secure for themselves a sure footing, and great boldness in proclaiming that faith which is founded on Christ Jesus. So much I tell thee by letter, although I hope to pay thee a visit before long; so that, if I am slow in coming, thou mayest be in no doubt over the conduct that is expected of thee in God's household. By that I mean the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation upon which the truth rests.

No question of it, it is a great mystery we worship. Revelation made in human

¹ *ev.* 1-7: It is possible that the false teachers at Ephesus, if they were Jews, may have been influenced by the unpopularity of Roman rule in Judaea, so as to preach disloyalty to the Empire; perhaps, too, they refused to recognize that the gospel was offered to the whole of mankind. ² St Paul is probably teaching here that women are to abstain from offering public prayer, as well as from teaching (in the sense of giving instructions at public worship).

³ The Latin here has 'in the birth of children'; but the text as given in the Greek makes it equally possible to follow Theophylact (as several non-Catholic commentators do), and translate 'in the Child-bearing'. Woman, here considered as a single race, has been re-established since the fall of Eve by the obedience of the Blessed Virgin, as is commonly recognized by the Church from St Irenaeus onwards. 'If she will but remain' is 'if they will but remain' in the Greek; the plural being substituted for the singular to shew that the statement is made about womanhood generally. ⁴ 'Faithful to one wife' may mean, but does not necessarily mean, that in the discipline of the early Church a re-married widower was ineligible for the episcopate.

⁵ 'By winning their full respect'; in the Greek, 'with all dignity', in the Latin, 'with all holiness' (or perhaps 'chastity'). ⁶ *ev.* 1-7: It is possible that St Paul means us to understand these qualifications as applying, not only to the episcopal office, but to that of a priest; he does not mention presbyters in this chapter. Cf. p. 203, note 1. ⁷ v. 7: 'The False Accuser' is the name given in Greek to the Devil. Here the sense would seem to be, that a Christian who was an object of suspicion to those outside the Church would bring the Church into discredit, through the scandal which the Devil would attach to his name.

⁸ *ev.* 2 and 11: 'Modest'; in the Greek, 'dignified', in the Latin, 'holy' or 'chaste'. v. 11: 'The women-folk'; probably meaning the deacon's wife and household. It may, however, imply that women were recognized in the early Church, as they were later, in the character of 'deaconesses', sharing in the charitable work done by the deacons. Cf. Rom. 16. 1, where Phoebe is said to be a 'ministrant' to the church at Cenchræ.

nature, justification won in the realm of the Spirit; a vision seen by angels, a mystery preached to the Gentiles; Christ in this world, accepted by faith, Christ, on high, taken up into glory.¹

4 We are expressly told by inspiration that, in later days, there will be some who abandon the faith, listening to false inspirations, and doctrines taught by the devils. They will be deceived by the pretensions of impostors, whose conscience is hardened as if by a searing-iron. Such teachers bid them abstain from marriage, and from certain kinds of food, although God has made these for the grateful enjoyment of those whom faith has enabled to recognize the truth.² All is good that God has made, nothing is to be rejected; only we must be thankful to him when we partake of it, then it is hallowed for our use by God's blessing and the prayer which brings it.³ Lay down these rules for the brethren, and thou wilt shew thyself a true servant of Jesus Christ, thriving on the principles of that faith whose wholesome doctrine thou hast followed. Leave foolish nursery tales alone, and train thyself, instead, to grow up in holiness.⁴ Training of the body avails but little; holiness is all-availing, since it promises well both for this life and for the next; how true is that saying, and what a welcome it deserves!⁵ It is for this that we endure toil and reproach,⁶ our hope in a living God, who is the Saviour of mankind, and above all of those who believe in him.

11 Such is the charge, such is the doctrine

thou art to deliver. Do not let anyone think the less of thee for thy youthfulness; make thyself a model of speech and behaviour for the faithful, all love, all faith, all purity. Reading, preaching, instruction, let these be thy constant care while I am absent. A special grace has been entrusted to thee; prophecy awarded it, and the imposition of the presbyters' hands went with it; do not let it suffer from neglect.⁷ Let this be thy study, these thy employments, so that all may see how well thou doest. Two things claim thy attention, thyself and the teaching of the faith; spend thy care on them; so wilt thou and those who listen to thee achieve salvation.⁸

5 Instead of finding fault, appeal to an older man as if he were thy father, to younger men as thy brothers, to the older women, as mothers, to the younger (but with all modesty) as sisters. Give widows their due, if that name really belongs to them;⁹ if a widowed woman is left with children or grandchildren, she must be warned that their own flesh and blood has the first claim on their piety. They must make due returns to those who gave them birth; that is what God asks of them.¹⁰ The woman who is indeed a widow, bereft of all help, will put her trust in God, and spend her time, night and day, upon the prayers and petitions that belong to her state; one who lives in luxury would be alive and dead both at once.¹¹ Warn them of this, too, or they will bring themselves into disrepute; the man who makes no provision for those nearest him, above all

¹ This sentence would seem to be connected with what follows, rather than with what goes before. Some think that St Paul is quoting from an early Christian hymn; cf. Eph. 5. 14. The sentence is perhaps best divided into three paradoxes: Christ manifested to the world in his humanity, yet redeeming us through the dignity of his Divine Person; the Resurrection, a sight only witnessed by angels, yet published throughout the world; Christ still making his power felt here below, through the faith of his Church, although he has ascended into heaven. ² 'Certain kinds of food'; either those prohibited by the Jewish law, as in Rom. 14, or some others (perhaps flesh-meat generally) prohibited by innovating teachers at Ephesus, in the spirit of the later Gnostics. ³ God's blessing; literally, 'God's word'; which some understand here as meaning 'the words of Scripture'; it is doubtful whether St Paul ever uses the phrase in that sense. ⁴ For 'foolish' the Greek has 'profane'; it is not clear in what sense. ⁵ Some commentators think the saying consists of the words given in verse 10. ⁶ 'Reproach'; many Greek manuscripts read 'struggle'. ⁷ St Paul says that the grace was given to St Timothy 'through prophecy', presumably in the sense that the prophets pointed him out as a suitable person to be made a presbyter, or a bishop (cf. 1. 18 above, and Ac. 13. 2). It was, perhaps, through this influence that he was chosen in spite of his youth, on which this chapter seems to lay special emphasis. ⁸ 'Spend thy care on them'; that is, upon thyself and upon the preaching of the faith, as is indicated by the words which follow. ⁹ 'Their due', including their maintenance by public alms, according to the custom of the early Church (cf. Ac. 6. 1). In Heb., the verb 'to honour' sometimes has the sense of monetary payment (cf. Ecclus. 38. 1, and p. 16, note 2). ¹⁰ 'She must be warned'; the Greek manuscripts, and many of the Latin, have 'they must be warned'. This seems the more probable reading, in view of verse 7. ¹¹ 'Would be alive and dead both at once'; literally, 'is dead while she still lives'. The sense appears to be, that she must not attempt to live a worldly life and claim, at the same time, the privileges of widowhood.

his own family, has contradicted the teaching of the faith, and indeed does worse than
 9 the unbelievers do. If a woman is to be put on the list of widows, she must have reached, at least, the age of sixty, and have
 10 been faithful to one husband.¹ She must have a name for acts of charity; has she brought up children? Has she been hospitable? Has she washed the feet of the saints? Has she helped those who were in affliction? Has she attached herself to every charitable cause? Have nothing to do with younger widows; they will live at their ease at Christ's expense, and then be
 12 for marrying again,² thus incurring the guilt of breaking the promise they have made. Meanwhile, they learn habits of idleness as they go from house to house; nor are they merely idle, they gossip and interfere, and say what they have no right
 14 to say. So I would have the younger women marry and bear children and have households to manage; then they will give enmity no handle for speaking ill of us.
 15 Already there are some who have turned aside, to follow Satan. Meanwhile, if a believer has any widows depending on him, he should undertake their support, leaving the church free to support the widows who are really destitute.
 17 Presbyters who have acquitted themselves well of their charge should be awarded double consideration; those especially, who bestow their pains on preaching and instruction;³ there is a passage in scripture which tells us not to muzzle the ox while it is threshing grain, and the labourer has a right to expect his maintenance.⁴ Do not take cognizance of any charge made against a presbyter, unless
 20 there are two witnesses or more. Give a public rebuke to those who are living amiss, and thus put fear into the rest.⁵
 21 I adjure thee in the sight of God and of Jesus Christ, and the angels he has chosen,

to observe these rules without rash judgment, without yielding to partiality. As
 22 for the imposition of hands, do not bestow it inconsiderately, and so share the blame for the sins of others. Keep thyself clear of fault.⁶ (No, do not confine thyself to
 23 water any longer; take a little wine to relieve thy stomach, and thy frequent attacks of illness.)⁷ Some men have faults that are plain to view, so that they invite question; with others, discovery follows upon the heels of enquiry; so it is, too, with their
 25 merits; some are plain to view, and where they are not, they cannot long remain hidden.

6 Those who are bound to slavery must treat their masters as entitled to all respect; otherwise God's name and our doctrine will be ill spoken of. And those
 2 whose masters belong to the faith must not think the less of them, for being their brethren; they should render all the better service, when those who benefit by their good will are believers, worthy of their love. Teach them, and encourage them, so to act. Is there some rival teacher, who refuses assent to the sound principles which are the principles of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the doctrine which accords with holiness? Then it is because he is puffed up with vanity; knowledge he has none, but an itch for speculation and controversy. What comes of it? Only jealousy, quarrelling, recriminations and base suspicions, all such encounters as must arise
 5 between men with corrupted minds who have lost track of the truth. Religion, they think, will provide them with a living. And indeed, religion is ample provision for life, though no more than a bare sufficiency goes with it.⁸ Empty-handed we came into the world, and empty-handed, beyond question, we must leave it; why then, if we have food and clothing to last us out, let us

¹ There is the same uncertainty here as in 3, 2 above.

² This verse is ordinarily translated 'When they have begun to grow wanton against Christ', but this does not translate the Latin, and is a very doubtful rendering of the Greek. St Paul surely means, 'When they have finished living a luxurious life, upon the aims of the Christian community'.

³ 'Consideration' here is the same word in Greek as 'their due' in verse 3 above, and is no doubt used partly in the same signification; cf. the verse which follows.

⁴ Deut. 25, 4; see also Mt. 10, 10. ⁵ 'To those', probably meaning 'to those presbyters', and the direction that they are to be rebuked in public is best understood as meaning 'Before the other presbyters'.

⁶ St Timothy is probably warned against ordaining presbyters without due enquiry into their character; but it seems that the imposition of hands was also used in remitting ecclesiastical censures, and some think this is the meaning here.

⁷ This sentence interrupts the drift of the passage; probably St Paul suddenly remembered a question put to him, and answered it, as it were, in a foot-note. ⁸ 'Though no more than a bare sufficiency goes with it'; the Greek might also be translated, 'if it goes together with contentment'.

9 be content with that. Those who would be
rich fall into temptation, the devil's trap
for them; all those useless and dangerous
appetites which sink men into ruin here
10 and perdition hereafter. The love of money
is a root from which every kind of evil
springs, and there are those who have wan-
dered away from the faith by making it
their ambition, involving themselves in a
world of sorrows.¹

11 It is for thee, servant of God, to shun all
this; to aim at right living, holiness, and
faith, and love, and endurance, and kind
12 forbearance. Fight the good fight of faith,
lay thy grasp on eternal life, that life thou
wert called to, when thou didst assert the
13 great claim before so many witnesses. I ad-
jure thee before the God who gives life to
all things, before Christ Jesus who bore
witness to that great claim when he stood
14 before Pontius Pilate, to fulfil thy charge
without stain of reproach until the day
15 when our Lord Jesus Christ appears. God
will reveal him in due time, the blessed

God who alone enjoys dominion; he is
King of kings, and Lord of lords; to him
16 alone immortality belongs, his dwelling is
in unapproachable light; no human eye
has seen or can ever see him; to him be
glory and everlasting empire, Amen. Warn
17 those who are rich in this present world
not to think highly of themselves, not to
repose their hopes in the riches that may
fail us, but in the living God, who bestows
on us so richly all that we enjoy. Let them
18 do good, enrich their lives with charitable
deeds, always ready to give, and to share
the common burden, laying down a sure
19 foundation for themselves in time to come,
so as to have life which is true life within
their grasp. It is for thee, Timothy, to keep
20 safe what has been entrusted to thee,
avoiding these new, intruding forms of
speech, this quibbling knowledge that is
knowledge only in name;² there are those
21 who profess them, and in professing them
have shot wide of the mark which faith sets
us. Grace be with thee, Amen.

¹ 'Involving themselves in' has rather, in the Greek, the meaning of 'stabbing themselves with'.

² For 'new' the best Greek manuscripts have 'empty'.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO TIMOTHY

PAUL, sent as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, in furtherance of that promise of life which is given us in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, his well beloved son; Grace and mercy and peace from God the Father, and from Christ Jesus our Lord. It is with gratitude to that God, whom I worship with a clear conscience in the way my fathers taught me, that I make mention of thee continually, day and night, in my prayer. I keep the memory of thy tears, and long to see thee again, so as to have my fill of joy when I receive fresh proof of thy sincere faith. That faith dwelt in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice, before thee; I am fully persuaded that it dwells in thee too. That is why I would remind thee to fan the flame of that special grace which God kindled in thee, when my hands were laid upon thee. The spirit he has bestowed on us is not one that shrinks from danger; it is a spirit of action, of love, and of discipline. Do not blush, then, for the witness thou bearest to our Lord, or for me, who am his prisoner; share all the tribulations of the gospel message as God gives thee strength. Has he not saved us, and called us to a vocation of holiness? It was not because of anything we had done; we owe it to his own design, to the grace lavished on us, long ages ago, in Christ Jesus. Now it has come to light, since our Saviour Jesus Christ came to enlighten us; now he has annulled death, now he has shed abroad the rays of life and immortality, through that gospel which I have been appointed to herald, as an

apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles. This is what I have to suffer as the result; but I am not put to the blush. He, to whom I have given my confidence, is no stranger to me, and I am fully persuaded that he has the means to keep my pledge safe, until that day comes.¹

With all the faith and love thou hast in Christ Jesus, keep to the pattern of sound doctrine thou hast learned from my lips. By the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, be true to thy high trust. In Asia, as thou knowest, all have treated me coldly, Phigellus and Hermogenes among them.² May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus³; often enough he revived my spirits. Instead of being ashamed of a prisoner's acquaintance, he sought me out when he was in Rome, and succeeded in finding me. The Lord grant that he may find mercy with his Lord when that day comes; what he did for me in Ephesus I have no need to tell thee.

2 Take strength, my own son, from the grace which dwells in Christ Jesus. Thou hast learned, from many who can witness to it, the doctrine which I hand down; give it into the keeping of men thou canst trust, men who will know how to teach it to others besides themselves.⁴ Then, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus, take thy share of hardship. Thou art God's soldier, and the soldier on service, if he would please the captain who enlisted him, will refuse to be entangled in the business of daily life; the athlete will win no crown, if he does not observe the rules of the con-

¹ 'He, to whom I have given my confidence... has the means to keep my pledge safe'. The metaphor is probably that of a friend to whom we entrust something of value to keep for us during absence. But some think that 'my pledge' means 'the pledge God has entrusted to me', not 'the pledge I have entrusted to God'; in that case, we should have to translate 'he, in whom I have learned to believe'.² We cannot tell what was the exact complaint St Paul had against his acquaintances in Asia; perhaps they might have been expected to make representations at Rome to secure his release.

³ Onesiphorus had probably died since; greetings are sent to his household, but not to himself, in 4. 19 below.
⁴ Many commentators would understand 'Thou hast learned my doctrine in the presence of many witnesses'; but such a rendering is not justified either by the Greek or by the Latin.

6 test; the first share in the harvest goes to
7 the labourer who has toiled for it. Grasp
the sense of what I am saying; the Lord
will give thee quick insight wherever it is
8 needed. Fix thy mind on Jesus Christ,
sprung from the race of David, who has
risen from the dead; that is the gospel I
9 preach,¹ and in its service I suffer hard-
ship like a criminal, yes, even imprison-
ment; but there is no imprisoning the word
10 of God. For its sake I am ready to undergo
anything; for love of the elect, that they,
like us, may win salvation in Christ Jesus,
11 and eternal glory with it. It is well said,
We are to share his life, because we have
12 shared his death; if we endure, we shall
reign with him, if we disown him, he in his
13 turn will disown us. If we play him false,
he remains true to his word; he cannot
disown himself.

14 Bring this back to men's thoughts,
pleading with them earnestly in the Lord's
name; there must be no wordy disputes,
such as can only unsettle the minds of
15 those who are listening. Aim first at win-
ning God's approval, as a workman who
does not need to be ashamed of his work,
one who knows how to handle the claims
16 of the truth like a master. Keep thy dis-
tance from those who are bringing in a
fashion of meaningless talk; they will go
17 far to establish neglect of God, and their
influence eats in like a cancer. Such are
18 Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have missed
the true mark, by contending that the re-
surrection has come about already, to the
19 overthrow of the faith in some minds. But
God's foundation-stone stands firm, and
this is the legend on it, The Lord acknow-
ledges none but his own; and again, Let
everyone who names the Lord's name keep
20 far from iniquity.² A great house, besides
its plate of gold and silver, contains other
objects made of wood and earthenware;
21 those for noble, these for ignoble uses; it is
by keeping himself separate from these
that a man will prove the object of his
Lord's regard, hallowed, and serviceable,
and fit for all honourable employment.
22 Shun these youthful ardours I speak of;
aim at right living, faith, and hope, and

love, and fellowship with all those who call
on the name of the Lord with a pure heart.
Leave these foolish, ill-conceived disputes 23
alone; be very sure, they breed nothing but
quarrels. A servant of the Lord has no 24
business with quarrelling; he must be
kindly towards all men, persuasive and
tolerant, with a gentle hand for correcting 25
those who are obstinate in their errors. It
may be that God will enable them to rep-
ent, and acknowledge the truth; so they 26
will recover their senses, and shake off the
snare by which the devil, till now, has held
them prisoners to his will.³

3 Be sure of this, that in the world's last
age there are perilous times coming.
Men will be in love with self, in love with 2
money, boastful, proud, abusive; with-
out reverence for their parents, without
gratitude, without scruple, without love, 3
without peace; slanderers, incontinent,
strangers to pity and to kindness; treacher- 4
ous, reckless, full of vain conceit, thinking
rather of their pleasures than of God. They 5
will preserve all the outward form of re-
ligion, although they have long been
strangers to its meaning. From these, too,
turn away. They count among their num- 6
ber the men that will make their way into
house after house, captivating weak women
whose consciences are burdened by sin;
7 women swayed by shifting passions, who
are for ever inquiring, yet never attain to
recognition of the truth. Moses found 8
rivals in Jannes and Mambres; just so the
men I speak of set themselves up in rivalry
against the truth, men whose minds are 9
corrupt, whose faith is counterfeit; yet
they will come to little, they will soon be
detected, like those others, in their rash
folly.⁴

Not such was the schooling, the 10
guidance, thou hadst from me; in firm
resolve, in faith, in patience, in love, in
endurance; all my persecutions and suffer- 11
ing, such as those which befell me at
Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra; what per-
secutions I underwent! And yet the Lord 12
brought me through them all safely. And
indeed, all those who are resolved to live

¹ Cf. Ac. 13. 23 and 35-37.

² Cf. Mt. 7. 21-23.

³ The meaning of the Greek is obscure, and much disputed; the sense of the Latin is that given here.

⁴ *vv.* 8, 9: Jannes and Mambres (or, according to some manuscripts, Jambres) were the names given by Hebrew tradition to the magicians who withstood Moses by means of enchantments (Ex. 7. 11) and were finally discomfited (Ex. 9. 11).

a holy life in Christ Jesus will meet with
 13 persecution; while the rogues and the
 mountebanks go on from bad to worse, at
 14 once impostors and dupes. It is for thee
 to hold fast by the doctrine handed on to
 thee, the charge committed to thee; thou
 knowest well, from whom that tradition
 came; thou canst remember the holy
 15 learning¹ thou hast been taught from child-
 hood upwards. This will train thee up for
 salvation, through the faith which rests in
 16 Christ Jesus. Everything in the scripture
 has been divinely inspired, and has its
 uses; to instruct us, to expose our errors,
 to correct our faults, to educate us in holy
 17 living; so God's servant will become a
 master of his craft, and each noble task
 that comes will find him ready for it.

4 I adjure thee in the sight of God, and
 of Jesus Christ, who is to be the judge
 of living and dead, in the name of his
 2 coming, and of his kingdom, preach the
 word, dwelling upon it continually, wel-
 come or unwelcome; bring home wrong-
 doing, comfort the waverer, rebuke the
 sinner, with all the patience of a teacher.
 3 The time will surely come, when men will
 grow tired of sound doctrine, always itch-
 ing to hear something fresh; and so they
 will provide themselves with a continuous
 succession of new teachers, as the whim
 4 takes them, turning a deaf ear to the truth,
 bestowing their attention on fables instead.
 5 It is for thee to be on the watch, to accept
 every hardship, to employ thyself in
 preaching the gospel, and perform every
 duty of thy office, keeping a sober mind.
 6 As for me, my blood already flows in sacri-
 fice; the time has nearly come when I can
 7 go free. I have fought the good fight;
 I have finished the race; I have redeemed
 8 my pledge;² I look forward to the prize
 that is waiting for me, the prize I have

earned. The Lord, the judge whose award
 never goes amiss, will grant it to me when
 that day comes; to me, yes, and all those
 who have learned to welcome his ap-
 pearing.

Make haste, and come quickly to me. 9
 Demas has fallen in love with this present
 world; he has deserted me, and gone to
 Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Ga- 10
 latia, Titus to Dalmatia, and Luke is my 11
 only companion. Join company with
 Mark, and bring him here with thee; he
 can help me with the exercise of his mi- 12
 nistry now that I have sent Tychicus away
 to Ephesus. When thou comest, bring with 13
 thee the cloak which I left in Carpus' hands
 at Troas; the books, too, and above all the 14
 rolls of parchment. I have had much ill
 usage from Alexander, the coppersmith.
 As for what he has done, the Lord will 15
 judge him for it;³ only do thou, too, be
 on thy guard against him; he has been a 16
 great enemy to our preaching. At my first
 trial, no one stood by me; I was deserted 17
 by everybody; may it be forgiven them.
 But the Lord was at my side; he endowed
 me with strength, so that through me the 18
 preaching of the gospel might attain its full
 scope, and all the Gentiles might hear it;
 thus I was brought safely out of the jaws of
 the lion. Yes, the Lord has preserved me 19
 from every assault of evil; he will bring me
 safely into his heavenly kingdom; glory be
 to him through endless ages, Amen.

My greetings to Prisca and Aquila, and 20
 to the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus
 has stayed on at Corinth; Trophimus fell 21
 ill, and I left him behind at Miletus. Make
 haste, and come to me before winter.
 Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and
 Claudia and all the brethren send thee
 their greeting.⁴ The Lord Jesus Christ 22
 be with thy spirit. Grace be with you,
 Amen.

¹ 'Holy learning', including, doubtless, the Old Testament scriptures, but not necessarily confined to them.

² 'I have redeemed my pledge', or perhaps 'I have kept the faith', but the context here seems to demand a fresh metaphor: cf. I Tim. 6. 20, II Tim. 1. 12.

³ There is no means of determining whether this is the Alexander mentioned in Ac. 19. 33.

⁴ According to Eusebius, this is the same Linus who became bishop of Rome after the death of St Peter.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO TITUS

It is Paul who writes; God's servant, sent out as an apostle of Jesus Christ, with the faith of God's elect for his care; they were to acknowledge that truth which accords with holiness, and fix their hopes on eternal life. It has been promised to us long ages since by the God who cannot fail us; and now, in due time, he has made his meaning clear to us, through the preaching with which God, our Saviour, has seen fit to entrust me. To Titus, my own son in the faith we share, grace and peace from God the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord.

If I left thee behind me in Crete, it was to put all in order, where order is still needed. It is for thee to appoint presbyters, as I enjoined, in each city, always looking for a man who is beyond reproach, faithful to one wife; one whose children hold the faith, not accused of reckless living, not wanting in obedience. A bishop, after all, since he is the steward of God's house, must needs be beyond reproach. He must not be an obstinate or quarrelsome man, one who drinks deep, or comes to blows, or is grasping over money.¹ He must be hospitable, kindly, discreet, upright, unworldly and continent. He must hold firmly to the truths which have tradition for their warrant; able, therefore, to encourage sound doctrine, and to shew the wayward their error. There are many rebellious spirits abroad, who talk of their own fantasies and lead men's minds astray; those especially who hold by circumcision; and they must be silenced. They will bring ruin on entire households by false teaching, with an eye to their own base profits. Why, one of themselves, a spokesman of

their own, has told us, The men of Crete were ever liars, venomous creatures, all hungry belly and nothing besides; and that is a true account of them. Be strict, then, in taking them to task, so that they may be soundly established in the faith, instead of paying attention to these Jewish fables, these rules laid down for them by human teachers who will not look steadily at the truth. As if anything could be unclean for those who have clean hearts! But for these men, defiled as they are by want of faith, everything is unclean; defilement has entered their very thought, their very consciences. They profess recognition of God, but their practice contradicts it; it is they who are abominable, who are disloyal, who are ill qualified for the practice of any true virtue.²

2 Thine is to be a different message, with sound doctrine for its rule. Teach the older men to be sober, decent, orderly, soundly established in faith, in charity, in patience. The older women, too, must carry themselves as befits a holy calling, not given to slanderous talk or enslaved to drunken habits; teaching others by their good example. From them the younger women must learn orderly behaviour, how to treat their husbands and their children lovingly, how to be discreet, modest, and sober, busy about the house, kindly, submissive to their own husbands; the preaching of God's word must not be brought into disrepute. Encourage the young men, too, to live orderly lives. Let them find in all thou doest the model of a life nobly lived; let them find thee disinterested in thy teaching, worthy of their

¹ St Paul seems to assume that the qualifications needed by a bishop are those also needed by a presbyter; cf. I Tim. 3. 1-7 and p. 218, notes 4 and 6. ² vv. 14-16: The false teachers in Crete are referred to in much the same terms as the false teachers at Ephesus (cf. I Tim. 1. 4-11 and p. 217, note 1); in Crete, at any rate, they were Jews. They seem to have insisted particularly on the distinction between 'clean' and 'unclean' forms of food; thereby (as St Paul points out) denying the beneficent intentions of the Creator whom they professed to worship.

8 respect,¹ thy doctrine sound beyond all
 cavit; so that our adversaries may blush
 to find that they have no opportunity for
 9 speaking ill of us. Slaves must be sub-
 missive to their own masters, so as to
 10 content them in every way; no arguing, no
 pilfering; they must give good proof of
 utter fidelity, every action of theirs bring-
 ing credit to the teaching which God, our
 11 Saviour, has revealed. The grace of God,
 our Saviour, has dawned on all men alike,
 12 schooling us to forgo irreverent thoughts
 and worldly appetites, and to live, in this
 present world, a life of order, of justice,
 13 and of holiness. We were to look forward,
 blessed in our hope, to the day when there
 will be a new dawn of glory, the glory of
 the great God, the glory of our Saviour
 14 Jesus Christ;² who gave himself for us, to
 ransom us from all our guilt, a people set
 apart for himself, ambitious of noble deeds.
 15 Be this thy message, lending all authority
 to thy encouragement and thy reproof. Let
 no man lightly esteem thee.

3 Remind them that they have a duty
 of submissive loyalty to governments
 and to those in authority, of readiness to
 undertake any kind of honourable service.
 2 They are not to speak injuriously of any-
 one, or pick quarrels; they must be
 considerate, and lose no opportunity of
 shewing courtesy to the world around
 3 them. We, after all, were once like the rest
 of them, reckless, rebellious, the dupes of
 error; enslaved to a strange medley of
 desires and appetites, our lives full of
 meanness and of envy, hateful, and hating
 4 one another. Then the kindness of God,

our Saviour, dawned on us, his great love
 for man. He saved us; and it was not
 thanks to anything we had done for our
 own justification. In accordance with his
 own merciful design he saved us, with the
 cleansing power which gives us new birth,
 and restores our nature through the Holy
 Spirit, shed on us in abundant measure
 through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. So,
 7 justified by his grace, we were to become
 heirs, with the hope of eternal life set be-
 fore us. It is well said, and I would have
 thee dwell on it, that those who have
 learned to trust in God should be at pains
 to find honourable employment.³ That is
 their duty, and the world will benefit by
 it. But take no part in vain researches into
 9 pedigrees, and controversies that wrangle
 over points of the law; they are useless
 folly. Give a heretic one warning, then a
 10 second, and after that avoid his company;
 his is a perverse nature, thou mayest be
 11 sure, and his fault has been admitted on his
 own confession.

When I send for thee by Artemas or
 12 Tychicus, make haste and come to meet
 me at Nicopolis; I have decided to spend
 the winter there. Make careful provision
 13 for Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollo on their
 journey; they must not be left wanting for
 anything. It would be well if our brethren
 14 would learn to find honourable employ-
 ment, so as to meet what necessity de-
 mands of them, instead of having nothing
 to contribute.⁴ All those who are with
 15 me send their greeting to you. Greet all
 those who are our friends in the common
 faith. The grace of God be with you all,
 Amen.

¹ 'Disinterested in thy teaching'; literally, in the Latin. 'in uprightness', but the Greek makes it evident that the two words are part of a single thought.

² We may, with the Greek Fathers, understand St Paul to have written here 'the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ'; or we may, by a slightly less natural interpretation of the Greek, render 'the glory of the great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ'.

³ Here, as in I Tim. 4, 9, it is not certain whether the 'true saying' means what has gone before, or what immediately follows. 'Should be at pains to find honourable employment'; the sense might be 'should be champions of all that is good', but verse 14 below points to a more restricted interpretation.

⁴ The meaning probably is, that Christians should earn an honest living (cf. II Thess. 3, 11), so as to be able to meet extraordinary expenses demanded of the congregation, such as those mentioned in the preceding verse.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO PHILEMON

PAUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy, who is their brother, to the well beloved Philemon, who shares our labours, and to all the church that is in his household, to our dear sister Appia, Archippus, who fights the same battle with ourselves, and the rest; Grace and peace be yours from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God at all times, remembering thee in my prayers; such accounts I hear of the love and faith thou shewest towards the Lord Jesus and towards all the saints. May thy generosity in the faith be made known, when all your good actions are recognized in Christ Jesus.¹ It has been a happiness and a comfort to me to hear of thy charity, brother, and of the refreshment thou hast brought to the hearts of the saints. And now, though I might well make bold in Christ to prescribe a duty to thee, I prefer to appeal to this charity of thine. Who is it that writes to thee? Paul, an old man now, and in these days the prisoner, too, of Jesus Christ;² and I am appealing to thee on behalf of Onesimus, the child of my imprisonment. He did thee an ill service once; now, both to thee and to myself, he can be serviceable,³ and I am sending him back to thee; make him welcome, for my

heart goes with him. I would sooner have kept him here with me, to attend, as thy deputy, on a prisoner of the gospel, but I would do nothing without thy leave; thy generosity should be exercised freely, not from lack of choice. Perhaps, after all, the very purpose of thy losing him for a time was that thou mightest have him always by thee. Do not think of him any longer as a slave; he is something more than a slave, a well loved brother, to me in a special way; much more, then, to thee, now that both nature and Christ make him thy own. As thou dost value thy fellowship with me, make him welcome as thou wouldst myself; if he has wronged thee, or is in thy debt, make me answerable for it. Here is a message in Paul's own hand; I will make it good. Not to remind thee that thou owest me a debt already, thy own self. And now, brother, let me claim thy services; give comfort in the Lord to my anxious heart. I write to thee counting on thy obedience, well assured that thou wilt do even more than I ask. Be prepared, meanwhile, to entertain me; I hope, through your prayers, to be restored to you. Greetings to you from Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus; from Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, who share my labours. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

¹ This seems to be the sense intended by the Latin; it is, however, based on readings in the Greek which have little support. The Greek, rendered literally, runs: 'May thy sharing in the faith become effective, in the fuller knowledge (or recognition) of all the good that is in us in Christ Jesus'. ² Some think St Paul calls himself, not an old man, but 'the ambassador, and now the prisoner too, of Jesus Christ'. ³ The name Onesimus, in Greek, means 'profitable'. There is perhaps a further play upon words in verse 20 below.

THE EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PAUL TO THE HEBREWS

IN old days, God spoke to our fathers in many ways and by many means,¹ through the prophets; now at last in these times he has spoken to us with a Son to speak for him; a Son, whom he has appointed to inherit all things, just as it was through him that he created this world of time; a Son, who is the radiance of his Father's splendour, and the full expression of his being;² all creation depends, for its support, on his enabling word. Now, making atonement for our sins, he has taken his place on high, at the right hand of God's majesty, superior to the angels in that measure in which the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.³ Did God ever say to one of the angels, Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee this day? And again, He shall find in me a Father, and I in him a Son?⁴ Why, when the time comes for bringing his first-born into the world anew, then, he says, Let all the angels of God worship before him.⁵ What does he say of the angels? He will have his angels be like the winds, the servants that wait on him like a flame of fire.⁶ And what of the Son? Thy throne, O God, stands firm for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingship is a rod that rules

true. Thou hast been a friend to right, an enemy to wrong; and God, thy own God, has given thee an unction to bring thee pride, as none else of thy fellows.⁷ And elsewhere: Lord, thou hast laid the foundations of the earth at its beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They will perish, but thou wilt remain; they will all be like a cloak that grows threadbare, and thou wilt lay them aside, like a garment, and exchange them for new; but thou art he who never changes, thy years will not come to an end.⁸ Did he ever say to one of the angels, Sit on my right hand, while I make thy enemies a footstool under thy feet?⁹ What are they, all of them, but spirits apt for service, whom he sends out when the destined heirs of eternal salvation have need of them?

2 More firmly, then, than ever must we hold to the truths which have now come to our hearing, and run no risk of drifting away from them. The old law, which only had angels for its spokesmen, was none the less valid; every transgression of it, every refusal to listen to it, incurred just retribution; and what excuse shall we have, if we pay no heed to such a message

¹ The Greek perhaps implies that God spoke fragmentarily and under various figures. ² 'His being'; the word we find in the Greek here is *hypostasis*, which the Latins translated by 'substance', while the Greek theologians used it to mean 'person'.

³ The contrast here instituted between the Divine Word and the holy Angels may have some reference to contemporary errors (cf. Col. 2. 18); but its immediate purpose is to lead up to the beginning of ch. 2, where the new Covenant instituted by Jesus Christ is contrasted with the old Covenant, revealed by angels on mount Sinai (Ac. 7. 53, Gal. 3. 19).

⁴ Ps. 2. 7; II Kg. 7. 14. ⁵ Some commentators would render 'And again, when the time comes for bringing his first-born into the world'. But it is doubtful whether either the Greek or the Latin will bear this meaning, and the general sense of the Fathers is against it. It is not certain whether 'anew' contrasts the Incarnation of our Lord with his activity in Creation (cf. verse 2 above), or his Resurrection with his Incarnation, or his second Coming with his first. The words at the end of the sentence occur in the Septuagint Greek (but not in our present Hebrew text) of Deut. 32. 43, with 'sons of God' instead of 'angels'; a similar phrase is found in Ps. 96. 7.

⁶ Ps. 103. 4. The word here used for 'winds' may also be translated 'spirits'. Some think that the meaning of the Psalm is 'who makes the winds (or "spirits") his messengers, and the flame of fire do him service'; but the more generally received interpretation is that given here. ⁷ *vs.* 8, 9; Ps. 44. 7, 8. The Messiah is there addressed, in the person of King Solomon; and some commentators, to avoid the difficulty of the divine title being used in such a connexion, would render 'God is thy throne', a form of speech which has no parallel elsewhere. Some of the Fathers give the rendering, 'Thy God, O God, has anointed thee'.

⁸ *vs.* 10-12; Ps. 101. 26-28. It is not clear why these words should be understood as addressed to the Messiah, unless this was suggested by the use of the word 'Lord' (in the Septuagint Greek, though not in our present Hebrew text).

⁹ Ps. 109. 1.

of salvation as has been given to us? One which was delivered in the first instance by the Lord himself, and has been guaranteed to us by those who heard it from his own lips? One which God himself has attested by signs and portents, manifesting his power so variously, and distributing the gifts of his Holy Spirit wherever he would?

We are speaking of a world that is to come; to whom has God entrusted the ordering of that world? Not to angels. We are assured of that, in a passage where the writer says, What is man, that thou shouldst remember him? What is the son of man, that thou shouldst care for him? Man, whom thou hast made a little lower than the angels, whom thou hast crowned with glory and honour, setting him in authority over the works of thy hands? Thou hast made all things subject at his feet. Observe, he has subjected all things to him, left nothing unsubdued. And what do we see now? Not all things subject to him as yet.¹ But we can see this; we can see one who was made a little lower than the angels, I mean Jesus, crowned, now, with glory and honour because of the death he underwent; in God's gracious design he was to taste death, and taste it on behalf of all.² God is the last end of all things, the first beginning of all things; and it befitted his majesty that, in summoning all those sons of his to glory, he should crown with suffering the life of that Prince who was to lead them into salvation.³ The Son who sanctifies and the sons who are sanctified have a common origin, all of them; he is not ashamed, then, to own them as his brethren. I will proclaim thy renown, he says, to my brethren; with the church

around me I will praise thee;⁴ and elsewhere he says, I will put my trust in him, and then, Here stand I, and the children God has given me.⁵ And since these children have a common inheritance of flesh and blood, he too shared that inheritance with them. By his death he would depose the prince of death, that is, the devil; he would deliver those multitudes who lived all the while as slaves, made over to the fear of death. After all, he does not make himself the angels' champion, no sign of that; it is the sons of Abraham that he champions.⁶ And so he must needs become altogether like his brethren; he would be a high priest who could feel for us and be our true representative before God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. It is because he himself has been tried by suffering, that he has power to help us in the trials we undergo.

3 Brethren and saints, you share a heavenly calling. Think, now, of Jesus as the apostle and the high priest of the faith which we profess, and how loyal he was to the God who had so appointed him; just as Moses was loyal in all the management of God's house.⁷ In any household, the first honours are reserved for him who founded it; and in that degree, Jesus has a prouder title than Moses.⁸ Every household has its founder, and this household of creation was founded by God.⁹ Thus the loyalty of Moses in the management of all God's house was the loyalty of a servant; he only bore witness to what was to be revealed later on; whereas Christ's was the loyalty of a Son in a household which is his own. What is that household? We are, if only we will keep unshaken to the end our

¹ *v.* 6-8: Ps. 8, 5-7.

² Some interpreters would translate differently: 'We can see one who was made a little lower than the angels through the death he underwent, crowned, now, with glory and honour'.
³ 'In summoning'; the Latin appears to mean 'when he had summoned', but this is probably not the sense of the Greek, and indeed it is hard to see how the bestowal of glory on Christians could be represented as earlier in time than the Crucifixion. It seems likely, therefore, that the sense intended by the Latin is, 'since he had decided to summon a multitude of his sons to glory'.
⁴ Ps. 21, 23.

⁵ Is. 8, 17 and 18. 'And then' is expressed by the same word as 'and elsewhere'; but here the Apostle seems to be drawing our attention to the connexion of thought between two consecutive verses of Isaiah. That confidence with which the prophet inspires his own disciples is regarded as the type of that faith which our Lord communicates to Christian people.

⁶ 'After all, he does not make himself the angels' champion'; literally, according to the Latin, 'he does not anywhere take the angels', which some have interpreted as meaning, 'he does not take upon himself the nature of angels'; but this interpretation does not accord well with the Greek.

⁷ 'The God who had so appointed him'; or perhaps, 'the God who had created him', that is, in his human nature. The reference to Moses is taken from Num. 12, 7.

⁸ The Greek may also mean, 'greater honours are reserved for him who founded the household, than for the household itself', Moses (as being nothing more than man) being himself a part of God's earthly creation, as a steward is of the household which he governs.

⁹ 'This household of creation'; literally, 'all things', but it seems clear from the context that creation is here regarded as a household, in which Christ rules as the Householder's Son, cf. I. 2 above.

confidence, and the hope which is our pride.

- 7 Come, then, the Holy Spirit says, If you
8 hear his voice speaking to you this day, do not harden your hearts, as they were hardened once when you provoked me, and put me to the test in the wilderness.
9 Your fathers put me to the test, made trial
10 of me, and saw what I could do, all those forty years. So I became the enemy of that generation; These, I said, are ever wayward hearts, these have never learned my lessons. And I took an oath in my anger,
11 They shall never attain my rest.¹ Take care, brethren, that there is no heart among you so warped by unbelief as to desert the living God. Each day, while the word
12 To-day has still a meaning, strengthen your own resolution, to make sure that none of you grows hardened; sin has such
13 power to cheat us. We have been given a share in Christ, but only on condition that we keep unshaken to the end the principle
14 by which we are grounded in him.² That is the meaning of the words, If you hear his voice speaking to you this day, do not harden your hearts, as they were hardened
15 once when you provoked me; those who provoked him were the people (some, though not all of them) whom Moses had rescued from Egypt.³ Who was it, during all those forty years, that incurred his enmity? Those who sinned; it was their corpses that lay scattered in the wilderness.
16 To whom did he swear that they should never attain his rest? Those who refused
17 to believe in him. We see, then, the consequences of unbelief; this it was that denied them entrance.

4 The promise, therefore, still holds good, that we are to attain God's rest; what we have to be afraid of, is that there

may be someone among you who will be found to have missed his chance. The promise has been proclaimed to us, just as it was to them. The message which came to them did them no good, because it was not met by belief in what they heard,⁴ and this rest is only to be attained by those who, like ourselves, have learned to believe; that is why he said, I took an oath in my anger, They shall never attain my rest. God's rest, from what? From labours which were over and done with, as soon as the world was founded;⁵ in another passage he has said of the sabbath, God rested on the seventh day from all his labours; and yet in this passage he is still saying, They shall not attain my rest. It is still left for some, then, to attain it, and meanwhile, those to whom the message first came have been excluded by their unbelief. So he fixes another day, To-day, as he calls it; in the person of David, all those long years afterwards, he uses the words I have already quoted, If you hear his voice speaking this day, do not harden your hearts. (Josue cannot have brought them their rest, or God would not still be talking of a fresh To-day, long afterwards.) You see, therefore, that God's people have a sabbath of rest still in store for them; to attain his rest means resting from human labours, as God did from divine.⁶

We must strive eagerly, then, to attain that rest; none of you must fall away into the same kind of unbelief. God's word to us is something alive, full of energy; it can penetrate deeper than any two-edged sword, reaching the very division between soul and spirit, between joints and marrow, quick to distinguish every thought and design in our hearts.⁷ From him, no creature can be hidden; everything lies bare, everything is brought face to face

¹ *vv.* 7-11: Ps. 94. 8-11: Throughout this passage, the Apostle compares those Christians who lose their hope of heaven by losing their faith, with the first generation of Israelites who came out of Egypt, since these lost their hope of entering Chanaan through want of faith in God. ² This seems to be the meaning of the Latin; the Greek perhaps means 'keep unshaken to the end our first confidence'.

³ The Greek might also mean, 'Who was it that provoked him? Was it not all those whom Moses had rescued from Egypt?' ⁴ 'In what they heard'; the Greek has, 'In those who heard it'.

⁵ 'God's rest, from what? From labours which were over and done with'; literally, 'the labours having been accomplished'. There has been much dispute over this sentence and the two verses which follow; neither their meaning nor their relevance to the context is clear. The translation here given assumes that the Apostle's thought is as follows: God himself rested after the Creation, but did not summon any human creatures to share his rest till long afterwards, at the time of the Exodus. That summons having been disregarded, it is not wonderful that he should leave another long interval before repeating it; this time, at the Incarnation. ⁶ It is possible to take this sentence differently, as referring to Christ; 'He who has attained to God's rest has rested from his labours, as God did from his own'. But it seems doubtful whether this allusion contributes anything to the argument. ⁷ 'God's word to us'; some have understood this as meaning 'God's Word', that is, Christ.

with him, this God to whom we must give our account.

14 Let us hold fast, then, by the faith we profess. We can claim a great high priest, and one who has passed right up through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. It is not as if our high priest was incapable of feeling for us in our humiliations; he has been through every trial, fashioned as we are, only sinless. Let us come boldly, then, before the throne of grace, to meet with mercy, and win that grace which will help us in our needs.

5 The purpose for which any high priest is chosen from among his fellow men, and made a representative of men in their dealings with God, is to offer gifts and sacrifices in expiation of their sins. He is qualified for this by being able to feel for them when they are ignorant and make mistakes, since he, too, is all beset with humiliations, and, for that reason, must needs present sin-offerings for himself, just as he does for the people.¹ His vocation comes from God, as Aaron's did; nobody can take on himself such a privilege as this. So it is with Christ. He did not raise himself to the dignity of the high priesthood; it was God that raised him to it, when he said, Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee this day,² and so, elsewhere, Thou art a priest for ever, in the line of Melchisedech.³ Christ, during his earthly life, offered prayer and entreaty to the God who could save him from death, not without a piercing cry, not without tears; yet with such piety as won him a hearing.⁴ Son of God though he was, he learned obedience in the school of suffering,⁵ and now, his full achievement reached, he wins eternal salvation for all those who render

obedience to him. A high priest in the line of Melchisedech, so God has called him.

Of Christ as priest we have much to say, and it is hard to make ourselves understood in the saying of it, now that you have grown so dull of hearing.⁶ You should, after all this time, have been teachers yourselves, and instead of that you need to be taught; taught even the first principles on which the oracles of God are based. You have gone back to needing milk, instead of solid food. Those who have milk for their diet can give no account of what holiness means; how should they? They are only infants. Solid food is for the full-grown; for those whose faculties are so trained by exercise that they can distinguish between good and evil.

6 We must leave on one side then, all discussion of our first lessons in Christ, and pass on to our full growth; no need to lay the foundations all over again, the change of heart which turns away from lifeless observances, the faith which turns towards God,⁷ instructions about the different kinds of baptism, about the laying on of hands, about the resurrection of the dead, and our sentence in eternity.⁸ Such will be our plan, if God permits it. We can do nothing for those who have received, once for all, their enlightenment, who have tasted the heavenly gift, partaken of the Holy Spirit, known, too, God's word of comfort, and the powers that belong to a future life, and then fallen away. They cannot attain repentance through a second renewal. Would they crucify the Son of God a second time, hold him up to mockery a second time, for their own ends?⁹ No, a piece of ground which has

¹ Lev. 4. 3. ² Ps. 2. 7. ³ Ps. 109. ⁴ The Apostle is no doubt referring to the Agony in Gethsemani, and perhaps also to our Lord's cry from the Cross. Cf. also Jn. 11. 35, 43. ⁵ See p. 56, note 5.

⁶ 'Of Christ as priest'; literally, 'of whom'. Some have understood this as referring simply to Christ, others as referring to Melchisedech (Gen. 14. 18); but it seems more probable that the word 'whom' includes the whole content of verse 10.

⁷ 'Lifeless observances'; literally, 'lifeless works'. This has often been taken to mean 'sins'; but it probably refers, both here and in 9. 14 below, to those actions in conformity with the law of Moses which are unprofitable to us without faith. So faith without charity is called 'lifeless' by St James (2. 26). ⁸ 'Different kinds of baptism'; literally, 'baptisms'. It seems likely that the earliest Christian catechists would have had to explain to Jewish converts the difference between our Lord's baptism and that of St John (cf. Ac. 18. 25).

⁹ *vv.* 4-6: The Apostle is not dealing here with the remission of our sins by sacramental penance; he only tells us that baptism cannot be repeated, and therefore the kind of instruction mentioned in verse 2, which was designed for catechumens, would be unsuitable for Jewish Christians, if there are such, who have fallen away from the faith after being fully instructed in it. The enlightenment referred to in verse 4 is almost certainly baptism itself (cf. Eph. 5. 14). The 'heavenly gift' may well mean the Holy Eucharist. What is meant by 'knowing' (literally, 'tasting') God's utterance has been much discussed; it may refer to the Holy Scriptures, or to God's word as revealed to the prophets, or simply to

drunk in, again and again, the showers which fell upon it, has God's blessing on it, if it yields a crop answering the needs of those who tilled it; if it bears thorns and thistles, it has lost its value; a curse hangs over it, and it will feed the bonfire at last. Beloved, of you we have better confidence, which does not stop short of your salvation, even when we speak to you as we are speaking now. God is not an unjust God, that he should forget all you have done, all the charity you have shewn in his name, you who have ministered, and still minister, to the needs of his saints. But our great longing is, to see you all shewing the same eagerness right up to the end, looking forward to the fulfilment of your hope; listless no more, but followers of all those whose faith and patience are to bring them into possession of the good things promised them.

Such was Abraham. God made him a promise, and then took an oath (an oath by himself, since he had no greater name to swear by), in the words, More and more I will bless thee, more and more I will give thee increase;¹ whereupon Abraham waited patiently, and saw the promise fulfilled. Men, since they have something greater than themselves to swear by, will confirm their word by oath, which puts an end to all controversy; and God, in the same way, eager to convince the heirs of the promise that his design was irrevocable, pledged himself by an oath. Two irrevocable assurances, over which there could be no question of God deceiving us, were to bring firm confidence to us poor wanderers, bidding us cling to the hope we have in view,² the anchorage of our souls. Sure and immovable, it reaches that inner sanctuary beyond the veil,³ which Jesus Christ, our escort, has entered already, a high priest, now, eternally with the priesthood of Melchisedech.

God's influence on Christian lives. The suggestion in verse 6 is probably that a Christian soul could not receive baptism a second time unless Christ were crucified a second time in its behalf; but the meaning may be simply, that the soul which falls away from the faith inflicts a fresh Passion, as it were, on our Lord himself.

¹ Gen. 22. 16, 17. ² 'Wanderers'; this is generally understood as a metaphor taken from those who flee for refuge to a stronghold, or to the Cities of Refuge mentioned in Numbers, ch. 35. But the allusion to an anchor in the next verse would suggest, rather, the picture of sailors forced by a storm to 'flee landwards' to the nearest possible harbour. ³ For the veil which separated the Holy Place from the inner Sanctuary of the Temple, cf. Ex. 26. 33; Mt. 27. 51.

⁴ Gen. 14. 18. ⁵ In the narrative of Genesis, Melchisedech appears on the scene very suddenly, without any explanation of his parentage or history. It seems to be on this account that the Apostle regards him as a type of Christ, whose priesthood did not descend to him by inheritance, and remains with him instead of having to be handed on to a successor.

7 It was this Melchisedech, king of Salem, and priest of the most high God, who met Abraham and blessed him on his way home, after the defeat of the kings;⁴ and to him Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils. Observe, in the first place, that his name means, the king of justice; and further that he is king of Salem, that is, of peace. That is all; no name of father or mother, no pedigree, no date of birth or of death; there he stands, eternally, a priest, the true figure of the Son of God.⁵ Consider how great a man was this, to whom the patriarch Abraham himself gave a tenth part of his chosen spoil. The descendants of Levi, when the priesthood is conferred on them, are allowed by the provisions of the law to take tithes from God's people, although these, like themselves, come from the privileged stock of Abraham; after all, they are their brothers; here is one who owns no common descent with them, taking tithes from Abraham himself. He blesses him, too, blesses the man to whom the promises have been made; and it is beyond all question that blessings are only given by what is greater in dignity to what is less. In the one case, the priests who receive tithes are only mortal men; in the other, it is a priest (so the record tells us) who lives on. And indeed, there is a sense in which we can say that Levi, who receives the tithes, paid tithes himself with Abraham; as the heir of Abraham's body, he was present in the person of his ancestor, when he met Melchisedech.

Now, there could be no need for a fresh priest to arise, accredited with Melchisedech's priesthood, not with Aaron's, if the Levitical priesthood had brought fulfilment. And it is on the Levitical priesthood that the law given to God's people is founded. When the priesthood is altered, the law, necessarily, is altered with it.

13 After all, he to whom the prophecy relates
 belonged to a different tribe, which never
 14 produced a man to stand at the altar; our
 Lord took his origin from Juda, that is
 certain, and Moses in speaking of this
 15 tribe, said nothing about priests.¹ And
 something further becomes evident, when
 a fresh priest arises to fulfil the type of
 16 Melchisedech,² appointed, not to obey the
 law, with its outward observances, but in
 17 the power of an unending life; (Thou art
 a priest in the line of Melchisedech, God
 18 says of him, for ever). The old observance
 is abrogated now, powerless as it was to
 19 help us; the law had nothing in it of final
 achievement. Instead, a fuller hope has
 been brought into our lives, enabling us to
 20 come close to God. And this time there is
 a ratification by oath; none was taken when
 21 those other priests were appointed, but the
 new priest is appointed with an oath, when
 God says to him, The Lord has sworn an
 irrevocable oath, Thou art a priest for
 22 ever; all the more solemn, then, is that
 covenant for which Jesus has been given
 23 us as our surety. Of those other priests
 there was a succession, since death denied
 24 them permanence; whereas Jesus con-
 tinues for ever, and his priestly office is
 25 unchanging; that is why he can give eternal
 salvation to those who through him make
 their way to God; he lives on still to make
 26 intercession on our behalf.³ Such was the
 high priest that suited our need, holy and
 guiltless and undefiled, not reckoned
 among us sinners, lifted high above all the
 27 heavens; one who has no need to do as
 those other priests did, offering a twofold
 sacrifice day by day, first for his own sins,
 then for those of the people. What he has

done he has done once for all; and the
 offering was himself.⁴ The law makes high
 28 priests of men, and men are frail; promise
 and oath, now, have superseded the law;
 our high priest, now, is that Son who has
 reached his full achievement for all eternity.

8 And here we come to the very pith of
 our argument. This high priest of ours
 is one who has taken his seat in heaven, on
 the right hand of that throne where God
 sits in majesty, ministering, now, in the
 2 sanctuary, in that true tabernacle which
 the Lord, not man, has set up.⁵ After all,
 3 if it is the very function of a priest to offer
 gift and sacrifice, he too must needs have
 an offering to make.⁶ Whereas, if he were
 4 still on earth, he would be no priest at all;
 there are priests already, to offer the gifts
 which the law demands, men who devote
 5 their service to the type and the shadow of
 what has its true being in heaven. (That is
 why Moses, when he was building the
 tabernacle, received the warning, Be sure
 to make everything in accordance with the
 pattern that was shewn to thee on the
 mountain.)⁷ As it is, he has been entrusted
 6 with a more honourable ministry, dis-
 penser as he is of a nobler covenant, with
 nobler promises for its sanction. There
 7 would have been no room for this second
 covenant, if there had been no fault to find
 with the first. But God, you see, does find
 8 fault; this is what he tells them: Behold,
 says the Lord, a time is coming when I will
 ratify a new covenant with the people of
 Israel, and with the people of Juda.⁸ It
 9 will not be like the covenant which I made
 with their fathers, on the day when I took
 them by the hand, to rescue them from

¹ Cf. Deut. 33. 7 and 8.

² 'Something further becomes evident'; this is usually translated, 'It is still more evident', but in that case it is difficult to see what is more evident, or what makes it so. The rendering here given assumes that this verse serves to connect verse 12 with verse 18; we have seen that the alteration of the priesthood involves an alteration of the law; now we proceed to a further stage in the argument—if our new High Priest is wholly unconnected with the Old Law, that means that the Old Law has actually been abolished.

³ 'Eternal salvation'; the Greek has 'complete salvation'.
⁴ Cf. Lev. 16. 17, where, however, the reference is not to a daily sacrifice. But it seems evident that the daily sacrifice in the Temple, whether the High Priest performed it in person or not, did include the priests themselves among the sinners for whom intercession was made. 'What he has done he has done'; literally, 'he did this', but such a rendering obscures the sense of the passage, since it is clear from the context that Jesus as High Priest has no need to make intercession for himself.

⁵ Some think the 'tabernacle' mentioned here and in 9. 11 below is our Lord's human body (cf. Mk. 14. 58; Jn. 2. 21); others, that it is the Church, either Triumphant (which accords best with 9. 11) or Militant (which accords best with the use of the word 'tabernacle', or 'tent', applying as it does to what is temporary and transient, as in II Cor. 5. 4).

⁶ 'Must needs have an offering to make'; that is, himself, cf. 7. 27 above. Probably this is what the Apostle means by the pith of his argument (verse 1 above), viz. that Christ has only become our High Priest by dying and triumphing over death. Hence the reference to 'if he were still on earth' in the verse which follows.

⁷ Ex. 25. 40.

⁸ *vs.* 8 and following:

Jer. 31. 31.

Egypt; that they should break my covenant, and I (says the Lord) should abandon them. No, this is the covenant I will grant the people of Israel, the Lord says, when that time comes. I will implant my law in their innermost thoughts, engrave it in their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. There will be no need for neighbour to teach neighbour, or brother to teach brother, the knowledge of the Lord; all will know me, from the highest to the lowest. I will pardon their wrongdoing; I will not remember their sins any more. In speaking of a new covenant, he has superannuated the old. And before long the superannuated, the antiquated, must needs disappear.

9 The former covenant, to be sure, had its own ceremonial observances, its own earthly sanctuary. There was an outer tabernacle, which contained the lampstand and the table and the loaves set out before God; sanctuary was the name given to this;¹ and then, beyond the second veil, the inner sanctuary, as it is called, with the golden censer;² and the ark of the covenant, gilded all round. In the ark rested the golden urn with the manna in it, Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets on which the covenant was inscribed; above were the Cherubim, heralds of the divine glory, spreading their wings over the throne of mercy. We have no time to treat of these more particularly,³ but this was the general fashion of it. Into the outer tabernacle the priests made their way at all times, in the performance of their duties; into this other, only the high priest, once a year, and even then not without an offering of blood, for the faults which he and the people had committed unknowingly. The Holy Spirit meant us to see that no way of access to the

true sanctuary lay open to us, as long as the former tabernacle maintained its standing. And that allegory still holds good at the present day; here are gifts and sacrifices being offered, which have no power, where conscience is concerned, to bring the worshipper to his full growth; they are but outward observances, connected with food and drink and ceremonial washings on this occasion or that, instituted to hold their own until better times should come. Meanwhile, Christ has taken his place as our high priest, to win us blessings that still lie in the future. He makes use of a greater, a more complete tabernacle, which human hands never fashioned; it does not belong to this order of creation at all.⁴ It is his own blood, not the blood of goats and calves, that has enabled him to enter, once for all, into the sanctuary; the ransom he has won lasts for ever. The blood of bulls and goats, the ashes of a heifer sprinkled over men defiled, have power to hallow them for every purpose of outward purification; and shall not the blood of Christ, who offered himself, through the Holy Spirit, as a victim unblemished in God's sight, purify our consciences, and set them free from lifeless observances, to serve the living God?⁵

Thus, through his intervention, a new covenant has been bequeathed to us; a death must follow, to atone for all our transgressions under the old covenant, and then the destined heirs were to obtain, for ever, their promised inheritance. Where a bequest is concerned, the death of the testator must needs play its part; a will has no force while the testator is alive, and only comes into force with death.⁶ Thus the old covenant, too, needed blood for its inauguration. When he had finished reading the provisions of the law to the

¹ *vv.* 1 and 2: 'Former' and 'outer' are represented by the same word both in the Greek and in the Latin, to contrast (i) the earthly tabernacle with the heavenly and (ii) the outer with the inner court of the earthly tabernacle itself.

² 'Censer' is the meaning of the Latin: the Greek word should probably be translated 'altar of incense'. Cf. Ex. 16. 33. Num. 17. 10. Deut. 10. 2. ³ Ex. 25. 22. ⁴ Blessings that still lie in the future; some Greek manuscripts have 'blessings already assured'. 'He makes use of a more complete tabernacle'; that is, his own body (Mk. 14. 58; Jn. 2. 21). Others would understand this 'more complete tabernacle' as referring to the saints in heaven, and would connect this sentence with the sentence which follows; Christ has passed through the heaven in which the saints have their dwelling, and entered that inner sanctuary which is the presence of God himself.

⁵ 'Through the Holy Spirit'; the more probable reading in the Greek is, 'through (his) eternal spirit', that is, his human spirit, considered as the vehicle of his divinity (cf. Rom. 1. 3, 4). 'From lifeless observances'; cf. p. 231, note 7. ⁶ *vv.* 15-17: In Greek, the same word may be used for a covenant between two parties, and for the will by which a man disposes of his property. Here the covenant into which God entered with his people, whether under the Old or under the New Dispensation, is treated as being also a legacy to them.

assembled people, Moses took blood, the blood of calves and goats, took water, and scarlet-dyed wool, and hyssop, sprinkled the book itself, and all the people, and said, This is the blood of the covenant which God has prescribed to you.¹ The tabernacle, too, and all the requisites of worship he sprinkled in the same way with blood; and the law enjoins that blood shall be used in almost every act of purification; unless blood is shed, there can be no remission of sins. And if such purification was needed for what was but a representation of the heavenly world, the heavenly world itself will need sacrifices more availing still. The sanctuary into which Jesus has entered is not one made by human hands, is not some adumbration of the truth; he has entered heaven itself, where he now appears in God's sight on our behalf. Nor does he make a repeated offering of himself, as the high priest, when he enters the sanctuary, makes a yearly offering of the blood that is not his own. If that were so, he must have suffered again and again, ever since the world was created; as it is, he has been revealed once for all, at the moment when history reached its fulfilment, annulling our sin by his sacrifice. Man's destiny is to die once for all; nothing remains after that but judgement; and Christ was offered once for all, to drain the cup of a world's sins; when we see him again, sin will play its part no longer, he will be bringing salvation to those who await his coming.²

10 What the law contains is only the shadow of those blessings which were still to come, not the full expression of their reality. The same sacrifices are offered year after year without intermission, and still the worshippers can never reach, through the law, their full growth. If they could, must not the offerings have ceased before now? There would be no guilt left to reproach the consciences of those who come to worship; they would

have been cleansed once for all. No, what these offerings bring with them, year by year, is only the remembrance of sins; that sins should be taken away by the blood of bulls and goats is impossible. As Christ comes into the world, he says, No sacrifice, no offering was thy demand; thou hast endowed me, instead, with a body. Thou hast not found any pleasure in burnt-sacrifices, in sacrifices for sin. See then, I said, I am coming to fulfil what is written of me, where the book lies unrolled; to do thy will, O my God.³ First he says, Thou didst not demand victim or offering, the burnt-sacrifice, the sacrifice for sin, nor hast thou found any pleasure in them; in anything, that is, which the law has to offer, and then:—I said, See, my God, I am coming to do thy will. He must clear the ground first, so as to build up afterwards. In accordance with this divine will we have been sanctified by an offering made once for all, the body of Jesus Christ. One high priest after another must stand there, day after day, offering again and again the same sacrifices, which can never take away our sins; whereas he sits for ever at the right hand of God, offering for our sins a sacrifice that is never repeated.⁴ He only waits, until all his enemies are made a footstool under his feet;⁵ by a single offering he has completed his work, for all time, in those whom he sanctifies. And here the Holy Spirit adds his testimony. He has been saying, This is the covenant I will grant them, the Lord says, when that time comes; I will implant my laws in their hearts, engrave them in their innermost thoughts. And what follows? I will not remember their sins and their transgressions any more.⁶ Where they are so remitted, there is no longer any room for a sin-offering.

Why then, brethren, we can enter the sanctuary with confidence through the blood of Christ. He has opened up for us a new, a living approach, by way of the veil, I mean, his mortality.⁷ A great priest

¹ *vv.* 19-20: *Ex.* 24. 6-8.

² 'To drain the cup of a world's sins'; in the Greek, 'to take a world's sins upon himself'.

³ *vv.* 5-7: *Ps.* 39. 7-9; where, however, the Hebrew text differs. Our author here follows the Greek Septuagint, which is less obscure than the Hebrew.

⁴ 'He sits... at the right hand of God, offering for our sins a sacrifice'; in the Greek, 'he has taken his seat at the right hand of God after offering a sacrifice'.

⁵ *Ps.* 109. 2.

⁶ *v.* 16, 17: *Jer.* 31. 31-34.

⁷ 'By way of the veil, I mean, his mortality'; literally, 'through the veil, that is, his flesh'. Some commentators understand this of our Lord's human Nature as such; but it is difficult to see how the Sacred Humanity could be regarded as in any sense an obstacle which has to be removed, as the sense of the passage suggests.

is ours, who has dominion over God's
 22 house. Let us come forward with sincere
 hearts in the full assurance of the faith, our
 guilty consciences purified by sprinkling,
 our bodies washed clean in hallowed
 23 water.¹ Do not let us waver in acknow-
 ledging the hope we cherish; we have a
 promise from one who is true to his word.
 24 Let us keep one another in mind, always
 ready with incitements to charity and to
 25 acts of piety, not abandoning, as some do,
 our common assembly, but encouraging
 one another; all the more, as you see the
 26 great day drawing nearer. If we go on
 sinning wilfully, when once the full know-
 ledge of the truth has been granted to us,
 we have no further sacrifice for sin to look
 27 forward to;² nothing but a terrible ex-
 pectation of judgement, a fire that will
 28 eagerly consume the rebellious. Let a man
 be convicted by two or three witnesses of
 29 defying the law of Moses, and he dies,
 without hope of mercy.³ What of the man
 who has trampled the Son of God under
 foot, who has reckoned the blood of the
 covenant, that blood which sanctified him,
 as a thing unclean, mocked at the Spirit
 that brought him grace? Will not he incur
 30 a punishment much more severe? It is one
 we know well, who has told us, Vengeance
 is for me, I will repay; and again, The
 31 Lord will judge his people.⁴ It is a fearful
 thing to fall into the hands of the living
 God.

32 Remember those early days, when the
 light first came to you, and the hard proba-
 33 tion of suffering you went through. There
 were times when you yourselves were
 publicly exposed to calumny and persecu-
 tion; there was a time when you took part
 with those who had the same path to tread.
 34 You shewed your sympathy with those
 who were in bonds; and when you were
 robbed of your goods you took it cheer-
 35 fully, as men who knew that a higher, a
 more lasting good was yours. Do not
 throw away that confidence of yours, with
 36 its rich hope of reward; you still need en-
 durance, if you are to attain the prize God
 has promised to those who do his will.

Only a brief moment, now, before he who
 37 is coming will be here; he will not linger
 on the way. It is faith that brings life to the
 38 man whom I accept as justified; if he
 shrinks back, he shall win no favour with
 me.⁵ Not for us to shrink away, and be
 39 lost; it is for us to have faith, and save our
 souls.

11 What is faith? It is that which gives
 substance to our hopes, which con-
 2 vinces us of things we cannot see. It was
 this that brought credit to the men who
 went before us. It is faith that lets us
 3 understand how the worlds were fashioned
 by God's word; how it was from things
 unseen that the things we see took their
 origin. It was in faith that Abel offered a
 4 sacrifice richer than Cain's, and was proved
 thereby to be justified, since God recog-
 nized his offering; through that offering
 of his he still speaks in death.⁶ When Enoch
 5 was taken away without the experience of
 death, when God took him and no more
 was seen of him, it was because of his faith;
 that is the account we have of him before
 he was taken, that he pleased God;⁷ and it
 6 is impossible to please God without faith.
 Nobody reaches God's presence until he
 has learned to believe that God exists, and
 that he rewards those who try to find him.
 7 When Noe received a warning about dan-
 gers still unseen, it was faith that made
 him take alarm, and build an ark to pre-
 serve his family. Thus he proved the whole
 world wrong, and was left heir to the jus-
 8 tification which comes through faith. And
 he to whom the name of Abraham was
 given shewed faith when he left his home,
 obediently, for the country which was to
 be his inheritance; left it without knowing
 where his journey would take him.⁸ Faith
 9 taught him to live as a stranger in the land
 he had been promised for his own, en-
 camping there with Isaac and Jacob, heirs
 with him of a common hope; looking for-
 10 ward all the while to that city which has
 true foundations, which is God's design
 and God's fashioning. It was faith that
 11 enabled Sara, barren till then, to conceive

¹ 'Sprinkling'; that is, with the precious Blood. The Greek shows that the Apostle is referring to obstinate sinners, and in particular, no doubt, to those who fall away from the faith.

² Deut. 17. 6.

³ Deut. 32. 35-36.

⁴ Gen. 4. 10.

⁵ Heb. 37. 38: A reminiscence,

rather than an exact quotation, of Hab. 2. 3-4.

⁶ Gen. 5. 22.

⁷ Gen. 12. 1; 17. 5.

⁸ He to whom the name of Abraham was given; the Greek should rather be translated, 'Abraham, when he was called'.

offspring, although she was past the age of child-bearing; she believed that God would be faithful to his word. Here is one man, a man for whom life is already over; and from him springs a race whose numbers rival the stars of heaven, or the uncounted grains of sand on the sea-shore. It was faith they lived by, all of them, and in faith they died; for them, the promises were not fulfilled, but they looked forward to them and welcomed them at a distance, owning themselves no better than strangers and exiles on earth. Those who talk so make it clear enough, that they have not found their home. Did they regret the country they had left behind? If that were all, they could have found opportunities for going back to it. No, the country of their desires is a better, a heavenly country. God does not disdain to take his title from such names as these; he has a city ready for them to dwell in.¹

Abraham shewed faith, when he was put to the test, by offering up Isaac. He was ready to offer up an only son, this man who had made the promises his own, and received the assurance, It is through Isaac that thy posterity shall be traced. God, he argued, had the power to restore his son even from the dead; and indeed, in a hidden sense, he did so recover him.² It was by faith that Isaac, in blessing Jacob and Esau, foretold what was to come; by faith that Jacob, on his death-bed, made reverence to the top of Joseph's staff, as he blessed his two sons in turn;³ by faith that Joseph, when he, too, came to the end of his life, spoke of the Israelites' escape from Egypt, and gave orders for the removal of his bones. The parents of Moses shewed faith, in making light of the king's edict, and hiding their child away for three months, when they saw what a fine child he was. And Moses shewed faith, when he grew up, by refusing to pass for the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He preferred ill-usage, shared with the people of God, to the brief enjoyment of sinful pleasures; all the

wealth of Egypt could not so enrich him as the despised lot of God's anointed; he had eyes, you see, for nothing but the promised reward.⁴ It was in faith that he left Egypt behind, defying the royal anger, made strong as if by the very sight of him who is invisible;⁵ in faith that he performed the paschal rite, and the sprinkling of the blood, to leave Israel untouched by the angel that destroyed the first-born; in faith that they crossed the Red Sea as if it had been dry land, whereas the Egyptians, when they ventured into it, were drowned. Faith pulled down the walls of Jericho after seven days spent in marching round them; faith saved Rahab, the harlot, from sharing the doom of the disobedient, because she had given the spies a peaceable welcome.

What need is there to say more? Time will fail me if I try to go through all the history of Gedeon, of Barac, of Samson, of Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets. Theirs was the faith which subdued kingdoms, which served the cause of right, which made promises come true. They shut the mouths of lions, they quenched raging fire, swords were drawn on them, and they escaped. How strong they became, who till then were weak, what courage they shewed in battle, how they routed invading armies! There were women, too, who recovered their dead children, brought back to life. Others, looking forward to a better resurrection still, would not purchase their freedom on the rack. And others experienced mockery and scourging, chains, too, and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were cut in pieces, they were tortured,⁶ they were put to the sword; they wandered about, dressed in sheepskins and goatskins, amidst want, and distress, and ill-usage; men whom the world was unworthy to contain, living a hunted life in deserts and on mountainsides, in rock-fastnesses and caverns underground. One and all gave proof of their faith, yet they never saw the promise

¹ 'To take his title'; that is, to be called 'the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob'. ² Abraham recovered his son from the dead, inasmuch as his life was spared unexpectedly; 'in a hidden sense', because the sacrifice of Isaac was a type of our Lord's Crucifixion. ³ Made reverence to the top of Joseph's staff, because the staff was a symbol of the tribe; cf. e.g. Num. 1. 49, where 'the tribe of Levi' is literally 'the staff of Levi'. ⁴ 'Of God's anointed', probably in the sense that Moses was the type of Christ, in being rejected by his people, Ex. 2. 14; but possibly the reference is to the people of Israel, cf. Hab. 3. 13. ⁵ 'Left Egypt behind'; that is, at the Exodus. Some of the Fathers understand the phrase of Moses' flight in Ex. 2. 15; but it is clear that Moses did fear the king's anger on that occasion. ⁶ 'Tortured'; literally, 'tested', 'put to the question'.

40 fulfilled; for us, God had something better in store. We were needed, to make the history of their lives complete.¹

12 Why then, since we are watched from above by such a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of all that weighs us down, of the sinful habit that clings so closely, and run, with all endurance, the 2 race for which we are entered. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the origin and the crown of all faith, who, to win his prize of blessedness, endured the cross and made light of its shame, Jesus, who now sits on the right 3 of God's throne. Take your standard from him, from his endurance, from the enmity the wicked bore him, and you will not grow faint, you will not find your souls un- 4 manned. Your protest, your battle against sin, has not yet called for bloodshed; yet 5 you have lost sight, already, of those words of comfort in which God addresses you as his sons; My son, do not undervalue the correction which the Lord sends thee, do not be unmanned when he reproves thy 6 faults. It is where he loves that he bestows correction; there is no recognition for any 7 child of his, without chastisement.² Be patient, then, while correction lasts; God is treating you as his children. Was there 8 ever a son whom his father did not correct? No, correction is the common lot of all; 9 you must be bastards, not true sons, if you are left without it. We have known what it was to accept correction from earthly 10 fathers, and with reverence; shall we not submit, far more willingly, to the Father of a world of spirits, and draw life from 11 him? They, after all, only corrected us for a short while, at their own caprice; he does it for our good, to give us a share in that 12 holiness which is his. For the time being, all correction is painful rather than pleasant; but afterwards, when it has done its work of discipline, it yields a harvest of good dispositions, to our great peace. 13 Come then, stiffen the sinews of drooping hand, and flagging knee, and plant your footprints in a straight track, so that the

man who goes lame may not stumble out of the path, but regain strength instead. Your aim must be peace with all men, and that holiness without which no one will ever see God. Take good care that none of you is false to God's grace, that no poisonous shoot is allowed to spring up, and contaminate many of you by its influence.³ None of you must be guilty of fornication, 16 none of you earthly-minded, as Esau was, when he sold his birthright for a single dish of food;⁴ afterwards, you may be sure, he was eager enough to have the blessing allotted to him, but no, he was rejected. He pleaded for it in tears, but no second chance was given him.⁵

What is the scene, now, of your approach to God? It is no longer a mountain that can be discerned by touch; no longer burning fire, and whirlwind, and darkness, and storm. No trumpet sounds; no utterance comes from that voice, which made those who listened to it pray that they might hear no more (daunted by the command, that if even a beast touched the mountain it should die by stoning.⁶ Moses said, in terror at the sight, I am overcome with fear and trembling).⁷ The scene of your approach now is mount Zion, is the heavenly Jerusalem, city of the living God; here are gathered thousands upon thousands of angels, here is the assembly of those first-born sons whose names are written in heaven, here is God sitting in judgement on all men, here are the spirits of just men, now made perfect; here is Jesus, the spokesman of the new covenant, and the sprinkling of his blood, which has better things to say than Abel's had. Beware of excusing yourselves from listening to him who is speaking to you. There was no escape for those others, who tried to excuse themselves when God uttered his warnings on earth; still less for us, if we turn away when he speaks from heaven. His voice, even then, made the earth rock; now, he has announced to us that it shall happen again, only once; he will shake earth and heaven too.⁸ Only once again; 27

¹ The meaning here seems to be, that the Church of the new Covenant is the continuation and the explanation of the Jewish Church which went before it, Christians enjoying here and now the blessings to which the patriarchs looked forward. ² *vs.* 5, 6; *Prov.* 3, 11 and 12. ³ *Deut.* 29, 18.

⁴ *Gen.* 27, 34. ⁵ 'No second chance'; literally, 'no room for repentance'. This seems to have been an idiom of Roman law, meaning an opportunity to reconsider one's decision; in this case, the decision of Esau to sell his birthright. ⁶ *vs.* 18-20; *Ex.* 19, 12-19; 20, 18-19. ⁷ *Cf.* *Deut.* 9, 19; where, however, a different occasion is referred to. ⁸ *Aggacus* 2, 7.

that means that what is shaken, this created universe, will be removed; only the things which cannot be shaken are to stand firm. The kingdom we have inherited is one which cannot be shaken; in gratitude for this, let us worship God as he would have us worship him, in awe and reverence;¹ no doubt of it, our God is a consuming fire.²

13 Let brotherly love be firmly established among you; and do not forget to shew hospitality; in doing this, men have before now entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as if you were prisoners too; those who endure suffering, since you have mortal bodies of your own. Marriage, in every way, must be held in honour, and the marriage-bed kept free from stain; over fornication and adultery, God will call us to account. The love of money should not dwell in your thoughts; be content with what you have. God himself has told us, I will never forsake thee, never abandon thee;³ so that we can say with confidence, The Lord is my champion; I will not be afraid of what man can do to me.⁴

Do not forget those who have had charge of you, and preached God's word to you; contemplate the happy issue of the life they lived, and imitate their faith.⁵ What Jesus Christ was yesterday, and is to-day, he remains for ever.⁶ Do not be carried aside from your course by a maze of new doctrines; what gives true strength to a man's heart is gratitude, not observances in the matter of food, which never yet proved useful to those who followed them.⁷ We have an altar of our own, and it is not those who carry out the worship of the tabernacle

that are qualified to eat its sacrifices. When the high priest takes the blood of beasts with him into the sanctuary, as an offering for sin, the bodies of those beasts have to be burned, away from the camp; and thus it was that Jesus, when he would sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered beyond the city gate. Let us, too, go out to him away from the camp, bearing the ignominy he bore;⁸ we have an everlasting city, but not here; our goal is the city that is one day to be. It is through him, then, that we must offer to God a continual sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips that give thanks to his name. Meanwhile, you must remember to do good to others and give alms; God takes pleasure in such sacrifice as this.

Obeys those who have charge of you, and yield to their will; they are keeping unwearied watch over your souls, because they know they will have an account to give. Make it a grateful task for them: it is your own loss if they find it a laborious effort. Pray for us; we trust we have a clear conscience, and the will to be honourable in all our dealings. And I make this request the more earnestly, in the hope of being restored to you the sooner. May God, the author of peace, who has raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, that great shepherd, whose flock was bought with the blood of an eternal covenant,⁹ grant you every capacity for good, to do his will. May he carry out in you the design he sees best, through Jesus Christ, to whom glory belongs throughout all ages, Amen.¹⁰ I entreat you, brethren, bear patiently with all these words of warning; it is but a brief letter I am sending you.¹¹ You must know that our brother

¹ 'In gratitude for this, let us worship'; this may also mean, 'We have grace given us, to worship'.

² Deut. 4. 24.

³ Deut. 31. 6.

⁴ Ps. 117. 6.

⁵ 'The happy issue of the life they lived'; literally, 'the out-going of their behaviour'. This is usually understood of their deaths (cf. Wis. 2. 17); but it seems more likely that the Apostle refers to the results (cf. I Cor. 10. 13) of the holy life lived by the earliest Christian missionaries, in the establishment of the faith.

⁶ This verse seems to point forward to what follows; since the Christ we worship is the same in every age, there can be no room for new doctrines in the Church.

⁷ 'What gives true strength to a man's heart is gratitude, not observances in the matter of food'; literally, 'it is good that the heart should be made firm with thankfulness (or, with grace), not with foods'. There is perhaps a reference to Ps. 103. 15. Some commentators would understand the 'foods' in question to be the sacrificial meat eaten by the worshipper under the old Covenant.

⁸ *ver.* 10-13: These reflections are doubtless meant to console the Jewish Christians, in case any of them should regret being cut off from their ancestral worship. The 'altar' is understood by some commentators of the Holy Sacrifice, by others of the Cross, by others of Christ himself.

⁹ 'That great shepherd, whose flock was bought with the blood of an eternal covenant'; literally, 'that great shepherd of the flock in the blood of the eternal covenant'. According to some, these last seven words should be taken with the main verb, 'raised from the dead'.

¹⁰ Here, as in I Pet. 4. 11, it is not clear whether 'to whom' refers to 'God' or to 'Christ'.

¹¹ It is difficult to believe that the Apostle refers to the whole of these thirteen chapters as a short letter. Perhaps we

Timothy has been set at liberty; if he comes soon, I will bring him with me
 24 when I visit you. Greet all those who are

in authority, and all the saints. The brethren from Italy send you their greet-
 ings.¹ Grace be with you all, Amen. 25

should understand that he is referring only to the immediate context, verses 18 to 25, as his 'letter' (in the sense that these alone bring a *personal* message from him), and distinguishing it from the lengthy 'words of warning', which have had to be read with patience.

¹ 'The brethren from Italy', as an English phrase, would suggest that the Apostle was not writing from Rome. But he may well have been writing from Rome, since the same words, according to classical usage, might mean 'the brethren in Italy send their greetings from there'.

THE UNIVERSAL EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE JAMES

JAMES, a servant of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, sends greeting to the members of the twelve tribes scattered throughout the world.
2 Consider yourselves happy indeed, my brethren, when you encounter trials of
3 every sort, as men who know well enough that the testing of their faith breeds endurance. Endurance must do its work
4 thoroughly, if you are to be men full-grown in every part, nothing lacking in you. Is
5 there one of you who still lacks wisdom? God gives to all, freely and ungrudgingly; so let him ask God for it, and the gift will
6 come. (Only it must be in faith that he asks, he must not hesitate; one who hesitates is like a wave out at sea, driven to and
7 fro by the wind; such a man must not hope to win any gift from the Lord. No, a man
8 who is in two minds will find no rest wherever he goes.) Is one of the brethren
9 in humble circumstances? Let him be
10 proud of it; it exalts him, whereas the rich man takes pride in what in truth abases him.¹ (The rich man will pass by like the
11 bloom on the grass; the sun gets up, and the scorching wind with it, which dries up the grass, till the bloom on it falls, and all its fair show dies away; so the rich man, with his enterprises, will disappear.)
12 Blessed is he who endures under trials. When he has proved his worth, he will win that crown of life, which God has promised
13 to those who love him. Nobody, when he finds himself tempted, should say, I am being tempted by God. God may threaten us with evil, but he does not himself tempt
14 anyone.² No, when a man is tempted, it is always because he is being drawn away by
15 the lure of his own passions. When that

has come about, passion conceives and gives birth to sin; and when sin has reached its full growth, it breeds death. Beloved brethren, do not deceive yourselves over this. Whatever gifts are worth
17 having, whatever endowments are perfect of their kind, these come to us from above; they are sent down by the Father of all that gives light, with whom there can be no change, no swerving from his course; and
18 it was his will to give us birth, through his true word, meaning us to be the first-fruits, as it were, of all his creation. You know
19 this, my beloved brethren, well enough. It is for us men to be ready listeners, slow to speak our minds, slow to take offence; man's anger does not bear the fruit that is
20 acceptable to God. Rid yourselves, then, of all defilement, of all the ill-will that remains in you; be patient, and cherish that word implanted in you which can bring salvation to your souls.

Only you must be honest with yourselves; you are to live by the word, not content merely to listen to it. One who
23 listens to the word without living by it is like a man who sees, in a mirror, the face he was born with;³ he looks at himself, and
24 away he goes, never giving another thought to the man he saw there. Whereas one who
25 gazes into that perfect law, which is the law of freedom, and dwells on the sight of it, does not forget its message; he finds something to do, and does it, and his doing of it wins him a blessing. If anyone
26 deludes himself by thinking he is serving God, when he has not learned to control his tongue, the service he gives is vain. If
27 he is to offer service pure and unblemished in the sight of God, who is our Father, he

¹ 'Whereas the rich man takes pride in what in truth abases him'; others would interpret, 'Let the rich (Christian) take pride in his abasement', that is, in bearing reproach for the sake of his religion; but this does not seem to fit the context so well.

² 'God may threaten us with evil'; this seems to be the only possible meaning of the Latin, if the text here is correct. The sense of the Greek is, 'God is unversed in evil', or perhaps 'is not tempted by evil'; others would render it, 'does not tempt men to evil'.

³ 'The face he was born with'; some understand this as meaning 'the face which belongs to his perishable body'.

must take care of orphans and widows in their need, and keep himself untainted by the world.

2 Brethren, you believe that all glory belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ; do not combine this faith of yours with flattery of human greatness. Suppose that a man comes into your place of meeting in fine clothes, wearing a gold ring; suppose that a poor man comes in at the same time, ill clad. Will you pay attention to the well-dressed man, and bid him take some place of honour; will you tell the poor man, Stand where thou art, or, Sit on the ground at my footstool? If so, are you not introducing divisions into your company? Have you not shewn partiality in your judgement? Listen to me, my dear brethren; has not God chosen the men who are poor in the world's eyes to be rich in faith, to be heirs of that kingdom which he has promised to those who love him? And here are you putting the poor man to shame. Is it not the rich who use their power to oppress you? Are not they the very men who drag you into court, the very men who speak evil of that honoured name, by which you are called? True, you do well to observe, in their regard, the royal law you find in the words of scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if you flatter the great, you incur guilt; the law finds you out in a transgression. And the man who has failed in one point, though he has kept the rest of the law, is liable to all its penalties: he who forbids adultery has forbidden murder as well. The murderer, though he be no adulterer, has yet transgressed the law. You must speak and act like men already on their trial before a law of freedom.¹ The merciless will be judged mercilessly; mercy gives its judgement an honourable welcome.²

14 Of what use is it, my brethren, if a man claims to have faith, and has no deeds to shew for it? Can faith save him then? 15 Here is a brother, here is a sister, going naked, left without the means to secure 16 their daily food; if one of you says to them,

Go in peace, warm yourselves and take your fill, without providing for their bodily needs, of what use is it? Thus faith, if it has no deeds to shew for itself, has lost its own principle of life. We shall be inclined to say to him, Thou hast faith, but I have deeds to shew. Shew me this faith of thine without any deeds to prove it, and I am prepared, by my deeds, to prove my own faith.³ Thou believest that there is only one God; that is well enough, but then, so do the devils, and the devils shrink from him in terror. Rash soul, wouldst thou be assured that faith without deeds to shew has no life in it? Think of our father Abraham; was it not by his deeds that he found approval, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? See how his faith conspired with deeds done, and through those deeds his faith was realized. Thus he confirmed the words of scripture, which tell us, Abraham put his faith in God, and it was reckoned virtue in him, and he earned the title of God's friend.⁴ You see, then, that it takes deeds as well as faith if a man is to be justified. Or again, how did Rahab, the harlot, win God's approval? Was it not by her deeds, when she harboured the spies and sent them home by a different way?⁵ Body separated from spirit is a dead body, and faith separated from good deeds is a dead faith.

3 Do not be too eager, brethren, to impart instruction to others; be sure that, if we do, we shall be called to account all the more strictly. We are betrayed, all of us, into many faults; and a man who is not betrayed into faults of the tongue must be a man perfect at every point, who knows how to curb his whole body. Just so we can make horses obey us, and turn their whole bodies this way and that, by putting a curb in their mouths. Or look at ships; how huge they are, how boisterous are the winds that drive them along! And yet a tiny rudder will turn them this way and that, as the captain's purpose will have it. Just so, the tongue is a tiny part of our body, and yet what power it can boast!

¹ 'Men already on their trial'; in the Greek, 'men who are to be tried'. ² 'Mercy gives its judgement an honourable welcome'; literally, 'mercy exalts judgement'. This appears to be the sense of the Latin text, which is perhaps due to an error of copying. The sense of the Greek is, 'Mercy can boast over (its) judgement'. ³ 'We shall be inclined to say'; the phrase here used commonly introduces an objection, 'But someone will say'. But such a rendering would not fit the present context. ⁴ Gen. 15. 6. ⁵ Jos. 2. 1-16.

How small a spark it takes to set fire to a vast forest! And that is what the tongue is, a fire. Among the organs of our nature, the tongue has its place as the proper element in which all that is harmful lives. It infects the whole body, and sets fire to this mortal sphere of ours, catching fire itself from hell.¹ Mankind can tame, and has long since learned to tame, every kind of beast and bird, of creeping things and all else;² but no human being has ever found out how to tame the tongue; a pest that is never allayed, all deadly poison. We use it to bless God who is our Father; we use it to curse our fellow men, that were made in God's image; blessing and cursing come from the same mouth. My brethren, there is no reason in this. Does the fountain gush out fresh and salt water from the same outlet? What, my brethren, can a fig-tree yield olives, or a vine figs? No more easily will brackish water yield fresh. Does any of you lay claim to wisdom or learning? Then let him give proof of his quality by setting a good example, living peaceably as a wise man should. As long as you find bitter jealousy and thoughts of rivalry in your hearts, let us have none of this boasting that perverts the truth; such wisdom as yours does not come from above, it belongs to earth and to nature, and is fit only for devils. Where there is jealousy, where there is rivalry, there you will find disorder and every kind of defect. Whereas the wisdom which does come from above is marked chiefly indeed by its purity, but also by its peacefulness; it is courteous and ready to be convinced, always taking the better part; it carries mercy with it, and a harvest of all that is good; it is censorious, and without affectation. Peace is the seed-ground of holiness, and those who make peace will win its harvest.

4 What leads to war, what leads to quarrelling among you? I will tell you

what leads to them; the appetites which infest your mortal bodies. Your desires go unfulfilled, so you fall to murdering; you set your heart on something, and cannot have your will, so there is quarrelling and fighting. Why cannot you have your will? Because you do not pray for it, or you pray, and what you ask for is denied you, because you ask for it with ill intent; you would squander it on your appetites. Wantons, have you never been told that the world's friendship means enmity with God, and the man who would have the world for his friend makes himself God's enemy? Do you think scripture means nothing when it tells you that the Spirit which dwells in you loves with a jealous love?³ No, the grace he gives us is something better still; and so he tells us, God flouts the scornful, and gives the humble man his grace.⁴ Be God's true subjects, then; stand firm against the devil, and he will run away from you, come close to God, and he will come close to you. You that are sinners must wash your hands clean, you that are in two minds must purify the intention of your hearts. Bring yourselves low with mourning and weeping, turn your laughter into sadness, your joy into downcast looks; humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Brethren, do not disparage one another. In disparaging one of his brethren, in passing judgement on him, a man disparages the law, passes judgement on the law; and in passing judgement on the law thou art setting thyself up to be its censor, instead of obeying it. There is only one Lawgiver, only one Judge, he who has power to destroy and to set free. Who art thou, to sit in judgement on thy neighbour?

See how you go about saying, To-day, or to-morrow, we will make our way to such and such a town, spend a year there, and make profit by trading, when you have no means of telling what the morrow will

¹ 'The proper element in which all that is harmful lives'; literally, 'iniquity's world'. Some think that these words should be attached to the foregoing sentence. 'This mortal sphere of ours'; literally, 'the circle of our birth (or, becoming)'; probably the phrase means simply 'the world'. ² 'And all else'; in the Greek, 'and of fishes'.

³ Literally, this verse runs, 'Or do you think that the passage in scripture means nothing when it says, The Spirit which dwells in you (in the Greek, which God has sent to dwell in you) longs after you even to envy?' The whole phrase cannot be found in the Old Testament; the notion that God is a jealous God frequently occurs, e.g. Ex. 20. 5. The Hebrew language does not distinguish between envy and jealousy.

⁴ 'The grace he gives us is something better still'; literally, 'He gives a greater grace', perhaps by way of contrast with the earthly subjects of petition mentioned in verse 3 above. The quotation is from Prov. 3. 34.

15 bring. What is your life but a wisp of smoke, which shews for a moment and then must vanish into nothing? You ought to be saying, We will do this or that if it is the Lord's will, and if life is granted us. As it is, your self-conceit makes boasters of you; all such boastfulness is an evil thing. 17 Yes, if a man has the power to do good, it is sinful in him to leave it undone.¹

5 Come, you men of riches, bemoan yourselves and cry aloud over the 2 miseries that are to overtake you. Corruption has fallen on your riches; all the 3 fine clothes are left moth-eaten, and the gold and silver have long lain rusting. That rust will bear witness against you, will bite into your flesh like flame. These are the last days given you, and you have spent them in heaping up a store of retribution.² 4 You have kept back the pay of the workmen who reaped your lands, and it is there to cry out against you; the Lord of hosts has listened to their complaint. You have feasted here on earth, you have comforted your hearts with luxuries on this day that 6 dooms you to slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the innocent man, while he offered no resistance.³ 7 Wait, then, brethren, in patience for the Lord's coming. See how the farmer looks forward to the coveted returns of his land, yet waits patiently for the early and the late rains to fall before they can be brought in.⁴ 8 You too must wait patiently, and take courage; the Lord's coming is close at hand. Brethren, do not bring complaints against one another; if you do, you will be judged, and the judge is already standing

at your doors. If you would learn by 10 example, brethren, how to work on and wait patiently in evil times, think of the prophets who spoke in the Lord's name. See how we congratulate those who have 11 shewn endurance. You have heard of Job's endurance; and you have read, in that story, how kind and merciful the Lord is in rewarding us.⁵ But above all, my 12 brethren, do not bind yourselves by any oath, by heaven, by earth, or by any oath at all. Let your word be Yes for Yes, and No for No; if not, you will be judged for it.⁶

Is one of you unhappy? Let him fall to 13 prayer. Is one of you cheerful? For him, a psalm. Is one of you sick? Let him send for the presbyters of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Lord's name. Prayer offered in 15 faith will restore the sick man, and the Lord will give him relief; if he is guilty of sins, they will be pardoned.⁷ Confess your 16 sins to one another, and pray for one another, for the healing of your souls. When a just man prays fervently, there is great 17 virtue in his prayer. Elias was only a mortal man like ourselves, and when he prayed and prayed that it might not rain on the land, there was no rain for three years and 18 six months;⁸ then he prayed anew, and rain fell from heaven, and so the land yielded its harvest.

My brethren, if one of you strays from 19 the truth, and a man succeeds in bringing him back, let him be sure of this; to bring 20 back erring feet into the right path means saving a soul from death, means throwing a veil over a multitude of sins.⁹

¹ It is difficult to see how this fits into the context, unless we suppose that the whole passage from 4. 13 to 5. 6 is directed against the rich, who are here accused of neglecting the great opportunities they have for doing good. ² 'Heaping up a store of retribution'; in the Greek, 'heaping up treasure'.

³ 'The innocent man'; this might also be translated 'the Just One', and understood as a reference to our Lord; cf. Ac. 3. 14; 7. 52; Wis. 2. 12-20. ⁴ In Palestine, the rains of early autumn and late spring are especially important to the crops.

⁵ 'How kind and merciful the Lord is in rewarding us'; literally, 'the fulfilment of the Lord, how kind and merciful he is'. Cf. Rom. 6. 21; I Pet. 1. 9. ⁶ Cf. Mt. 5. 33. It seems probable that St James had some special reason for warning the Jewish Christians against taking oaths, perhaps because he was afraid of their taking part in unlawful conspiracies.

⁷ 'Give him relief'; in the Greek, 'raise him up'. ⁸ III Kg. 17. 1; 18. 41. ⁹ That is, probably, his own sins; cf. I Pet. 4. 8.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PETER

PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who dwell as foreigners up and down Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen in the foreknowledge of God the Father, to be sanctified by the Spirit, to give their allegiance to Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood; Grace and peace be yours abundantly. Blessed be that God, that Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has begotten us anew, making hope live in us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We are to share an inheritance that is incorruptible, inviolable, unfading. It is stored up for you in heaven; and meanwhile, through your faith, the power of God affords you safe conduct till you reach it, this salvation which is waiting to be disclosed at the end of time. Then you will be triumphant.¹ What if you have trials of many sorts to sadden your hearts in this brief interval? That must needs happen, so that you may give proof of your faith, a much more precious thing than the gold we test by fire; proof which will bring you praise, and glory, and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. You never saw him, but you learned to love him; you may not see him even now, but you believe in him;² and, if you continue to believe in him, how you will triumph! How ineffable your joy will be, and how sublime, when you reap the fruit of that faith of yours, the salvation of your souls! Salvation was the aim and quest of the prophets, and the grace of which they prophesied has been reserved for you. The Spirit of Christ was in them, making known to them the sufferings which Christ's cause brings with it, and the glory that crowns them; when was it to be,

and how was the time of it to be recognized? It was revealed to them that their errand was not to their own age, it was to you. And now the angels can satisfy their eager gaze; the Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven, and your evangelists have made the whole mystery plain, to you instead.

Rid your minds, then, of every encumbrance, keep full mastery of your senses, and set your hopes on the gracious gift that is offered you when Jesus Christ appears.³ Obedience should be native to you now; you must not retain the mould of your former untutored appetites. No, it is a holy God who has called you, and you too must be holy in all the ordering of your lives; You must be holy, the scripture says, because I am holy.⁴ You appeal to God as your Father; yes, but he judges each man impartially by what he has done; look anxiously, then, to the ordering of your lives while your stay on earth lasts. What was the ransom that freed you from the vain observances of ancestral tradition? You know well enough that it was not paid in earthly currency, silver or gold; it was paid in the precious blood of Christ; no lamb was ever so pure, so spotless a victim. Before the beginning of the world, God had foreknown him, but it was only in these last days that he was revealed, for your sakes; through him you have learned to be faithful to God, who raised him from the dead and endowed him with glory; your faith and your hope are to be centred in God. Purify your souls with the discipline of charity, and give constant proof of your good will for each other, loving unaffectedly as brethren should,⁵ since you have all been born anew with an immortal,

¹ 'You will be triumphant'; both here and at the end of verse 8 the Latin gives the verbs in the future tense; the Greek, somewhat obscurely, has the present tense, 'You are triumphing'. ² The words 'you believe in him; and' are not found in the Greek. ³ 'Rid your minds, then, of every encumbrance'; literally, 'gird up the loins of your mind', cf. Lk. 12. 35. ⁴ Lev. 11. 44. ⁵ 'Purify your souls with the discipline of charity'; the Greek has, 'Now that you have purified your souls by obedience to the truth'.

imperishable birth, through the word of
 24 God who lives and abides for ever.¹ Yes,
 all mortal things are like grass, and all their
 glory like the bloom of grass; the grass
 25 withers, and its bloom falls, but the word
 of the Lord lasts for ever.² And this word
 is nothing other than the gospel which has
 been preached to you.

2 You must put aside, then, every trace
 of ill-will and deceitfulness, your affec-
 tations, the grudges you bore, and all
 2 the slanderous talk; you are children new-
 born, and all your craving must be for the
 soul's pure milk, that will nurture you into
 3 salvation,³ once you have tasted, as you
 have surely tasted, the goodness of the
 4 Lord.⁴ Draw near to him; he is the living
 antitype of that stone which men rejected,
 5 which God has chosen and prized; you too
 must be built up on him, stones that live
 and breathe, into a spiritual fabric; you
 must be a holy priesthood, to offer up
 that spiritual sacrifice which God accepts
 6 through Jesus Christ. So you will find in
 scripture the words, Behold, I am setting
 down in Zion a corner-stone, chosen out
 and precious; those who believe in him
 7 will not be disappointed.⁵ Prized, then, by
 you, the believers, he is something other
 to those who refuse belief; the stone which
 the builders rejected has become the chief
 8 stone at the corner,⁶ a stone to trip men's
 feet, a boulder they stumble against. They
 stumble over God's word, and refuse it
 9 belief; it is their destiny. Not so you; you
 are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a
 consecrated nation, a people God means
 to have for himself; it is yours to proclaim
 the exploits of the God who has called you
 out of darkness into his marvellous light.
 10 Time was when you were not a people at
 all, now you are God's people; once you
 were unpitied, and now his pity is yours.⁷
 11 Beloved, I call upon you to be like
 strangers and exiles, to resist those natural
 12 appetites which besiege the soul. Your life
 amidst the Gentiles must be beyond re-
 proach; decried as malefactors, you must

let them see, from your honourable be-
 haviour, what you are; they will praise
 God for you, when his time comes to have
 mercy on them.⁸ For love of the Lord,
 13 then, bow to every kind of human author-
 ity; to the king, who enjoys the chief
 power, and to the magistrates who hold his
 14 commission to punish criminals and en-
 courage honest men. To silence, by honest
 15 living, the ignorant chatter of fools; that
 is what God expects of you. Free men, but
 the liberty you enjoy is not to be made a
 pretext for wrong-doing; it is to be used in
 God's service. Give all men their due; to
 17 the brethren, your love; to God, your
 reverence; to the king, due honour.

You who are slaves must be submissive
 18 to your masters, and shew all respect, not
 only to those who are kind and considerate,
 but to those who are hard to please. It does
 19 a man credit when he bears undeserved ill
 treatment with the thought of God in his
 heart. If you do wrong and are punished
 20 for it, your patience is nothing to boast of;
 it is the patience of the innocent sufferer
 that wins credit in God's sight. Indeed,
 21 you are engaged to this by the call of
 Christ; he suffered for our sakes, and left
 you his own example; you were to follow
 in his footsteps. He did no wrong, no
 22 treachery was found on his lips;⁹ he was
 ill spoken of, and spoke no evil in return,
 23 suffered, and did not threaten vengeance,
 gave himself up into the hands of injus-
 tice.¹⁰ So, on the cross, his own body took
 24 the weight of our sins; we were to become
 dead to our sins, and live for holiness; it
 was his wounds that healed you.¹¹ Till
 25 then, you had been like sheep going astray;
 now, you have been brought back to him,
 your shepherd, who keeps watch over your
 souls.¹²

3 You, too, who are wives must be sub-
 missive to your husbands. Some of
 these still refuse credence to the word; it
 is for their wives to win them over, not by
 word but by example; by the modesty and
 3 reverence they observe in your demeanour.

¹ The Greek might also be translated 'through the word of God which lives and lasts for ever'.
² Is. 40. 6-8. ³ 'The soul's pure milk'; some would render the Greek here, 'the pure milk of the
 word'. ⁴ Ps. 33. 9. ⁵ Is. 28. 16; see p. 157, note 3. ⁶ Ps. 117. 22. ⁷ Prized, then, by the
 believers'; according to some commentators, this should be 'The honour, then, belongs to you, the
 believers'. ⁸ Os. 2. 23, 24. ⁹ 'To have mercy on them'; literally, 'to visit them', but the
 sense here is probably that which the verb has in Lk. 1. 68. ¹⁰ 'Of injustice'; the
 Greek here has, 'of a just judge', that is, his heavenly Father. ¹¹ Is. 53. 4, 5. ¹² 'Your shep-
 herd, who keeps watch'; literally, 'the shepherd and overseer (or bishop) of your souls'.

3 Your beauty must lie, not in braided hair,
not in gold trinkets, not in the dress you
4 wear, but in the hidden features of your
heart, in a possession you can never lose,
that of a calm and tranquil spirit; to God's
5 eyes, beyond price. It was thus that the
holy women of old time adorned them-
selves, those women who had such trust in
God, and paid their husbands such re-
6 spect. Think how obedient Sara was to
Abraham, how she called him her lord; if
you would prove yourselves her children,
live honestly, and let no anxious thoughts
7 disturb you. You, too, who are husbands
must use marriage considerably, paying
homage to woman's sex as weaker than
your own. The grace of eternal life belongs
to both, and your prayers must not suffer
interruption.¹

8 In a word, think the same thoughts, all
of you, and share the same feelings; be
lovers of the brethren. I would see you
9 tender-hearted, modest, and humble, not
repaying injury with injury, or hard words
with hard words, but blessing those who
curse you. This God's call demands of you,
and you will inherit a blessing in your turn.
10 Yes, long life and prosperous days, who
would have these for the asking? My
counsel is, keep thy tongue clear of harm,
and thy lips free from every treacherous
11 word. Neglect the call of evil, and rather
do good; let peace be all thy quest and
12 aim. On the upright, the Lord's eye ever
looks favourably; his ears are open to their
pleading. Perilous is his frown for the
13 wrong-doers.² And who is to do you wrong,
if only what is good inspires your ambi-
14 tions? If, after all, you should have to
suffer in the cause of right, yours is a
blessed lot. Do not be afraid or disturbed
at their threats; enthrone Christ as Lord
15 in your hearts. If anyone asks you to give

an account of the hope which you cherish,
be ready at all times to answer for it, but
16 courteously and with due reverence. What
matters is that you should have a clear
conscience; so the defamers of your holy
life in Christ will be disappointed in their
calumny. It may be God's will that we
17 should suffer for doing right; better that,
than for doing wrong. It was thus that
18 Christ died as a ransom, paid once for all,
on behalf of our sins, he the innocent for
us the guilty, so as to present us in God's
sight. In his mortal nature he was done to
death, but endowed with fresh life in his
spirit, and it was in his spirit that he went
19 and preached to the spirits who lay in
prison. Long before, they had refused be-
20 lief, hoping that God would be patient with
them, in the days of Noe. That ark which
Noe was then building, in which a few
souls, eight in all, found refuge as they
passed through the waves,³ was a type of
21 the baptism which saves us now. Our
baptism is not a putting away of outward
defilement; it is the test which assures us
of a good conscience before God, through
the resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴ He sits,
22 now, at the right hand of God, annihilating
death, to make us heirs of eternal life; he
has taken his journey to heaven, with all
the angels and powers and principdoms
made subject under his feet.⁵

4 Christ's mortal nature, then, has been
crucified, and you must arm your-
selves with the same intention; he whose
mortal nature has been crucified is quit,
now, of sin.⁶ The rest of your mortal life
must be ordered by God's will, not by
human appetites. Time enough has been
3 spent already in doing what the heathen
would have you do, following a course
of incontinence, passion, drunkenness,

¹ Cf. I Cor. 7. 5.

² *vv.* 10-12; Ps. 33. 13 sqq.

³ *vv.* 19-20: It is certain that this passage represents the holy patriarchs as living in a place of detention, neither heaven nor hell, till our Lord came (cf. Mt. 27. 52, 53). It is not clear why the Apostle concentrates his attention on the contemporaries of Noe, or how those who had refused belief attained salvation afterwards; it seems best to suppose that they were incredulous while the ark was being built, and repented when it was too late to escape the Deluge. 'Hoping that God would be patient with them'; in the Greek, apparently, 'while God's patience waited for them'. 'As they passed through the waves'; some would translate 'by means of water', but this does not apply to the story in Genesis; Christian baptism typifies passing through the waters of death (cf. I Cor. 10. 2).

⁴ 'The test which assures us of a good conscience'; the Greek might also mean 'the petition for a good conscience'.

⁵ The words 'annihilating (literally, swallowing up) death, to make us heirs of eternal life' are not found in the Greek manuscripts. ⁶ 'Christ's mortal nature, then, has been crucified... he whose mortal nature has been crucified'; literally, 'Christ has suffered as far as the flesh is concerned... he who has suffered as far as the flesh is concerned'. It is difficult to see in what sense 'he who has suffered is quit of sin', unless suffering here means death. Probably the Apostle refers to baptism as mystical association with Christ's death; cf. the very similar passage in Rom. 6. 3-7. It is possible, however, that physical death is alluded to in both parts of the sentence.

revelling, carousal, and shameful idolatry.

4 They are surprised that you do not rush
headlong into the same welter of debauch,
5 and call you ill names accordingly; they
will have to answer for it before him who is
all in readiness to pass sentence on the living
6 and the dead. That is why dead men, too,
had the gospel message brought to them;
though their mortal natures had paid the
penalty in men's eyes, in the sight of God
their spirits were to live on.¹

7 The end of all things is close at hand;
live wisely, and keep your senses awake to
8 greet the hours of prayer. Above all things,
preserve constant charity among your-
selves; charity draws the veil over a multi-
9 tude of sins.² Make one another free of
10 what is yours ungrudgingly,³ sharing with
all whatever gift each of you has received,
as befits the stewards of a God so rich in
11 graces. One of you preaches, let him re-
member that it is God's message he is
uttering; another distributes relief, let him
remember that it is God who supplies him
the opportunity; that so, in all you do,
God may be glorified through Jesus
Christ; to him be the glory and the power
through endless ages, Amen.⁴

12 Do not be surprised, beloved, that this
fiery ordeal should have befallen you, to
test your quality; there is nothing strange
13 in what is happening to you. Rather re-
joice, when you share in some measure the
sufferings of Christ; so joy will be yours,
and triumph, when his glory is revealed.
14 Your lot will be a blessed one, if you are
reproached for the name of Christ; it
means that the virtue of God's honour and
glory and power, it means that his own
15 Spirit, is resting upon you.⁵ Let it not be
said that any of you underwent punish-
ment for murder, or theft, or slander, or
16 infringing other men's rights;⁶ but, if a

man is punished for being a Christian, he
has no need to be ashamed of it; let him
bear that name, and give glory to God. The
17 time is ripe for judgement to begin, and to
begin with God's own household; and if
our turn comes first, what will be its issue
for those who refuse credence to God's
message? If the just man wins salvation
18 only with difficulty, what will be the plight
of the godless, of the sinner? Why then,
19 let those who suffer in fulfilment of God's
will commend their souls, all innocent,
into his hands; he created them, and he
will not fail them.

5 And now I have a charge to give to the
presbyters in your company; I, who
am a presbyter like yourselves, I, who bear
witness of Christ's sufferings, I, who have
my part in that glory which will one day be
revealed. Be shepherds to the flock God
has given you. Carry out your charge as
God would have it done, cordially, not like
drudges, generously, not in the hope of
sordid gain; not tyrannizing, each in his
3 own sphere, but setting an example, as best
you may, to the flock.⁷ So, when the Prince
of shepherds makes himself known, your
prize will be that crown of glory which
cannot fade. And you, who are young,
5 must defer to these, your seniors. De-
ference to one another is the livery you
must all wear; God thwarts the proud, and
keeps his grace for the humble.

Bow down, then, before the strong hand
6 of God; he will raise you up, when his time
comes to deliver you.⁸ Throw back on him
the burden of all your anxiety; he is con-
cerned for you.⁹ Be sober, and watch well;
8 the devil, who is your enemy, goes about
roaring like a lion, to find his prey, but you,
9 grounded in the faith, must face him
boldly; you know well enough that the

¹ 'Though their mortal natures had paid the penalty in men's eyes, in the sight of God their spirits were to live on'; literally, 'that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit'. This much-disputed passage probably refers us back to 3. 19 and 20 above; there were souls who, through incredulity, incurred the outward penalty of temporal death at the time of the Deluge, and nevertheless, through contrition, were reserved for spiritual life, which was brought to them by Christ after his Passion. This illustrates why God 'judges the dead' (verse 5); physical death is only a temporary penalty, and their eternal destiny had still to be settled.

² Prov. 10. 12; cf. Jas. 5. 20; the sense may be that charity 'hides away, obliterates in its effects, the sin of another; but more probably the doctrine here is that of Lk. 7. 47.

³ 'Make one another free of what is yours'; literally, 'be hospitable to one another', but it seems necessary to take the words in this more general sense, in order to connect them with the two verses which follow.

⁴ Cf. p. 239, note 10. ⁵ The text here is uncertain; some manuscripts omit the words 'honour' and 'power'; some add, after the word 'Spirit', the words 'blasphemed by others, but honoured by you'.

⁶ For 'slander', the Greek has 'wrong-doing'. The word which follows means, literally, 'one who looks after business which is not his own'; it is possible that political agitators are referred to.

⁷ The words 'as best you may', literally 'from the heart', are not found in the Greek. ⁸ Cf. p. 246, note 8. ⁹ Ps. 54. 23.

brotherhood you belong to pays, all the world over, the same tribute of suffering.¹
10 And God, the giver of all grace, who has called us to enjoy, after a little suffering, his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself give you mastery, and steadiness, and strength.² To him be glory and power through endless ages, Amen.
11
12 I count on Silvanus as a faithful brother; and through him I have written you these brief lines of encouragement; to assure you that the grace in which you are so firmly established is the true grace of God.³ The church here in Babylon, united with you by God's election, sends you her greeting; so does my son, Mark.⁴ Greet one another with the kiss of fellowship. Grace be to all of you, friends in Christ Jesus. Amen.⁵

¹ The Greek here should perhaps be rendered, 'you know how to pay the same tribute of suffering as your brethren, all the world over'. The idea of 'tribute' is probably suggested by the Greek verb used, though it is not rendered in the Latin. ² Some commentators would make the words 'after a little suffering' follow on the words 'will himself give you'. ³ Silvanus is probably the companion of St Paul (I Thess. I. I). ⁴ The word 'church' is not expressed, but is evidently meant to be understood, in the Greek. There can be little doubt that Babylon means Rome; cf. Apoc. 17. 5. The Mark here mentioned is doubtless the Evangelist, whom a very early tradition describes as the 'interpreter' of St Peter. ⁵ For 'grace' the Greek has 'peace'.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE PETER

SIMON Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who share with us the common privilege of faith, justified as we are by our God and Saviour Jesus Christ;¹ Grace and peace be yours abundantly, as you gain fuller knowledge of God, and of Christ Jesus our Lord. See how all the gifts that make for life and holiness in us belong to his divine power; come to us through fuller knowledge of him, whose own glory and sovereignty have drawn us to himself!² Through him³ God has bestowed on us high and treasured promises; you are to share the divine nature, with the world's corruption, the world's passions, left behind. And you too have to contribute every effort on your own part, crowning your faith with virtue, and virtue with enlightenment, and enlightenment with continence, and continence with endurance, and endurance with holiness, and holiness with brotherly love, and brotherly love with charity. Such gifts, when they are yours in full measure, will make you quick and successful pupils, reaching ever closer knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; he who lacks them is no better than a blind man feeling his way about; his old sins have been purged away, and he has forgotten it. Bestir yourselves then, brethren, ever more eagerly, to ratify God's calling and choice of you by a life well lived; if you do this, you will make no false step, and it will be no grudging entrance that is afforded to you into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I shall never fail, then, to go on reminding you of this, although you know it well, and are firmly grounded in a truth that is present to your minds. I hold it my duty to keep the memory awake in you, while I am still in this brief dwelling-place; I am assured, by what our Lord Jesus Christ has made known to me, that I must fold my tent before long. And I will see to it that, when I am gone, you shall always be able to remember what I have been saying.⁴ We were not crediting fables of man's invention, when we preached to you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and about his coming; we had been eye-witnesses of his exaltation. Such honour, such glory was bestowed on him by God the Father, that a voice came to him out of the splendour which dazzles human eyes; This, it said, is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; to him, then, listen.⁵ We, his companions on the holy mountain, heard that voice coming from heaven, and now the word of the prophets gives us more confidence than ever.⁶ It is with good reason that you are paying so much attention to that word; it will go on shining, like a lamp in some darkened room, until the dawn breaks, and the day-star rises in your hearts. Yet always you must remember this, that no prophecy in scripture is the subject of private interpretation. It was never man's impulse, after all, that gave us prophecy; men gave it utterance, but they were men whom God had sanctified, carried away, as they spoke, by the Holy Spirit.

¹ 'Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ'; others would render, 'our God, and the Saviour Jesus Christ', but this seems a less accurate rendering of the Greek.

² For 'See how all the gifts that make for life and holiness in us belong to his divine power', the Greek has 'Since his divine power has given us all that makes for life and holiness'. Most of the Latin manuscripts have, apparently, 'See how all things belong to his divine power, which has been given to us to make for life and holiness'.³ 'Through him'; the Greek has, 'through them'.

⁴ This verse seems to suggest that the Apostle intended to put his doctrine on record in some other way, independently of this epistle.

⁵ See Mt. 17. 5, and parallels.
⁶ 'The word of the prophets gives us more confidence than ever', since it has been ratified by the Transfiguration; or perhaps 'The word of the prophets gives us even more confidence' (than the Transfiguration), since it rests on admitted facts, not on an experience which might be called in question by the incredulous.

2 There were false prophets, too, among God's people. So, among you, there will be false teachers, covertly introducing pernicious ways of thought, and denying the Master who redeemed them, to their own speedy undoing. Many will embrace their wanton creeds, and bring the way of truth into disrepute, trading on your credulity with lying stories for their own ends. Long since, the warrant for their doom is in full vigour; destruction is on the watch for them. God did not spare the angels who fell into sin; he thrust them down to hell, chained them there in the abyss, to await their sentence in torment.¹ Nor did he spare the world he had first made; he brought a flood on that world of wickedness, preserving Noe, who had borne witness to holiness, and only seven others with him. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, too, he punished with utter ruin, turning them to ashes, for an example to the godlessness of a later time. Yet he saved Lot, an innocent man who was overborne by the violence and the wantonness of his wicked neighbours; eye and ear could testify to his innocence, although he lived among men whose lawless doings, day after day, wrung that blameless heart.² The Lord does not find it difficult to save his true worshippers from their trials, while the wrong-doers must await the day of judgement, marked down for torment; those especially, who follow the defiling appetites of their corrupt nature, and make light of authority. So hold are they, so obstinate, that they are not afraid to bring in new and blasphemous ways of thought,³ whereas angels, with a strength and a capacity far above theirs, do not bring on themselves any charge so abominable.⁴

Such men, like dumb creatures that are born to be trapped and destroyed, sneer at what they cannot understand, and will soon perish in their own corruption; they will have the reward their wickedness has deserved. To live in luxury while the day lasts is all their pleasure; what a stain they are, what a disfigurement, when they revel in the luxury of their own banquets, as they fare sumptuously at your side!⁵ Their eyes feast on adultery, insatiable of sin; and they know how to win wavering souls to their purpose, so skilled is all their accursed brood at gaining its own ends. They have gone far astray, leaving the true path, and following the path of Balaam the son of Bosor, the man who was content to take pay in the cause of wrong, and was rebuked for his perversity, when the dumb beast spoke with a human voice, to bring a prophet to his senses.⁶ They are wells with no water in them, clouds driven before the storm; the lot that awaits them is darkness and gloom. Using fine phrases that have no meaning, they bait their hook with the wanton appetites of sense, to catch those who have had but a short respite from false teaching.⁷ What do they offer them? Liberty. And all the time they themselves are enslaved to worldly corruption; whatever influence gets the better of a man, becomes his master. That they should have been rescued, by acknowledging our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, from the world's pollution, and then been entangled and overpowered by it a second time, means that their last state is worse than the first. Better for them, never to have found their way to justification, than to have found it, and then turned their backs on the holy law once handed down to them. What has

¹ 'Chained them there in the abyss'; the Greek means, literally, 'in ropes (or perhaps, in pits) of darkness'. The Latin has simply 'in ropes of hell'.

² This appears to be the meaning of the Latin (cf. Job 29. 11); or the sense may be, 'he was innocent in spite of all that he heard and saw'. The Greek of the whole sentence is different: 'that innocent man, living in their company, fretted (or perhaps, gave proof of) his innocent soul over the lawless doings of which the sound and sight came to him, day after day'.

³ The word 'authority', according to some, should be understood of the holy Angels (cf. Eph. 1. 21; Col. 1. 16, where the same word has been translated 'powers'); according to others, of God himself. But it may equally well refer to earthly authorities. 'Bring in new and blasphemous ways of thought'; the Greek has 'insult august names', as in Jude, verse 8.

⁴ 'Do not bring on themselves any charge so abominable'; this appears to be the sense of the Latin; the Greek has, 'do not bring against them (it is not clear, against whom) a derogatory sentence before the Lord'; cf. Jude, verse 9.

⁵ 'While the day lasts'; literally, 'in the day', either in the sense of daylight, or as referring to the shortness of life (cf. Wis. 2. 1-8). The latter part of the sentence probably refers to those common meals at which Christians met for social intercourse (cf. Jude, verse 12); if so, it seems clear that the false teachers here in question were rich men who brought their own victuals and did not share them with their poorer neighbours (cf. I Cor. 11. 21).

⁶ Num. 22. 28. ⁷ 'Those who have had but a short respite from false teaching'; literally, 'those who have barely (in some Greek manuscripts, have genuinely) escaped from those who walk in error'.

happened to them proves the truth of the proverb, The dog is back at his own vomit again. Wash the sow, and you find her wallowing in the mire.¹

3 This is my second letter to you, beloved; I write such letters as a reminder, to awaken in you your clear sense of the truth. Do not forget those predictions of the holy prophets which I mentioned to you, or the charge which our Lord and Saviour laid on your apostles.² Remember always that in the last days mocking deceivers must needs come, following the rule of their own appetites, who will ask, What has become of the promise that he would appear? Ever since the fathers went to their rest, all is as it was from the foundation of the world. They are fain to forget how, long ago, heaven stood there, and an earth which God's word had made with water for its origin, water for its frame; and those were the very means by which the world, as it then was, came to perish, overwhelmed by water. That same word keeps heaven and earth, as they now are, stored up, ready to feed the fire on the day when the godless will be judged, and perish. But one thing, beloved, you must keep in mind, that with the Lord a day counts as a thousand years, and a thousand years count as a day.³ The Lord is not being dilatory over his promise, as some think; he is only giving you more time, because his will is that all of you should

attain repentance, not that some should be lost. But the day of the Lord is coming, and when it comes, it will be upon you like a thief. The heavens will vanish in a whirlwind, the elements will be scorched up and dissolve, earth, and all earth's achievements, will burn away.

All so transitory; and what men you ought to be! How unworlily in your life, how reverent towards God, as you wait, and wait eagerly, for the day of the Lord to come, for the heavens to shrivel up in fire, and the elements to melt in its heat! And meanwhile, we have new heavens and a new earth to look forward to, the dwelling-place of holiness; that is what he has promised. Beloved, since these expectations are yours, do everything to make sure that he shall find you innocent, undefiled, at peace. If our Lord stays his hand, count it part of his mercy. Our beloved brother Paul, with the wisdom God has granted him, has written you a letter,⁴ in which, as in all his letters, he talks of this. (Though indeed, there are passages in them difficult to understand, and these, like the rest of scripture, are twisted into a wrong sense by ignorant and restless minds, to their own undoing.) For yourselves, beloved, be warned in time; do not be carried away by their rash errors, and lose the firm foothold you have won; grow up in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory, now and for all eternity. Amen.

¹ Cf. Prov. 26. 11; it does not appear, however, that St Peter is quoting Scripture, and it may be that there was a current saw of this kind. There is no reference, in the Book of Proverbs, to the sow wallowing in the mire. ² The Greek has, 'Do not forget what has been foretold by the holy prophets, or the charge... etc.' ³ Cf. Ps. 89. 4. ⁴ If the letter referred to has been preserved, it may perhaps be II Thessalonians. But as St Peter's second epistle bears no particular address, we can have no certainty on the point.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE JOHN

OUR message concerns that Word, who is life; what he was from the first, what we have heard about him, what our own eyes have seen of him; what it was that met our gaze, and the touch of our hands.¹ Yes, life dawned; and it is as eye-witnesses that we give you news of that life, that eternal life, which ever abode with the Father and has dawned, now, on us. This message about what we have seen and heard we pass on to you, so that you too may share in our fellowship. What is it, this fellowship of ours? Fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And if we are writing to you now, it is so that joy may be yours in full measure. What, then, is this message we have heard from him, and are passing on to you? That God is light, and no darkness can find any place in him; if we claim fellowship with him, when all the while we live and move in darkness, it is a lie; our whole life is an untruth. God dwells in light; if we too live and move in light, there is fellowship between us, and the blood of his Son Jesus Christ washes us clean from all sin. Sin is with us; if we deny that, we are cheating ourselves; it means that truth does not dwell in us. No, it is when we confess our sins that he forgives us our sins, ever true to his word, ever dealing right with us, and all our wrong-doing is purged away. If we deny that we have sinned, it means that we are treating him as a liar; it means that his word does not dwell in our hearts.

2 Little children, the purpose of this letter is to keep you clear of sin. Meanwhile, if any of us does fall into sin, we have an advocate to plead our cause before the Father in the Just One, Jesus

Christ. He, in his own person, is the atone-
ment made for our sins, and not only for
ours, but for the sins of the whole world.
Have we attained the knowledge of him?
The test is, whether we keep his command-
ments; the man who claims knowledge of
him without keeping his commandments is
a liar; truth does not dwell in such a man
as that. No, if a man keeps true to his
word, then it is certain that the love of God
has reached its full stature in him; that is
what tells us that we are dwelling in him.
One who claims to dwell in him must needs
live and move as he lived and moved. Be-
loved, I am not sending you a new com-
mandment; it is an old commandment,
which you were given from the very first;
what was the message to which you listened
long ago but this same commandment,
now grown old? And yet it is a new com-
mandment I am sending you, now that it
is verified in him and you; the darkness has
passed away now, and true light shines
instead. He who claims enlightenment,
and all the while hates his brother, is in
darkness still. It is the man who loves his
brother that lives in light; no fear of stum-
bling haunts him. The man who hates his
brother is in the dark, guides his steps in
the dark without being able to tell where he
is going; darkness has fallen, and blinded
his eyes.

I call you little children; have not your
sins been forgiven in his name? I call you
fathers; have you not knowledge of one
who was from the first? I call you young
men; have you not gained victory over the
evil one? I call you sons; you have learned
to recognize the Father. I call you young
men; you are strong, with God's word
dwelling in you always; you have gained
your victory over the evil one.² Do not

¹ That 'the Word' here is used in a personal sense would seem clear from a comparison of this passage with St John's Gospel, 1. 1-4. ² *vv.* 12-14: 'I call you little children'; literally, 'I write to you, children', and so throughout. It is possible to read these phrases as if St John was addressing, in turn, three or four different classes in the Christian community, divided according to their ages. But it seems unlikely that he should have addressed himself to children; or that he should have no message at all for

bestow your love on the world, and what the world has to offer; the lover of this world has no love of the Father in him.

- 16 What does the world offer? Only gratification of corrupt nature, gratification of the eye, the empty pomp of living; these things take their being from the world, not from the Father. The world and its gratifications pass away; the man who does God's will outlives them, for ever.

- 18 My sons, this is the last age of time. You have been told that Antichrist must needs come; and even now, to prove to us that it is the last stage of time, many Antichrists have appeared. They came of our company, but they never belonged to our company; if they had belonged to it, they would have persevered at our side. As it is, they were destined to prove that there are some who are no true companions of ours. With you, it is otherwise; the Holy One has anointed you, and now nothing is hidden from you, so that I am not writing to you as to men from whom the truth is hidden. Rather, I am appealing to your knowledge of it; the truth, after all, cannot give birth to a lie. To whom do we give the lie, if not to him who tells us that Jesus is not the Christ? Such a man is Antichrist, disowning as he does both the Father and the Son. To disown the Son is to have no claim to the Father; it is by acknowledging the Son that we lay claim to the Father too.
- 24 Enough for you, that the message which was first brought you should dwell in you. If that first message dwells in you, you too will dwell in the Son, and in the Father. He himself has made us a promise, the promise of eternal life. So much I have written about those who are trying to mislead you.
- 27 Meanwhile, the influence of his anointing lives on in you, so that you have no need of teaching; no lesson his influence gives you can be a lie, they are all true. Follow those lessons, and dwell in him. Yes, little children, dwell in him, so that when he appears we may greet him confidently, instead of being ashamed at his presence. You are sure that he is just; be sure, then, that whoever does right is born of him.

3 See how the Father has shewn his love towards us; that we should be counted as God's sons, should be his sons. If the world does not recognize us, that is because it never recognized him. Beloved, we are sons of God even now, and what we shall be hereafter, has not been made known as yet. But we know that when he comes we shall be like him; we shall see him, then, as he is. Now, a man who rests these hopes in him lives a life of holiness; he, too, is holy.

The man who commits sin, violates order; sin of its nature is disorder. You know well enough that when he is revealed to us, it was to take away our sins; there is no sinfulness in him, and no one can dwell in him and be a sinner. The sinner must be one who has failed to see him, failed to recognize him. Little children, do not allow anybody to mislead you; the man who lives right is the man who is right with God; he, too, is right in all his dealings. The man who lives sinfully takes his character from the devil; the devil was a sinner from the first. If the Son of God was revealed to us, it was so that he might undo what the devil had done, and if a man is born of God, he does not live sinfully, he is true to his parentage; he cannot be a sinner, if he is born of God.¹

This, then, is how God's children and the devil's children are known apart. A man cannot trace his origin from God if he does not live right, if he does not love his brethren. To love one another; that, from the first, was the charge given to you; you were not to be like Cain, who took his character from the evil one, and murdered his brother. Why did he murder him? Because his own life was evil, and his brother's life was acceptable to God. No, brethren, do not be surprised that the world should hate you. Remember that we have changed over from death to life, in loving the brethren as we do; whereas, if a man is without love, he holds fast by death. A man cannot hate his brother without being a murderer, and you may be sure that no murderer has eternal life dwelling in him. God has proved his love

1. v. 14: after the words 'recognize the Father', the clause used above, 'I call you fathers; have you not knowledge of one who was from the first?' is repeated, according to the Greek manuscripts.

¹ 'He is true to his parentage'; literally, 'his seed persists in him', that is, being a child of God he inherits a strain proper to his ancestry.

to us by laying down his life for our sakes; we too must be ready to lay down our lives for the sake of our brethren. And now, suppose that a man has the worldly goods he needs, and sees his brother go in want; if he steels his heart against his brother, how can we say that the love of God dwells in him? My little children, let us shew our love by the true test of action, not by taking phrases on our lips. That proves to us that we take our character from the truth, and we shall be able to satisfy our consciences before God; if our consciences condemn us, it is because God is above conscience, and nothing is hidden from him.¹ Beloved, if conscience does not condemn us, we can appear boldly before God, and he will grant all our requests, since we are keeping his commandments, and living as he would see us live. What he commands is, that we should have faith in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and at his command should love one another. When a man keeps his commandments, it means that he is dwelling in God, and God in him. This is our proof that he is really dwelling in us, through the gift of his Spirit.²

4 Not all prophetic spirits, brethren, deserve your credence; you must put them to the test, to see whether they come from God. Many false prophets have made their appearance in the world. This is the test by which God's Spirit is to be recognized; every spirit which acknowledges Jesus Christ as having come to us in human flesh has God for its author; and no spirit which would disunite Jesus³ comes from God. This is the power of Antichrist, whose coming you have been told to expect; now you must know that he is here in the world already. You, little children, who take your origin from God, have gained the mastery over it; there is a stronger power at work in you, than in the world. Those others, belonging to the

world, speak the world's language, and the world listens to them; we belong to God, and a man must have knowledge of God if he is to listen to us; if he does not belong to God, he does not listen to us at all. That is the test by which we distinguish the true Spirit from the false spirit. Beloved, let us love one another; love springs from God; no one can love without being born of God, and knowing God. How can the man who has no love have any knowledge of God, since God is love?

What has revealed the love of God, where we are concerned, is that he has sent his only-begotten Son into the world, so that we might have life through him. That love resides, not in our shewing any love for God, but in his shewing love for us first, when he sent out his Son to be an atonement for our sins. Beloved, if God has shewn such love to us, we too must love one another. No man has ever seen God; but if we love one another, then we have God dwelling in us, and the love of God has reached its full growth in our lives. This is our proof that we are dwelling in him, and he in us; he has given us a share of his own Spirit.⁴ We apostles have seen for ourselves, and can testify, that the Father sent out his Son to be the redeemer of the world,⁵ and where a man acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God; we have learned to recognize the love God has in our regard, to recognize it, and to make it our belief. God is love; he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. That our life in the world should be like his, means that his love has had its way with us to the full, so that we can meet the day of judgement with confidence. Love has no room for fear; and indeed, love drives out fear when it is perfect love, since fear only serves for correction. The man who is still afraid has not yet reached the full measure of love.⁶ Yes, we must love God; he gave us his love

¹ This seems to be the most probable rendering of a verse whose meaning has been much disputed. ² Or the last sentence may be connected with what really dwelling in us is the gift of his Spirit'. ³ 'Which would disunite Jesus'; apparently in the sense that it would deny the identity of the human Jesus with the divine Christ; but the phrase might have a more general sense of 'destroying' Jesus. This reading in the Latin goes back to the Fathers of the second century; our present Greek manuscripts have simply 'which does not acknowledge Jesus'.

⁴ 'This is our proof'; it is not certain whether this refers to what has gone before, or to what immediately follows; perhaps to both. ⁵ 'We apostles'; the word 'apostles' does not appear in the text, but has been supplied for the sake of clearness in reading, since this is evidently what is meant.

⁶ 'Since fear only serves for correction'; literally, 'since fear has chastisement'. Others would interpret this as meaning 'because fear is painful', or 'because fear involves the prospect of punishment'; but it is doubtful whether the language of the Greek justifies either rendering.

20 first.¹ If a man boasts of loving God, while he hates his own brother, he is a liar. He has seen his brother, and has no love for him; what love can he have for the God he
 21 has never seen? No, this is the divine command that has been given us; the man who loves God must be one who loves his brother as well.

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and to
 2 love the parent is to love his child. If we love God, and keep his commandments, we can be sure of loving God's children.
 3 Loving God means keeping his commandments, and these commandments of his are not a burden to us. Whatever takes its
 4 origin from God must needs triumph over the world; our faith, that is the triumphant principle which triumphs over the world.
 5 He alone triumphs over the world, who
 6 believes that Jesus is the Son of God. He it is, Jesus Christ, whose coming has been made known to us by water and blood; water and blood as well, not water only; and we have the Spirit's witness that Christ
 7 is the truth.² Thus we have a threefold warrant in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, three who are yet
 8 one;³ and we have a threefold warrant on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood,
 9 three witnesses that conspire in one.⁴ We are ready to trust human authority; is not
 10 divine authority higher still? And we have that higher divine authority for this; God has borne witness to his own Son. The man who believes in the Son of God has this

divine attestation in his heart; the man who does not believe in the Son treats God as a liar; although God himself has borne witness to his Son, he has refused to believe in it. And what is the truth so attested?
 11 That God has given us eternal life, and that this life is to be found in his Son. To keep
 12 hold of the Son is to have life; he is lifeless, who has no hold of the Son of God. There
 13 is my message to you; be sure that you have eternal life, you who go on believing in the name of the Son of God.

Such familiar confidence we have in
 14 him, that we believe he listens to us whenever we make any request of him in accordance with his will. We are sure that he
 15 listens to all our requests, sure that the requests we make of him are granted. If a
 16 man knows his brother to be guilty, yet not of such a sin as brings death with it, he should pray for him; and, at his request, life will be granted to the brother who is sinning, yet not fatally. There is a sin which
 kills; it is not over this that I bid him fall to prayer.⁵ Sin may be wrong-doing of any
 17 kind; not all sin is fatal. The man who has been born of God, we may be sure, keeps
 18 clear of sin; that divine origin protects him, and the evil one cannot touch him. And we can be sure that we are God's
 19 children, though the whole world about us lies in the power of evil.⁶ We can be sure,
 20 too, that the Son of God has come to us, and has given us a sense of truth; we were to recognize the true God, and to live in his true Son. He is true God, and eternal life.⁷
 Beware, little children, of false gods. 21

¹ 'We must love God'; the Greek may mean, 'we love God'; the Latin has, 'let us love God'. ² 'That Christ is the truth'; the Greek has 'that (or, because) the Spirit is the truth'. It is not clear what mystical significance St John attached to the Spirit, the water, and the blood, here and in verse 8; he may, perhaps, have had the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist in mind. In Jn. i. 33 water and the Spirit are closely associated, water and blood in Jn. 19. 34; in both these passages the idea of human testimony is prominent. ³ This verse does not occur in any good Greek manuscript. But the Latin manuscripts may have preserved the true text. ⁴ 'Conspire in one'; literally, in the Latin, 'are one', in the Greek 'form one'. ⁵ For 'if a man knows', the Greek has, 'if a man sees'. Commentators are much disagreed as to the nature of the sin which brings death with it. It has often been identified as final impenitence, but the context seems to demand an action, rather than a state of mind. Since St John is warning us, all through his epistle, against the danger of apostasy from Christ, he may be distinguishing here between various degrees of culpability in sinners of that kind (cf. Jude 22-23). He does not explicitly say that 'fatal' sin is irremissible, only that we are not bound to pray for one who shews so little evidence of good dispositions; cf. II Jn. 10. ⁶ 'Of evil'; or perhaps 'of the evil one'. ⁷ It is not certain whether the word 'he' refers to the word 'God' or to the word 'Son'.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE JOHN

I, the presbyter, send greeting to that sovereign lady whom God has chosen; and to those children of hers who are my friends in the truth, loved, not by me only, but by all those who have recognized the truth,¹ for love of that truth which dwells in us, and will be our companion for ever. God the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, send you grace, mercy and peace in a spirit of truth and love. It has given me great happiness, in meeting some of thy children, to find that they followed the way of truth, obeying the command that came to us from the Father. And now, sovereign lady, I have a request to make of thee. It is no new command that my letter brings, only the command we were given from the first; let us all love one another. Love means keeping his commandments; love is itself the commandment which our earliest lessons bade us follow. Many false teachers have

appeared in the world, who will not acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in human flesh; here is the deceiver you were warned against, here is Antichrist. Be on your guard, or you will lose all you have earned, instead of receiving your wages in full.² The man who goes back, who is not true to Christ's teaching, loses hold of God; the man who is true to that teaching, keeps hold both of the Father and of the Son.³ If you are visited by one who does not bring this teaching with him, you must not receive him in your houses, or bid him welcome; to bid him welcome is to share the guilt of his doings. I might add to this letter, but I have thought it best not to entrust my message to paper and ink; I hope to visit you, and convey it by word of mouth, to give you happiness in full measure. The children of thy sister, God's chosen, send thee greeting.

¹ If, as is probable, the word 'presbyter' (or senior) referred in the first instance to those who were 'foundation members' of a given church (cf. Ac. 20. 17, 18), it is easy to see why St John should describe himself as 'the senior' (in relation to the Church at large) at a time when he was the only Apostle left. The 'lady' whom he addresses is perhaps a local church; the notion that a person is addressed (some think, by a proper name, Kyria) does not accord well with the use of the plural in verses 8-12. ² 'All you have earned'; some Greek manuscripts have 'all the result of our labours'. ³ 'The man who goes back'; other manuscripts of the Latin have 'the man who goes on in front', which corresponds better with the Greek. The sense may be (if that is the true reading), 'the man who tries to go beyond' the fixed deposit of faith, perhaps by adopting a Docetic view of our Lord's Incarnation.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE JOHN

GREETINGS from the presbyter to Gaius, his most dear friend in the truth.¹ Beloved, my prayer is that all goes well with thee, and that thou art in health; with thy soul, all goes well. What happiness it gave me, when the brethren who came here bore witness of thy loyalty to the truth, the loyalty thou shewest in all thy dealings! I have no greater cause for thankfulness, than when I hear that my children are following the way of truth. Beloved, thou art playing a faithful man's part in shewing such kindness to the brethren, even when they are strangers to thee. They have borne public witness before the church of thy charity, and thou wilt do well to set them forward on their journey in such a manner as befits God's service; it was undertaken for love of his name, the heathen contributed nothing to it.² Yes, it is our duty to help on the cause of truth by giving welcome to such men as these. I might have sent this message to the church at large,

were it not that Diotrefes, ever eager to take a leading part among them, refuses to acknowledge us. If I should pay you a visit, be sure I will tax him with his ill conduct. He maligns us with his foolish gossip; is not that enough for him, without refusing to acknowledge our brethren, and putting restraint on those who would, by expelling them from the church? Beloved, choose the right pattern, not the wrong, to imitate. He who does right is a child of God; the wrong-doer has caught no glimpse of him. Demetrius is one whom all speak well of, and the truth itself is his warrant; we, too, commend him, and thou knowest that our commendation is true. I have much to tell thee, but I have no mind to convey the message with paper and ink; I hope to see thee before long, and we will converse by word of mouth. Peace be with thee. Thy friends here greet thee. Give our friends, each of them by name, our greeting.

¹ See p. 257, note 1. ² 'Of his name'; the Greek has, 'of the Name', as in Ac. 5. 41, where the name of Jesus Christ is clearly meant.

THE UNIVERSAL EPISTLE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE JUDE

JUDE, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who have met with loving-kindness from God the Father, those whom he has set apart for Jesus Christ, and called them; 2 Mercy and peace and love be yours, in full 3 measure. Beloved, as one who is ever ready to write to you about that salvation which is your common concern, I am compelled to send you this letter of warning; you have a battle to fight over the faith that was handed down, once for all, to the 4 saints. Godless men, long since destined thus to incur condemnation, have found their way secretly into your company, and are perverting the life of grace our God has bestowed on us into a life of wantonness; they even deny Jesus Christ, our one Lord 5 and Master. Learn one lesson, and you know all. Let me remind you, how the Saviour who had rescued his people from Egypt went on to destroy those who had 6 proved unfaithful.¹ The angels, too, who left the place assigned to them, instead of keeping their due order, he has imprisoned in eternal darkness, to await their judgement when the great day comes. So with 7 Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities round them, which fell into the same debauchery as their neighbours and pursued unnatural lust; they bear, for our warning, their sentence of eternal fire. And so it is with these 8 as it was with those others; they pollute nature, they defy authority, they insult 9 august names. (And yet, when the archangel Michael held debate with the devil, in their dispute over the body of Moses, he did not venture to accuse him insultingly; he was content to say, May the Lord rebuke thee.)²

Such men sneer at the things they cannot understand; like the brute beasts they derive knowledge only from their senses, and it serves to corrupt them. Woe betide 11 them, they have followed in the path of Cain; greed, that led Balaam astray, has been their ruin; they have taken part in the fatal rebellion of Core.³ What defilement 12 there is in their banquets, as they fare sumptuously at your side, shepherds that feed themselves without scruple! They are clouds with no water in them, driven before the winds, autumn trees that bear no fruit, given over anew to death, plucked up by the roots; they are fierce waves of 13 the sea, with shame for their crests, wandering stars, with eternal darkness and storm awaiting them.⁴ Of these, among 14 others, Enoch was speaking, Adam's descendant in the seventh degree, when he prophesied, Behold, the Lord came with his saints in their thousands, to carry out 15 his sentence on all men, and to convict the godless. Godless and sinners, with how many ungodly acts they have defied God, with how many rebellious words have they 16 blasphemed him!⁵ Such men go about whispering and complaining, and live by the rule of their own appetites; meanwhile, their mouths are ready with fine phrases, to flatter the great when it serves their ends.

But as for you, beloved, keep in mind 17 the warnings given you long since by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how 18 they told you, that mocking spirits must needs appear in the last age, who would make their own ungodly appetites into a rule of life.⁶ Such are the men who now 19 keep themselves apart; animal natures,

¹ 'The Saviour'; the name 'Jesus' is here used in the Vulgate, apparently, to designate the God who brought Israel out of Egypt. Some Greek manuscripts have 'the Lord'. ² *vv.* 8, 9: See II Pet. 2, 10-11, and notes there. The tradition of a dispute over the body of Moses seems to have been preserved also in the apocryphal book called *The Assumption of Moses*, of which a fragment survives. ³ See II Pet. 2, 15. ⁴ *vv.* 12, 13: See II Pet. 2, 13 and 17, and p. 251, note 5. ⁵ *vv.* 14, 15: These words are found in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, which is supposed by scholars to have been written in the second and first centuries before Christ. ⁶ *vv.* 17, 18: See II Pet. 3, 2-4.

- 20 without the life of the Spirit. It is for you, beloved, to make your most holy faith the foundation of your lives, and to go on praying in the power of the Holy Spirit; to maintain yourselves in the love of God, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with eternal life for your goal. To some you must give a hearing, and confute them; others you must pluck out of the fire, and rescue them; others again you can only pity, while you shun them; even the outward fringe of what the flesh has defiled must be hateful to you.¹ There is one who can keep you clear of fault, and enable you to stand in the presence of his glory, triumphant and unproved, when our Lord Jesus Christ comes;² to him, who alone is God, to him, who gives us salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, glory and majesty and power and domination are due, before time was, and now, and for all ages. Amen.

¹ 'While you shun them'; literally, 'in fear'. Some Greek manuscripts only give two classes of men here, instead of three. 'The outward fringe of what the flesh has defiled'; literally, 'the garment defiled by the flesh'. ² The words 'when our Lord Jesus Christ comes' are not in our Greek text.

THE APOCALYPSE OF THE BLESSED APOSTLE JOHN

THIS is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God has allowed him to make known to his servants, of things which must soon find their due accomplishment. And he has sent his angel to disclose the pattern of it to

his servant John, one who bore witness for God's word, and for the truth concerning Jesus Christ, as his own eyes had seen it.¹

A blessing on him who reads this, and on all who listen to these words of prophecy, and keep true to their message; the time is close at hand.

Thus John writes to the seven churches in Asia, Grace and peace be yours, from him who is, and ever was, and is still to come, and from the seven spirits that stand before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, first-born of the risen dead, who rules over all earthly kings. He has proved his love for us, by washing us clean from our sins in his own blood, and made us a royal race of priests, to serve God, his Father; glory and power be his through endless ages, Amen. Behold, he comes with clouds about him, seen by every eye, seen by those who wounded him,² and he shall bring lamentation to all the tribes of earth. So it must be, Amen. I am Alpha, I am Omega, the beginning of all things and their end, says the Lord God; he who is, and ever was, and is still to come, the Almighty.

I, John, your brother, who share your ill-usage, your royal dignity, and your endurance in Christ Jesus, was set down on the island called Patmos, for love of God's word and of the truth concerning Jesus. And there, on the Lord's day, I fell into a trance, and heard behind me a voice, loud

as the call of a trumpet, which said, Write down all thou seest in a book, and send it to the seven churches in Asia, to Ephesus, and Smyrna, and Pergamum, and Thyatira, and Sardis, and Philadelphia, and Laodicea. So I turned, to see what voice it was that was speaking to me. And as I turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of these seven golden candlesticks one who seemed like a son of man, clothed in a long garment, with a golden girdle about his breast. The hair on his head was like wool snow-white, and his eyes like flaming fire, his feet like orichalc melted in the crucible, and his voice like the sound of water in deep flood.³ In his right hand were seven stars; from his mouth came a sword sharpened at both its edges; and his face was like the sun when it shines at its full strength. At the sight of him, I fell down at his feet like a dead man; and he, laying his right hand on me, spoke thus: Do not be afraid; I am before all, I am at the end of all,⁴ and I live. I, who underwent death, am alive, as thou seest, to endless ages, and I hold the keys of death and hell. Write down thy vision of what now is, and what must befall hereafter. As for the meaning of the seven stars which thou hast seen in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks, the seven stars are the angels⁵ of the seven churches thou knowest, and the candlesticks, seven in number, are the seven churches.

2 To the angel of the church at Ephesus write thus: A message to thee from him who bears the seven stars in his right hand, and walks amidst the seven golden

¹ 'One who bore witness for God's word'; others would understand this as meaning 'the man who has now borne record of God's word', and as referring to the Apocalypse itself. But a comparison of 1. 9; 5. 9, and 20. 4 below suggests that the verb here means bearing witness to God's word in face of persecution (cf. 1 Tim. 6. 13); in which case the Apostle is identifying himself as an eye-witness of the gospel story and a confessor for the faith.

² Cf. Zach. 12. 10; Jn. 19. 37. ³ *Orichalc*, an unidentified metal of the ancient world. ⁴ Cf. Is. 44. 6; Mt. 14. 27. ⁵ This may refer to the angel guardians of the churches, or perhaps to their bishops.

2 candlesticks: I know of all thy doings, all thy toil and endurance; how little patience thou hast with wickedness, how thou hast made trial of such as usurp the name of
 3 apostle, and found them false. Yes, thou endurest, and all thou hast borne for the love of my name has not made thee despair.
 4 Yet there is one charge I make against thee; of losing the charity that was thine
 5 at first. Remember the height from which thou hast fallen, and repent, and go back to the old ways; or else I will come to visit thee, and, when I find thee still unrepentant, will remove thy candlestick from
 6 its place. Yet this is in thy favour, thou dost abhor the ways of the Nicolaitans, as
 7 I, too abhor them.¹ Listen, you that have ears, to the message the Spirit has for the churches. Who wins the victory? I will give him fruit from the tree of life, which grows in the Paradise of my God.

8 And to the angel of the church at Smyrna write thus: A message to thee from him, who is before all and at the end of all, who underwent death and now is alive: I know how sorely tried thou art, how stricken with poverty (yet, all the while, so rich); how thy name is traduced by men who claim to be Jews (though they are no true Jews; they are rather the chosen
 10 people of Satan). Do not be afraid of the suffering thou art to undergo. Before long, the devil will throw some of you into prison, to have your faith tested there, and for ten days you shall be in sore distress. Keep faith with me to the point of death,
 11 and I will crown thee with life. Listen, you that have ears, to the message the Spirit has for the churches. Who wins the victory? The second death shall have no power to hurt him.

12 And to the angel of the church at Pergamum write thus: A message to thee from him whose sword is sharpened at both its
 13 edges: I know well in what a place thou dwellest, a place where Satan sits enthroned. And yet thou art true to my name, and hast not disowned thy faith in me. Such in former times was Antipas, who bore me faithful witness, and was put to death in Satan's dwelling-place, your

city. Yet here and there I have fault to find
 14 with thee; thou hast followers there of the school of Balaam. It was Balaam who taught Balac how to lay a trap for the people of Israel, when they ate what was sacrificed to idols and fell into fornication;² and thou, too, hast followers of the
 15 Nicolaitan school. Do thou, in thy turn,³ 16 repent; or I will quickly come to visit thee, and fight against them with the sword of my mouth.³ Listen, you that have ears,
 17 to the message the Spirit has for the churches. Who wins the victory? I will feed him with the hidden manna, and give him a white stone, on which stone a new name is written, known to him only who receives it.

And to the angel of the church at Thyatira write thus: A message to thee from the Son of God, who has eyes like flaming fire, and feet like orichalc: I know of all thy
 18 doings, thy faith, thy love, thy generosity, thy endurance, how in these last days thou art more active than at first. Yet here and
 19 there I have fault to find with thee; thou allowest the woman Jezebel, who claims the gift of prophecy, to mislead my servants with her teaching, so that they fall into fornication, and eat what is offered to idols. I have given her time for repentance,
 20 but she will not mend her harlot's ways. I have a bed ready to lay her in; and
 21 those who commit adultery with her will be in sore straits, if they do not repent of their wrong-doing. And her children I
 22 will kill outright, so that all the churches may know me for one who probes the innermost heart, and will repay each of you what his deeds have earned. But I say to you, those others in Thyatira who do
 23 not follow this teaching, who have never learned the deep mysteries (as they are called) which Satan offers; I have no fresh burden to lay upon you; keep hold of what
 24 is in your grasp already, until I come. Who wins the victory? Who will do my bidding to the last? I will give him authority over the nations; to herd them like sheep with
 25 a crook of iron, breaking them in pieces like earthenware;⁴ the same authority
 26 which I myself hold from my Father. And

¹ There is a tradition that this sect was founded by Nicolas the deacon (Ac. 6. 5) but this is uncertain. They seem to have been antinomian in doctrine.

² Num. 31. 16. ³ 'In thy turn'; this may mean 'like the Christians at Ephesus' (verse 5 above), but more probably refers to the purge of religion ordered in Num. 25. 5.

⁴ vv. 26, 27: Ps. 2. 8-9.

29 the Star of morning shall be his.¹ Listen, you that have ears, to the message the Spirit has for the churches.

3 And to the church's angel at Sardis write thus: A message to thee from him who bears the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know of all thy doings, how thou dost pass for a living man, and all the while art a corpse. Rouse thyself, and rally whatever else still lives, but lives at the point of death. There are tasks my God expects of thee, and I find them unfulfilled. Remember how the gift, how the message came to thee; hold it fast, and repent. If thou faintest in thy watch, I will come upon thee like a thief; thou shalt never know the hour of my coming to thee. Yet here and there in Sardis thou canst claim souls which have kept their garments undefiled, and these shall bear me company, clothed in white; it is their due. Who wins the victory? So shall he be clothed, in white garments; his name I will never blot out of the book of life, his name I will acknowledge before my Father and his angels. Listen, you that have ears, to the message the Spirit has for the churches.

17 And to the angel of the church at Philadelphia write thus: A message to thee from him, who is all holiness and truth; who bears the key of David, so that none may shut when he opens, none open when he shuts: I know of thy doings, and see, I have set before thee an open door, there is no shutting it. I know how little thy strength is, and yet thou hast been true to my message, and hast not denied my name. Before long, I will give thee for thy own some of Satan's chosen people, the men who falsely claim to be Jews when they are none; before long, I will make them come to thee, doing reverence at thy feet, and acknowledging the love I have shewn for thee. Thou hast kept true to my lesson of endurance, and I will keep thee safe from the hour of trial which is soon to fall upon the whole world, for the testing of all who dwell on the earth. Patience, I am coming soon; hold what is in thy grasp, so that none may rob thee of thy crown. Who wins the victory? I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, never to leave it again. I will write on him the name of my God,

and the name of the city my God has built, that new Jerusalem which my God is even now sending down from heaven, and my own new name. Listen, you that have ears, to the message the Spirit has for the churches. 13

And to the angel of the church at Laodicea write thus: A message to thee from the Truth, the faithful and unerring witness, the source from which God's creation began: I know of thy doings, and find thee neither cold nor hot; cold or hot, I would thou wert one or the other. Being what thou art, lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, thou wilt make me vomit thee out of my mouth. I am rich, thou sayest, I have come into my own; nothing, now, is wanting to me. And all the while, if thou didst but know it, it is thou who art wretched, thou who art to be pitied. Thou art a beggar, blind and naked; and my counsel to thee is, to come and buy from me what thou needest; gold, proved in the fire, to make thee rich, and white garments, to clothe thee, and cover up the nakedness which dishonours thee; rub salve, too, upon thy eyes, to restore them sight. It is those I love that I correct and chasten; kindle thy generosity, and repent. See where I stand at the door, knocking; if anyone listens to my voice and opens the door, I will come in to visit him, and take my supper with him, and he shall sup with me. Who wins the victory? I will let him share my throne with me; I too have won the victory, and now I sit sharing my Father's throne. Listen, you that have ears, to the message the Spirit has for the churches. 22

4 Then a vision came to me; I saw a door in heaven, standing open. And the same voice, which I had heard speaking to me before, loud as the call of a trumpet, said to me, Come up to my side, and I will shew thee what must find, after this, its due accomplishment. And all at once I was in a trance, and saw where a throne stood in heaven, and one sat there enthroned. He who sat there bore the semblance of a jewel, jasper or sardius, and there was a rainbow about the throne, like a vision of emerald. Round it were twenty-four seats, and on these sat twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with crowns of

¹ Cf. 22, 16 below.

5 gold on their heads.¹ Lightnings came out from the throne, and mutterings, and thunders, and before it burned seven lamps, which are the seven spirits of God; 6 facing it was a whole sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst, where the throne was, round the throne itself, were four living figures, that had eyes everywhere to see before them and behind 7 them.² The first figure was that of a lion, the second that of an ox, the third had a man's look, and the fourth was that of an eagle in flight. Each of the four figures had six wings, with eyes everywhere looking outwards and inwards; day and night they cried unceasingly, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who ever was, 9 and is, and is still to come. And as often as these figures gave glory and honour and blessing to him who sat on the throne, who 10 lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fell down in worship before him who sat on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, and threw down their crowns before 11 the throne, crying out,³ Thou, our Lord God, claimest as thy due glory and honour and power; by thee all things were created; nothing ever was, nothing was ever created, but in obedience to thy will.

5 And now I saw that he who sat on the throne carried in his right hand a scroll. The inside of the page and the outside were both written on, and it was sealed 2 with seven seals. And I saw an angel of sovereign strength, who was crying in a loud voice, Who claims the right to open 3 the book, and break the seals on it? But there was no one in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, who could open the scroll 4 and have sight of it. I was all in tears, that none should be found worthy to open the 5 scroll or have sight of it; until one of the elders said to me, No need for tears; here is one who has gained the right to open the

book, by breaking its seven seals, the Lion that comes from the tribe of Juda, from the stock of David. Then I saw, in the midst, 6 where the throne was, amid the four figures and the elders, a Lamb standing upright, yet slain (as I thought) in sacrifice. He had seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, that go out to do his bidding everywhere on earth. He now 7 came, and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne, and 8 when he disclosed it,⁴ the four living figures and the twenty-four elders fell down in the Lamb's presence. Each bore a harp, and they had golden bowls full of incense, the prayers of the saints. And now it was a 9 new hymn they sang, Thou, Lord, art worthy to take up the book and break the seals that are on it. Thou wast slain in sacrifice; out of every tribe, every language, every people, every nation thou hast ransomed us with thy blood and given us to God.⁵ Thou hast made us a royal race of 10 priests, to serve God; we shall reign as kings over the earth. Then I heard, in my 11 vision, the voices of a multitude of angels, standing on every side of the throne, where the living figures and the elders were, in thousands of thousands,⁶ and crying aloud, 12 Power and Godhead, wisdom and strength, honour and glory and blessing are his by right, the Lamb that was slain.⁷ And every 13 creature in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all that is in it,⁸ I heard crying out together, Blessing and honour and glory and power, through endless ages, to him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb. Then the four living 14 figures said, Amen; and the twenty-four elders fell prostrate, worshipping him who lives for ever and ever.⁹

6 Then, in my vision, the Lamb broke open one of the seven seals, and with that I heard one of the four living figures

¹ The word 'elders' here may also be translated 'presbyters'. ² Cf. Ez. 1. 5-11. These figures were identified by some of the earliest Christian writers as representing the four Evangelists. ³ *vv.* 5-10: All the verbs in these sentences, except one, are in past tenses, according to our version. The Greek, and some manuscripts of the Latin, give the present tense in verses 5-8, the future in verses 9 and 10. ⁴ 'Disclosed'; it is not clear in what sense. The Greek manuscripts have 'took it up'. ⁵ *vv.* 9, 10: Some of the Greek manuscripts have 'them' and 'they' instead of 'us' and 'we'. ⁶ The Greek has, 'in ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands'. ⁷ 'Godhead'; the Greek here has 'riches', and it seems likely that the Latin version arose from a faulty reading. ⁸ 'And on the sea, and all that is in it'; this is perhaps the best account to give of the Latin text here, but it is curious that 'on' and 'in' should be rendered by the same preposition in Latin. The Greek text seems to be 'every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all that is in them'; it is hard to see that the last six words add anything to the sense. ⁹ The last seven words of this verse are of doubtful authority in the Greek, and are missing in some Latin manuscripts.

say, in a voice like thunder, Come and
 2 look.¹ So I looked, and saw there a white
 horse, whose rider carried a bow; a crown
 was given him, and he rode out victorious,
 3 and to win victory. And when he broke the
 second seal, I heard the second figure say,
 4 Come and look; and a second horse came
 out, fiery-red, whose rider was empowered
 to take away all peace from the world, bid-
 ding men slay one another; and a great
 5 sword was given to him. And when he
 broke the third seal, I heard the third
 figure say, Come and look; so I looked, and
 saw there a black horse, whose rider carried
 6 in his hand a pair of scales; I thought,
 too, I heard a voice that came from where
 the living figures were. A silver piece, it
 said, for a quart of wheat, a silver piece for
 three quarts of barley; but do the wine and
 7 the oil no hurt.² And when he broke the
 fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth
 8 living figure say, Come and look. So I
 looked, and saw there a cream-white horse;
 its rider was called Death, and Hell went
 at his bridle-rein; he was allowed to have
 his way with all the four quarters of the
 world, killing men by the sword, by
 famine, by plague, and through wild beasts
 9 that roam the earth. And when he broke
 the fifth seal, I saw there, beneath the altar,
 the souls of all who had been slain for love
 of God's word and of the truth they held,
 10 crying out with a loud voice, Sovereign
 Lord, the holy, the true, how long now
 before thou wilt sit in judgement, and
 exact vengeance for our blood from all
 11 those who dwell on earth? Whereupon a
 white robe was given to each of them, and
 they were bidden to take their rest a little
 while longer, until their number had been
 made up by those others, their brethren
 and fellow servants, who were to die as
 12 they had died. Then, in my vision, he
 broke the sixth seal; and with that there
 was a great earthquake, and the sun grew
 dark as sackcloth, and the whole moon
 13 blood-red; the stars of heaven fell to earth,
 like unripe fruit shaken from a fig-tree,
 when a high wind rocks it; the sky folded
 up like a scroll, and disappeared; no moun-
 tain, no island, but was removed from its

place. The kings of the world with their
 15 noblemen and their captains, men of
 wealth and of strength, all alike, slaves and
 free men, took shelter in caves and rock-
 fastnesses among the hills. Fall on us, they
 16 said to the hills and the rocks, and hide us
 from the presence of him who sits on the
 throne, and from the vengeance of the
 Lamb. Which of us can stand his ground,
 17 now that the great day, the day of their
 vengeance, has come?³

7 And now I saw four angels, standing
 at the world's four corners, and hold-
 ing back the four winds of the world, so
 that no wind should blow on land or sea,
 or upon any of the trees. And I saw
 2 a second angel coming up from the east,
 with the seal of the living God. And he
 cried out with a loud voice to the four
 angels who were empowered to lay waste
 land and sea; Do not lay waste land or sea
 3 or wood, until we have put a seal on the
 foreheads of those who serve our God.
 Then I heard the count of those who were
 4 sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand
 of them, taken from every tribe of the sons
 of Israel. Twelve thousand were sealed
 5 from the tribe of Juda, twelve thousand
 from the tribe of Ruben, twelve thousand
 from the tribe of Gad; twelve thousand
 6 from the tribe of Nephthali, twelve
 thousand from the tribe of Aser, twelve
 thousand from the tribe of Manasses;
 7 twelve thousand from the tribe of Simeon,
 twelve thousand from the tribe of Levi,
 twelve thousand from the tribe of Issachar;
 8 twelve thousand from the tribe of Zabulon,
 twelve thousand from the tribe of Joseph,
 twelve thousand from the tribe of Ben-
 jamin.⁴ And then I saw a great multitude,
 9 past all counting, taken from all nations
 and tribes and peoples and languages.
 These stood before the throne in the
 Lamb's presence, clothed in white robes,
 10 with palm-branches in their hands, and
 cried with a loud voice, To our God, who
 sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, all
 saving power belongs. And all the angels
 11 that were standing round the throne,
 round the elders and the living figures, fell

¹ 'Come and look'; most of the Greek manuscripts, here and in the parallel passages lower down, have simply, 'Come'. ² These are famine prices, at which a labourer would have to spend the whole of his day's wages to provide bread for himself alone. ³ 'Their vengeance'; the Greek manuscripts have 'his vengeance'. ⁴ *et. 4-8*: The list makes no mention of Dan; St Irenaeus and other authors think that this was because Antichrist was expected to come from that tribe.

prostrate before the throne and paid God
 12 worship; Amen, they cried, blessing and
 glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and
 honour and power and strength belong to
 13 our God through endless ages, Amen. And
 now one of the elders turned to me, and
 asked, Who are they, and whence do they
 14 come, these who are robed in white? My
 Lord, said I, thou canst tell me. These, he
 said, have come here out of the great afflic-
 tion; they have washed their robes white
 15 in the blood of the Lamb. And now they
 stand before God's throne, serving him
 day and night in his temple; the presence
 of him who sits on the throne shall over-
 16 shadow them. They will not be hungry or
 thirsty any more; no sun, no noonday heat,
 17 shall fall across their path. The Lamb, who
 dwells where the throne is, will be their
 shepherd, leading them out to the springs
 whose water is life; and God will wipe
 away every tear from their eyes.

8 Then he broke open the seventh seal;
 and, for about half an hour, there was
 silence in heaven.

2 And now I saw seven trumpets given to
 the seven angels who stand in God's pre-
 3 sence. There was another angel that came
 and took his stand at the altar, with a censer
 of gold; and incense was given him in
 plenty, so that he could make an offering
 on the golden altar before the throne, out
 4 of the prayers said by all the saints.¹ So,
 from the angel's hand, the smoke of the
 incense went up in God's presence, kindled
 5 by the saints' prayer.² Then the angel took
 his censer, filled it up with fire-brands from
 the altar, and threw it down on to the
 earth; thunder followed, and mutterings,
 6 and lightning, and a great earthquake. And
 now the seven angels with the seven trumpets
 7 made ready to sound them. When the
 first sounded, there was a storm of hail and
 fire, mingled with blood, that fell on the
 earth, burning up a third part of earth,
 burning up a third of the trees, burning up
 8 all the green grass on it. And when the
 second angel sounded, it was as if a great
 mountain, all in flames, fell into the sea,
 turning a third part of the sea into blood,
 9 and killing a third of all the creatures that

live in the sea, and wrecking a third of the
 ships. And when the third angel sounded,
 10 a great star fell from heaven, burning like
 a torch, fell upon a third part of the rivers,
 and on the springs of water. The name of
 11 this star is Wormwood; and it changed a
 third of the water into wormwood, till
 many died of drinking the water, so bitter
 had it become. And when the fourth angel
 12 sounded, a third of the sun and a third of
 the moon and a third of the stars were
 smitten with darkness, so that the day must
 go without light for a third of its length,
 and the night too. And I heard, in my
 13 vision, words spoken by an eagle that flew
 across the middle part of heaven, crying
 aloud, Woe, woe, woe to all that dwell on
 earth, when those other calls are sounded
 by the three angels whose trumpets have
 yet to sound.

9 And when the fifth angel sounded,
 I saw where a star had fallen from
 heaven to earth. This star was entrusted
 with the key of that shaft which leads to the
 abyss. So it opened the shaft which leads
 2 to the abyss, and smoke rose from the shaft
 as smoke rises from a great furnace, till the
 smoke rising from the shaft darkened both
 3 the sun and the air. And out of the smoke
 a swarm of locusts spread over the world,
 endowed with such power for mischief as
 scorpions have on earth; they were not to
 4 injure the grass on the land, the green
 things that grew there, or the trees; they
 were to attack men, such men as did not
 bear God's mark on their foreheads. These
 5 they had no power to kill, only to inflict
 pain on them during a space of five
 months; such pain as a man feels when he
 has been stung by a scorpion. (When those
 6 days come, men will be looking for the
 means of death, and there will be no find-
 ing it; longing to die, and death will always
 7 give them the slip.) The semblance of
 these locusts was that of horses caparisoned
 for war; on their heads they wore
 a kind of circlet that shone like gold, and
 their faces were like human faces; they
 8 had hair like women's hair, and teeth like
 lions' teeth. They wore breastplates that
 9 might have been of iron, and the noise of

¹ 'Make an offering... out of the prayers'; in the represented as live coals in the angel's thurible. seems to mean 'upon'.

Greek, 'put it upon the prayers', which are thus

² 'Kindled by', literally 'from'; the Greek phrase

their wings was like the noise of chariots, drawn at full speed by many horses into
 10 battle. It was their tails and the stings in their tails that made them like scorpions, and with these they were empowered to do men hurt for a space of five months. And they fought under a king; their king was the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, in Greek Apollyon, that is, in Latin, the Exterminator.¹ Of the three woes that were pronounced, one is now past; the two others are still to come.

13 And when the sixth angel sounded, I heard a voice that came from the four corners of the golden altar which stands in the presence of God. It said to the sixth angel, as he stood there with his trumpet, Release the four angels who are imprisoned by the
 14 great river, the river Euphrates. So these were released, four angels who were waiting for the year, the month, the day, the hour, when they were to destroy a third
 16 part of mankind. And the muster of the armies that followed them on horseback (for I heard their muster called) was twenty
 17 thousand armies of ten thousand. This is what I saw in my vision of the horses and of their riders; the riders had breastplates of fiery red, and blue, and brimstone yellow, and the horses' heads seemed like the heads of lions, with fire and smoke and brimstone coming out of their mouths.
 18 This fire, this smoke, this brimstone that came out of their mouths were three plagues, from which a third part of mankind perished. The power these horses have to do mischief lies in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents, with serpents' heads, and they use them to do hurt. The rest of mankind, that did not perish by these plagues, would not turn away from the things their own hands had fashioned; still worshipped evil spirits, false gods of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood, that can neither see, nor
 21 hear, nor move. Nor would they repent of the murders, the sorceries, the fornications, and the thefts which they committed.

10 And now I saw a second angel of sovereign strength coming down from heaven, with a cloud for his vesture,

and a rainbow about his head; with a face bright as the sun, and legs like pillars of fire. He carried in his hand an open book.
 2 Setting his right foot on the sea, and his left on the dry land, he cried with a loud
 3 voice, like the roaring of a lion; and as he cried, the seven thunders of heaven made their voices heard. And I, when the seven
 4 thunders had finished their utterance, was making as if to write it down, when I heard a voice say from heaven, Do not write down the message of the seven thunders, keep it sealed. Then that angel, whom I
 5 had already seen with his feet on the sea and on the dry land, lifted up his right hand towards heaven, and swore an oath
 6 by him who lives through endless ages, who made heaven and all that is in heaven, earth and all that is on earth, the sea and all that is in the sea. He swore that there should be no more waiting;² when the
 7 time came for the seventh angel to make himself heard, as he stood ready to sound his trumpet, God's secret design, made known by his servants the prophets, would be accomplished. Then once more I heard
 8 the voice speaking to me from heaven, thus: Go and take the open book from the hand of that angel, whose feet are on the sea and on the dry land. So I went to the
 9 angel, bidding him give me the book. Take it, he said, and eat it; it will turn thy belly sour, though in thy mouth it be as sweet as honey. So I took the book from the angel's
 10 hand and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but my belly turned sour once I had eaten it. Then he said to me, Thou
 11 art to make a fresh prophecy, which concerns many peoples, many races, many languages, and many kings.

11 Then I was given a reed, shaped like a wand, and word came to me, Up, and measure God's temple, and the altar, and reckon up those who worship in it. But leave out of thy reckoning the court
 2 which is outside the temple; do not measure that, because it has been made over to the Gentiles, who will tread the holy city under foot for the space of forty-two
 3 months. Meanwhile I will give the power of prophecy to my two witnesses; for twelve hundred and sixty days they shall

¹ The Latin equivalent is not given here by the Greek manuscripts.

² 'No more waiting'; literally, 'no more time', in which sense many commentators have understood the passage.

4 prophesy, dressed in sackcloth;¹ these are the two olive-trees, the two candlesticks thou knowest of, that stand before him who
5 is Lord of the earth.² Does anyone try to hurt them? Fire will come out from their mouths and devour such enemies of theirs; that will be the end of all who try to do
6 them hurt. These two have it in their power to shut the doors of heaven, and let no rain fall during the days of their ministry; they can turn the waters into blood, and smite the earth with any other plague,
7 whenever they will.³ Then, when they have borne me witness to the full, the beast which comes up out of the abyss will make war on them, and defeat and kill them.
8 Their bodies will lie in the open street, in that great city which is called Sodom or Egypt in the language of prophecy; there,
9 too, their Lord was crucified. For three days and a half, men of every tribe and people and language and race will gaze at their bodies, those bodies to which they
10 refuse burial; and all who dwell on earth will triumph over them, and take their ease, and send presents to one another; such a torment were these two prophets to
11 all that dwell on the earth. Then, after three and a half days, by God's gift the breath of life entered into them, and they rose to their feet, while great dread fell on
12 all who watched them.⁴ Then they heard a loud voice from heaven, Come up to my side; and, while their enemies watched them, they went up, amid the clouds, to
13 heaven. At that hour there was a great earthquake, which overthrew a tenth of the city; the count of those who were killed by the earthquake was seven thousand, and the rest were filled with dread, and acknowledged the glory of God in heaven. So the second of the three woes that were pronounced is past, and the third will come speedily.

15 Then the seventh angel sounded, and with that, a great cry was raised in heaven, The dominion of the world has passed to the Lord of us all, and to Christ his anointed; he shall reign for ever and ever,
16 Amen. And the twenty-four elders who sit enthroned in God's presence fell pro-

trate, worshipping God and crying out, Lord God Almighty, who art, and ever wast, and art still to come, we give thee thanks for assuming that high sovereignty which belongs to thee, and beginning thy reign. The heathen have vented their rage
18 upon us, but now the day of thy retribution has come; the time when thou wilt judge the dead, rewarding thy servants, prophets and holy men and all who fear thy name, little or great, and destroying the corrupters of the world. After this, God's
19 heavenly temple was thrown open, and the ark of the covenant was plain to view, standing in his temple; and there were lightnings, and mutterings, and an earthquake, and a great storm of hail.

12 And now, in heaven, a great portent appeared; a woman that wore the sun for her mantle, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars about her head. She had a child in her womb,
2 and was crying out as she travailed, in great pain of her delivery. Then a second portent
3 appeared in heaven; a great dragon was there, fiery-red, with seven heads and ten horns, and on each of the seven heads a royal diadem; his tail dragged down a third
4 part of the stars in heaven, and flung them to earth. And he stood fronting the woman who was in childbirth, ready to swallow up
5 the child as soon as she bore it. She bore a son, the son who is to herd the nations like sheep with a crook of iron; and this child of hers was caught up to God, right
6 up to his throne, while the mother fled into the wilderness, where God had prepared a place of refuge for her, and there, for twelve hundred and sixty days, she is to be kept safe.

Fierce war broke out in heaven, where
7 Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought
8 on their part, but could not win the day, or stand their ground in heaven any longer;
9 the great dragon, serpent of the primal age, was flung down to earth; he whom we call the devil, or Satan, the whole world's seducer, flung down to earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a voice crying
10

¹ *ov.* 2, 3: The forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days, represent three and a half years. These, with the three and a half days of verse 11, recall the 'time, times, and half a time' of Dan. 12. 7 (cf. 12. 14 below). ² Cf. Zach. 4. 3 and following. ³ Cf. Jas. 5. 17; Ex. 7. 20. ⁴ The language of prophecy is here exchanged for that of narrative, the Apostle being so absorbed by his vision that he feels plunged, as it were, into the events he is describing.

aloud in heaven, The time has come; now we are saved and made strong, our God reigns, and power belongs to Christ, his anointed; the accuser of our brethren is overthrown. Day and night he stood accusing them in God's presence; but because of the Lamb's blood and because of the truth to which they bore witness, they triumphed over him, holding their lives cheap till death overtook them. Rejoice over it, heaven, and all you that dwell in heaven; but woe to you, earth and sea, now that the devil has come down upon you, full of malice, because he knows how brief is the time given him. So the dragon, finding himself cast down to earth, went in pursuit of the woman, the boy's mother; but the woman was given two wings, such as the great eagle has, to speed her flight into the wilderness, to her place of refuge, where for a year, and two years, and half a year she will be kept hidden from the serpent's view.¹ Thereupon the serpent sent a flood of water out of his mouth in pursuit of the woman, to carry her away on its tide; but earth came to the woman's rescue. The earth gaped wide, and swallowed up this flood which the dragon had sent out of his mouth. So, in his spite against the woman, the dragon went elsewhere to make war on the rest of her children, the men who keep God's commandments, and hold fast to the truth concerning Jesus. And he stood there waiting on the sea beach.²

13 And out of the sea, in my vision, a beast came up to land, with ten horns and seven heads, and on each of its ten horns a royal diadem; and the names it bore on its heads were names of blasphemy. This beast which I saw was like a leopard, but it had bear's feet and a lion's mouth. To it the dragon gave the strength that was his, and great dominion. One of its heads, it seemed, had been mortally wounded, but this deadly wound had been healed. And now the whole world went after the beast in admiration, falling down

and praising the dragon for giving the beast all this dominion; praising the beast too. Who is a match for the beast? they asked; Who is fit to make war upon him? And he was given power of speech, to boast and to blaspheme with, and freedom to work his will for a space of forty-two months. So he began to utter blasphemy against God, blasphemy against his name, against his dwelling-place and all those who dwell in heaven. He was allowed, too, to levy war on the saints, and to triumph over them. The dominion given to him extended over all tribes and peoples and languages and races; all the dwellers on earth fell down in adoration of him, except those whose names the Lamb has written down in his book of life, the Lamb slain in sacrifice ever since the world was made. Listen to this, you that have ears to hear with. The captor will go into captivity; he who slays with the sword must himself be slain with the sword. Such good ground have the saints for their endurance, and for their faithfulness.³

Then, from the land itself, I saw another beast come up; it had two horns like a lamb's horns, but it roared like a dragon. And it stood in the presence of the former beast, to carry out all that it was empowered to do, bidding the world and all its inhabitants worship the former beast, that beast whose deadly wound was healed. Such wonders could it accomplish, that it brought down fire, before men's eyes, from heaven to earth; and by these wonders, which it was enabled to do in its master's presence, it deluded the inhabitants of the world, bidding those who dwell in it set up an image to that beast which was smitten with the sword, and lived.⁴ Further, it was able to put life into that beast's image, so that even the beast's image uttered speech; and if anyone refused to worship the image of the beast, it had him put to death. All alike, little and great, rich and poor, free men and slaves, must receive a mark from him on their right hands, or on their foreheads, and none might buy or sell, unless

¹ Literally, 'a time, times, and half a time' (but cf. verse 6 above), the mystical reckoning of Daniel's vision (7. 25).

² Some manuscripts read 'I stood' for 'he stood'.
³ The reading here is uncertain, both in the Greek and in the Latin. It is probable that the first clause means, 'He who is marked out for captivity, must go into captivity', and possible that the following clause means, 'and he who is marked out for death, must go to his death'; cf. Jer. 15. 2. In that case, the sense is that Christians must submit to persecution without resistance; and the last part of the sentence should be rendered, 'Such are the endurance and the faithfulness which belong to the saints'.
⁴ *vv.* 8-14; The Greek here (except in verse 11) gives the verbs in the present or future, not in the past tense.

he carried this mark, which was the beast's name, or the number that stands for his name. Here is room for discernment; let the reader, if he has the skill, cast up the sum of the figures in the beast's name, after our human fashion, and the number will be six hundred and sixty-six.¹

14 Then I looked, and saw where the Lamb stood on mount Sion, amidst a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand, with his name, and his Father's name, written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven, louder than water in full flood, or heavy thunder. This sound which I heard seemed to come from harpers, playing on their harps, as they sang a new song, there before the throne, and the living figures, and the elders. It was a song none else might learn to sing but the hundred and forty-four thousand that were ransomed from the earth. These have kept their virginity undefiled by the touch of woman; these are the Lamb's attendants, wherever he goes; these have been ransomed for God and the Lamb as the first-fruits of mankind. Falsehood was not found on their lips; they stand there untainted before the throne of God.

I saw, too, another angel flying in mid-heaven, carrying with him a final gospel to preach to all those who dwell on the earth, to every race and tribe and language and people.² Fear the Lord, he cried aloud, and give him the praise; the hour of his judgement has come. Fall down before him who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the springs of water. A second angel followed, who cried out, Babylon, great Babylon has fallen; she who made all the nations drunk with the maddening wine of her fornication. And these were followed by a third angel, who cried aloud, Whoever worships the beast and his image, or wears the beast's mark on forehead or hand, he too shall drink; but the wine he shall drink is God's anger, untempered wine poured out in the cup of his vengeance. Fire and brimstone shall be his

torment, in the presence of the holy angels, in the presence of the Lamb. The smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; day and night no rest is theirs, who worshipped the beast and his image, who bore the mark of his name. This is the test which the saints endure, keeping true to God's commandment, and the faith of Jesus. I heard a voice, too, from heaven, Write thus: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Yes, for ever henceforward, the Spirit says; they are to have rest from their labours; but the deeds they did in life go with them now.³

Then, in my vision, a white cloud appeared; and on this cloud sat one who seemed like a son of man, with a crown of gold on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And now, from the temple, came another angel, crying out to him who sat on the cloud, Put in thy sickle, and reap; the crop of earth is dry, and the time has come to reap it. So he who sat on the cloud put in his sickle, and earth's harvest was reaped. Then another angel came from the heavenly temple; he too had a sharp sickle. And from the altar came another angel, the same that had power over the fire on it,⁴ and cried aloud to the angel with the sharp sickle, Put in thy sharp sickle, and gather the grapes from earth's vineyard; its clusters are ripe. So the angel put in his sickle over the earth, and gathered in earth's vintage, which he threw into the great wine-press of God's anger; and when the wine-press was trodden out, away from the city, blood came from the wine-press, and reached as high as a horse's bridle, sixteen hundred furlongs off.

15 This was another great portent I saw in heaven, and a strange one; seven angels, the bearers of seven plagues, those last plagues by which the vengeance of God is finally achieved. I saw, too, what might have been a sea of glass, tinged with fire. And by this sea of glass the victors were standing, safe now from the beast, and his image, and the mark of his name,

¹ Both in Greek and in Hebrew, the letters of the alphabet are used for numerical figures. In Greek, the letters of *Latinus*, in Hebrew, the letters of *Nero Caesar*, would add up to the required sum, but these identifications are uncertain. ² 'Final'; literally 'eternal'. It is not clear why the 'gospel' preached by the angel is so described; but the context suggests that it is the last call to repentance which will be offered to men this side of eternity. ³ Many commentators prefer to take 'henceforward' as part of the previous sentence. ⁴ 'Had power over the fire on it'; apparently a reference to 8. 5 above.

Some would render 'had power over fire' in general; but it is difficult to see what relevance this has in the present context.

3 with harps of God's fashioning. Theirs is the song of God's servant Moses, theirs is the song of the Lamb. Lord God almighty, they cry, the deeds thou doest are great and wonderful; King of all the ages, thy ways are just and true.¹ Lord, who alone art holy, who shall refuse reverence and glory to thy name? All the nations shall come and fall down before thee, now that thy just retribution has been made known. 4 Then, as I looked, the tabernacle that bears record in heaven opened its inner shrine, and the seven angels who bear the seven plagues came out of the shrine, clad in pure white linen, with golden girdles at their breasts. And one of the four living figures gave to these seven angels seven golden cups, filled with the vengeance of God, who lives for ever and ever. 5 Meanwhile, God's majesty and power filled the whole shrine with smoke, so that none could enter the shrine until the plagues borne by the seven angels had run their course.

16 Then I heard a loud voice coming from the shrine, that said to the seven angels, Go and pour out the seven cups of God's vengeance on the earth. The first angel went on his errand, pouring out his cup on to the earth; whereupon an ulcer broke out, malignant and troublesome, upon all the men who bore the beast's mark, and worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his cup over the sea, where it turned into blood, as if murder had been done there till every living creature in the sea was dead. And the third poured out his cup over the rivers and the springs of water, where it turned into blood. Then I heard the angel of the waters cry out, Holy thou art, O Lord, and wast ever holy, and this is a just award of thine, blood to drink for those who have shed the blood of thy saints and prophets; it is their due. I heard another, too, saying from the altar, Yes, the judgements thou dost pronounce, Lord God almighty, are true and just.² The fourth angel poured

out his cup over the sun, which thereupon was given power to afflict mankind with burning heat; and in the great heat which burned them, men blasphemed the name of God, who disposes of these plagues, instead of repenting, and giving praise to him. And the fifth angel poured out his cup where the beast's throne was; and with that, all the beast's kingdom was turned into darkness, in which men sat biting their tongues for pain, finding cause to blaspheme the God of heaven in their pains and their ulcers, instead of finding cause for repentance in their ill deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his cup over the great river Euphrates, whose waters dried up, to make a passage for the kings that march from the East.

Then, in my vision, three unclean spirits appeared in the form of frogs; one from the mouth of the dragon, one from the mouth of the beast, and one from the mouth of his false prophet.³ These are devilish spirits that can do miracles, and find access to all the kings of the world, bidding them meet in battle when the great day comes, the day of almighty God. (Behold, I come as the thief comes; blessed is he that keeps watch, and is ready clad, so that he has no need to go naked, and be ashamed in men's sight.)⁴ The place where they are bidden to meet is the place called in Hebrew, Armagedon.⁵

And the seventh angel poured out his cup over the air. Then a loud voice came out of the shrine, a voice which cried from the throne, It is over; and there were lightnings and mutterings and thunder, and a violent earthquake; since man came into the world there was never an earthquake so great and so violent as this. The great city broke in three pieces, while the cities of the heathen came down in ruins. And God did not forget to minister a draught of his wine, his avenging anger, to Babylon, the great city.⁶ Gone were all the islands, and the mountains were no more to be seen. And hailstones as big as a talent-weight fell upon mankind out of heaven, till men

¹ The song of Moses' refers presumably to Ex. 15. It is not clear whether 'the song of the Lamb' is a song inspired by the Lamb, or one which had the Lamb for its theme; in the latter case, it refers to Ps. 12 above. For 'King of all the ages' some of the best Greek manuscripts have 'King of the nations'.

² 'I heard another, too, saying from the altar'; in the Greek, 'I heard, too, the altar saying'. ³ 'His false prophet'; that is, apparently, the second Beast (13. 11).

⁴ This verse is a parenthesis, which insists upon the suddenness of God's visitations; cf. Mt. 24. 18; 11 Cor. 5. 3.

⁵ The Latin here has 'he will gather them'; in the Greek, 'they gathered them'. ⁶ 'The great city' may be Jerusalem (11. 8); but some commentators understand a double reference in this verse to Babylon, that is, Rome.

cursed God for his plague of hail, so great it was, and so grievous.

17 And now one of the angels that bear the seven cups came and spoke to me. Come with me, he said, and I will shew thee how judgement is pronounced on the great harlot, that sits by the meeting-place of many rivers. The kings of the world have committed fornication with her; all the dwellers on earth have been drunk with the wine of her dalliance. Then, in a trance, he carried me off into the wilderness, where I saw a woman riding on a scarlet beast, scrawled over with names of blasphemy; it had seven heads, and ten horns. The woman went clad in purple and scarlet, all hung about with gold and jewels and pearls, and held a golden cup in her hand, full to the brim with those abominations of hers, with the lewdness of her harlot's ways. There was a title written over her forehead, The mystic Babylon, great mother-city of all harlots, and all that is abominable on earth. I saw this woman drunk with the blood of saints, the blood of those who bore witness to Jesus; and I was filled with great wonder at the sight. But the angel said to me, Why dost thou find cause for wonder? I will disclose to thee the mystery of this woman, and of the beast she rides, with its seven heads and ten horns. The beast thou sawest is that which lived once, and now is dead; soon it must rise from the abyss, and find its way to utter destruction. The sight of this beast which lived once, and now is dead, will strike awe into every dweller on earth, except those whose names have been written, before the world was, in the book of life. Here is need for a discerning mind. These seven heads are seven hills; upon these the woman sits enthroned. They are also seven kings; of these, five have fallen already, one is reigning now; the last has not come yet, but when he does, his reign will be a short one. And the beast which lived once and now is dead must be reckoned as the eighth, yet it is one of the seven; now it is

to find its way to utter destruction.¹ And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, who have not yet received their royal title, but are to enjoy such power as kings have, for one hour, in succession to the beast.² All of them have a single policy; they surrender to the beast the power and the dominion which is theirs. And they will fight against the Lamb, but the Lamb will have the mastery of them; he is Lord of all lords, King of all kings; whoever is called, is chosen, is faithful, will take his part. Then he told me, These waters in thy vision, at whose meeting the harlot sits enthroned, are all her peoples, nations, and languages. And the ten horns, which the beast had in thy vision, will become the harlot's enemies; they will lay her waste, and strip her quite bare, eat her flesh away, and then burn down what is left of her.³ God has put it into their hearts to carry out his design, and to give their dominion over to the beast, so that at last all the words of God may be fulfilled. And as for the woman of thy vision, she is that great city that bears rule over the rulers of the earth.

18 After this I saw another angel, entrusted with great power, come down from heaven; earth shone with the glory of his presence. And he cried aloud, Babylon, great Babylon is fallen; she has become the abode of devils, the stronghold of all unclean spirits, the eyrie of all birds that are unclean and hateful to man. The whole world has drunk the maddening wine of her fornication; the kings of the earth have lived in dalliance with her, and its merchants have grown rich through her reckless pleasures. And now I heard another voice from heaven say, Come out of her, my people, that you may not be involved in her guilt, nor share the plagues that fall upon her. Her guilt mounts up to heaven; and the Lord has kept her sins in remembrance. Deal with her as she has dealt with you; repay her twice over for all she has done amiss; brew double measure for

¹ *vv. 8, 11:* It has been conjectured that the seven kings are the emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, and Titus (Galba, Otho, and Vitellius being regarded as usurpers). There seems to have been a popular legend that Nero was not really dead, or perhaps would come to life again; he would thus be one of the seven and yet, as reincarnate, count as an eighth. If this interpretation is right, the present passage seems to allude to the short reign of Titus as the seventh king, and to identify his successor, Domitian, as a reincarnation of Nero, whose persecuting policy he revived. ² *In succession to the beast;* the Greek has 'together with the beast'. ³ *The ten horns, which the beast had in thy vision;* the Greek has 'the ten horns in thy vision, together with the beast'.

her in the cup she has brewed for others; ¹
⁷ requite her with anguish and sorrow for all her pride and luxury. She tells herself, Here I sit enthroned like a queen; widowhood is not for me, I shall never know what
⁸ it is to mourn; and all her plagues shall come upon her in one day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned to the ground; such power has the
⁹ God who is her judge. How they will weep over her and beat their breasts, those kings of the earth who once lived in dalliance and took their pleasures with her, as they see
¹⁰ the smoke rise where she burns! Standing at a distance, for fear of sharing her punishment, they will cry out, Alas, Babylon the great, alas, Babylon the strong, in one brief
¹¹ hour judgement has come upon thee! And all the merchants of the world will weep and mourn over her; who will buy their
¹² merchandise now? Their cargoes of gold and silver, of precious stone and pearl, of lawn and purple, of silk and scarlet; all the
¹³ stone and brass and iron and marble; cinnamon and balm, perfume and myrrh and incense, wine and oil and wheat and fine flour, cattle and sheep and horses and chariots, and men's bodies, and men's
¹⁴ souls.¹ It is gone from thee, the harvest thy soul longed for; all that gaiety and glory is lost to thee, and shall never be seen any
¹⁵ more. The merchants that grew rich from such traffic will stand at a distance from her, for fear of sharing her punishment,
¹⁶ weeping and mourning; Alas, they will say, alas for the great city, that went clad in lawn and purple and scarlet, all hung
¹⁷ about with gold and jewels and pearls; in one brief hour all that wealth has vanished. The sea-captains, too, and all that sail between ports, the mariners and all who make their living from the sea, stood at a distance,
¹⁸ crying out, as they saw the smoke rise where she was burning, What city can compare with this great city? They poured dust on their heads, and cried aloud, weeping and mourning, Alas, alas for the great city, whose magnificence brought wealth to all that had ships at sea; in one brief hour

she is laid waste. Triumph, heaven, over ²⁰
 her fall, triumph, you saints in heaven, apostles and prophets; God has avenged you on her.

And now an angel, of sovereign strength, ²¹
 lifted up a stone like a great mill-stone and cast it into the sea, crying out, So, with one crash of ruin, will Babylon fall, the great city, and there will be no trace of her any more. Never again will men listen there ²²
 to the music of harper and of minstrel, of flute-player and trumpeter; never again will the craftsmen of all those crafts be found in thee, never again the grinding of a mill heard in thee; never again the light of lamps shining, never again the voice of bridegroom and of bride. Once the great men of the earth were thy purveyors; once thy sorceries bewitched the world. The ²⁴
 blood of prophet and saint lay at her doors; the blood of all that were ever slain on the earth.

19 After this I heard, as it seemed, the voices of countless multitudes crying out in heaven, Alleluia; salvation and glory and power belong to our God; his sentence is ever true and just, and now he has given sentence against the great harlot, who poisoned the earth with her harlot's ways; now he has called her to account for the blood of his servants. And again they ³
 cried, Alleluia, the smoke of her burning goes up everlastingly.⁴ Then the twenty- ⁴
 four elders and the four living figures fell down and worshipped God, where he sits enthroned, crying, Amen, Alleluia. And a voice came from the throne, which said, ⁵
 Praise our God, all you that are his servants, and all you that fear him, little and great alike; whereupon I heard, as it ⁶
 seemed, the noise of a great multitude, like the noise of water in flood, or the noise of deep thunder, as they cried out, Alleluia, the Lord our God, the Almighty, has claimed his kingdom; let us rejoice and ⁷
 triumph and give him the praise; the time has come for the wedding-feast of the Lamb. His bride has clothed herself in readiness for it; hers it is to wear linen of ⁸

¹ As she has dealt with you'; in the Greek, 'as she has dealt with others'. If the sentence be understood in this way, it is best to regard it as addressed to the angels in heaven, not to the martyrs.

² The word 'balm' is omitted, probably by an error of printing, in the Clementine edition of the Vulgate.

³ Between ports; literally, 'to a place', according to the Greek. Some Latin manuscripts have 'to the lake', apparently through the misreading of a single letter.

⁴ It is not certain that the words 'the smoke of her burning goes up everlastingly' are represented as part of the triumph-song.

shining white; the merits of the saints are her linen.¹

9 And now the angel said to me, Write thus: Blessed are those who are bidden to the Lamb's wedding-feast. All this is true, he said; it is God's own utterance. Thereupon I fell at his feet, to worship him. But he said, Never that; keep thy worship for God; I am only thy fellow servant, one of those brethren of thine who hold fast the truth concerning Jesus. It is the truth concerning Jesus that inspires all prophecy.²

11 Then, in my vision, heaven opened, and I saw a white horse appear. Its rider bore for his title, the Faithful, the True; he judges and goes to battle in the cause of right. His eyes were like flaming fire, and on his brow were many royal diadems; the name written there is one that only he knows. He went clad in a garment deep dyed with blood, and the name by which he is called is the Word of God; the armies of heaven followed him, mounted on white horses, and clad in linen, white and clean. 15 From his mouth came a two-edged sword, ready to smite the nations; he will herd them like sheep with a crook of iron. He treads out for them the wine-press, whose wine is the avenging anger of almighty God.³ And this title is written on his cloak, over his thigh, The King of kings, and the Lord of lords.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun's orb, who cried aloud to all the birds that hovered in mid-air, Come and gather at God's great feast, where you shall eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of the strong, the flesh of horses and their riders, the flesh of all mankind, free men and slaves, the little and the great. And then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth muster their armies, to join battle with the rider on the white horse and the army which followed him. The beast was

made prisoner, and with it the false prophet that did miracles in its presence, deluding all those who bore the beast's mark and worshipped its image; and both were thrown alive into the fiery lake that burns with brimstone. All the rest were slain by the sword of that horseman, the sword that comes from his mouth; and all the birds feasted on the carrion, and had their fill.

20 I saw, too, an angel come down from heaven, with the key of the abyss in his hand, and a great chain. He made prisoner of the dragon, serpent of the primal age, whom we call the devil, or Satan, and put him in bonds for a thousand years, thrusting him down to the abyss and locking him in there, and setting a seal over him. He was not to delude the world any more until the thousand years were over; then, for a short time, he is to be released. Then I saw thrones prepared for those to whom judgement was committed; I saw the souls of all those who went to execution for love of the truth concerning Jesus, and of God's word, and all who would not worship the beast, or its image, or bear its mark on their foreheads and their hands. These were endowed with life, and reigned as kings with Christ for a thousand years; but the rest of the dead remained lifeless while the thousand years lasted. Such is the first resurrection.⁴ Blessed and holy is his lot who has a share in this first resurrection; over such the second death has no power, they will be priests of God, priests of Christ; all those thousand years they will reign with him. Then, when the thousand years are over, Satan will be let loose from his prison, and will go out to seduce the nations that live at the four corners of the earth—that is the meaning of Gog and Magog—and muster them for battle, countless as the sand by the sea.⁵

¹ 'The merits'; literally, 'the things which justify them'.

² St Augustine thinks that St John mistook the Angel (cf. 17. 1 above) for Christ himself; but the ground on which the Angel refuses his worship seems to be that St John, too, was a prophet. Some think that the passage is a warning against the worship of Angels mentioned in Col. 2. 18.

³ Ps. 2. 9; Is. 63. 3. ⁴ While the thousand years lasted; literally, 'until the thousand years were accomplished'; but this does not imply that the reprobate dead came to life at the end of the thousand years (see p. 1, note 3).

⁵ *vv.* 2-7: This passage gave rise to the error of the Millenarians, who held (as some Jewish authors held) that Christ would reign on earth, in visible triumph, for the period of a thousand years, between the Second Coming and the Final Judgement. Catholic expositors identify the thousand years with an indefinite but prolonged period between the Resurrection and the Second Coming in Judgement (which latter event will be preceded by a brief interval when the devil will triumph through Antichrist). During this period the elect, living or dead, will worship Christ reigning in heaven, and share in the glories of his Church; they will be spiritually alive, even when they have passed through the first death, that of the body. The reprobate will, already, be spiritually as well as physically dead. *v.* 7: Gog and Magog are an allusion to the prophecy of Ezechiel (chs. 38 and 39).

8 They came up across the whole breadth of the earth, and beleaguered the encampment of the saints, and the beloved city.
 9 But God sent fire from heaven to consume them, and the devil, their seducer, was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where, like himself, the beast and the false prophet will be tormented day and night eternally.

11 And now I saw a great throne, all white, and one sitting on it, at whose glance earth and heaven vanished, and were found no more. Before this throne, in my vision, the dead must come, great and little alike; and the books were opened. Another book, too, was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged by their deeds, as the books recorded them. The sea, too, gave up the dead that lay there, and death and hell gave up the dead they imprisoned, and each man was judged according to his deeds, while death and hell were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death; everyone must be thrown into this lake of fire, unless his name was found written in the book of life.

21 Then I saw a new heaven, and a new earth. The old heaven, the old earth had vanished, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw in my vision that holy city which is the new Jerusalem, being sent down by God from heaven, all clothed in readiness, like a bride who has adorned herself to meet her husband. I heard, too, a voice which cried aloud from the throne, Here is God's tabernacle pitched among men; he will dwell with them, and they will be his own people, and he will be among them, their own God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, or mourning, or cries of distress, no more sorrow; those old things have passed away. And he who sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. (These words I was bidden write down, words most sure and true.)¹
 6 And he said to me, It is over. I am Alpha, I am Omega, the beginning of all things and their end; those who are thirsty shall

drink—it is my free gift—out of the spring whose water is life. Who wins the victory? He shall have his share in this; I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But not the cowards, not those who refuse belief, not those whose lives are abominable; not the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, not those who are false in any of their dealings. Their lot awaits them in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, and it is the second death.

And now an angel came and spoke to me, one of those seven who bear the seven cups charged with the seven last plagues. Come with me, he said, and I will shew thee that bride, whose bridegroom is the Lamb. And he carried me off in a trance to a great mountain, high up, and there shewed me the holy city Jerusalem, as it came down, sent by God, from heaven, clothed in God's glory. The light that shone over it was bright as any precious stone, as the jasper when it is most like crystal; and a great wall was raised high all round it, with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel carved on the lintels; three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south, three on the west. The city wall, too, had twelve foundation-stones; and these, too, bore names, those of the Lamb's twelve apostles. The angel who was speaking to me had a rod of gold for a rule, to measure the city, and its gates, and its wall. The city lies foursquare, the same in its length as in its breadth, and when he measured it with his rod, he counted twelve thousand furlongs. Length and breadth and height are everywhere equal.¹ And when he measured its wall, he counted a hundred and forty-four cubits, reckoned by the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The fashioning of its wall was of jasper, but the city itself was pure gold, that seemed to have the purity of glass. And the foundations of the city wall were worked in every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was a jasper, the second a sapphire, the third a chalcedony, the fourth an emerald; the fifth a sardonyx, the sixth a sardius, the

¹ 'These words I was bidden write down'; literally, 'He says to me, Write it down'. It is not clear whether this direction was given by the Voice from the throne, or by the Angel mentioned in 17. 1 (who is clearly the speaker in 19. 9, although the word 'angel' does not occur in the original).
² Are everywhere equal', not, presumably, equal to one another, which would make the city nearly 1500 miles high, whereas the next verse gives the height of the wall as 144 cubits. More probably the meaning is that the height of the city was uniform at every point, as its length and its breadth were.

seventh a chrysolite, the eighth a beryl; the ninth a topaz, the tenth a chrysolite, the eleventh a jacinth, the twelfth an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve single pearls, one pearl for each gate; and the street of the city was of pure gold, that seemed like transparent glass. I saw no temple in it; its temple is the Lord God Almighty, its temple is the Lamb. Nor had the city any need of sun or moon to shew in it; the glory of God shone there, and the Lamb gave it light. The nations will live and move in its radiance; the kings of the earth will bring it their tribute of praise and honour. All day the gates will never be shut (there will be no night there), as the nations flock into it with their honour and their praise. Nothing that is unclean, no source of corruption or deceit can ever hope to find its way in; there is no entrance but for those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22 He shewed me, too, a river, whose waters give life; it flows, clear as crystal, from the throne of God, from the throne of the Lamb. On either side of the river, mid-way along the city street, grows the tree that gives life, bearing its fruit twelvefold, one yield for each month. And the leaves of this tree bring health to all the nations.¹ No longer can there be any profanation in that city; God's throne (which is the Lamb's throne) will be there, with his servants to worship him, and to see his face, his name written on their foreheads. There will be no more night, no more need of light from lamp or sun; the Lord God will shed his light on them, and they will reign for ever and ever. Then the angel said to me, These words are sure and true. The Lord God who inspires his prophets has sent his angel to tell his servants what must soon find its due accomplishment.² Patience, I am coming soon. Blessed is he who holds fast the words of prophecy this book contains. All this I,

John, heard and saw, till, hearing and seeing it, I fell down as if to worship at the feet of the angel who revealed it to me. But he said, Never that; I am only a fellow servant of thine, and of thy brother prophets, and of all who hold fast the words which this book contains. Keep thy worship for God.³

Then the command came to me, Do not seal up the words of prophecy that are contained in this book; the time is close at hand.⁴ Meanwhile, the wrong-doer must persist in his deeds of wrong, the corrupt in his corruption, the just man in winning his justification, the holy in his life of holiness. Patience, I am coming soon; and with me comes the award I make, repaying each man according to the life he has lived.

I am Alpha, I am Omega, I am before all, I am at the end of all, the beginning of all things and their end. Blessed are those who wash their garments in the blood of the Lamb; so they will have access to the tree which gives life, and find their way through the gates into the city.⁵ No room there for prowling dogs, for sorcerers and wantons and murderers and idolaters, for anyone who loves falsehood and lives in it. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you the assurance of this in your churches; I, the root, I, the offspring of David's race, I, the bright star that brings in the day. The Spirit and my bride bid me come; let everyone who hears this read out say, Come. Come, you who are thirsty, take, you who will, the water of life; it is my free gift.

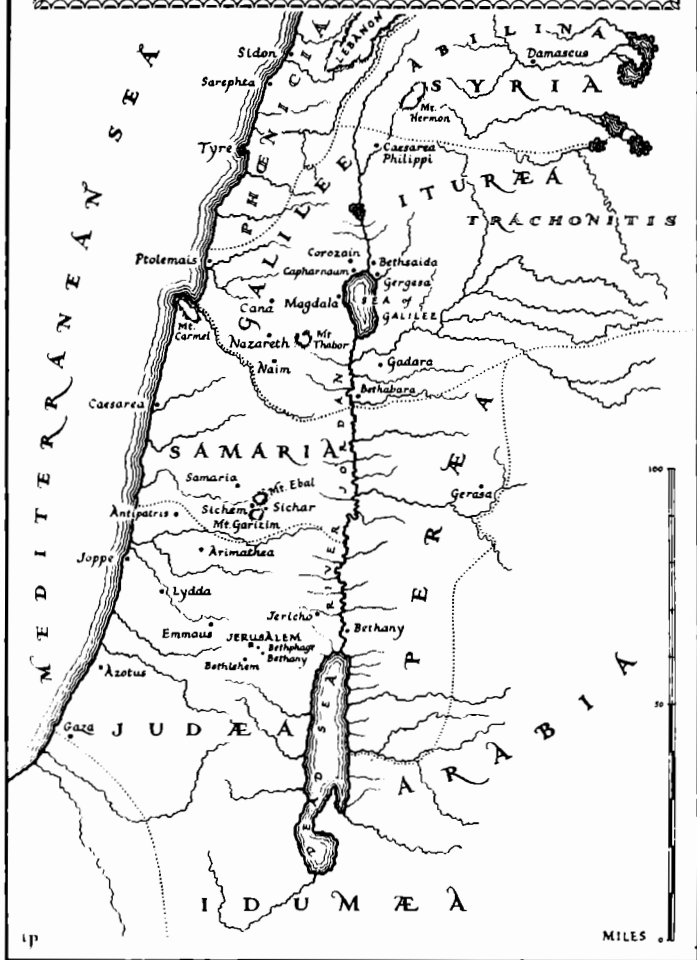
To all who hear the words of prophecy this book contains, I give this warning. If anyone adds to them, God will add to his punishment the plagues which this book threatens; and if anyone cancels a word in this book of prophecy, God will cancel his share in the book of life, in the holy city, in all that this book promises.⁶ And he who gives this warning says, Indeed I am coming soon. Be it so, then; come, Lord Jesus.⁷

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.⁸

¹ It is likely enough that the trees are represented as bearing twelve different kinds of fruit, but St John's language does not make this certain. ² The angel said to me'; literally, 'he said to me'. ³ See p. 274, note 2. ⁴ 'The command came to me'; literally, 'he said to me'. The context seems to indicate that our Lord is here the speaker, not the Angel, as in verse 6. ⁵ Some Greek manuscripts have 'those who carry out his commandments', instead of 'those who wash their garments'. The words 'in the blood of the Lamb' are not given in the Greek, or in most Latin manuscripts. ⁶ For 'the book of life', the Greek (followed by many Latin manuscripts) has 'the tree of life'; our text probably arises from a mistake in the Latin. ⁷ The words 'Be it so' represent 'Amen' in the Greek, which is attached by some commentators to the sentence which goes before it. ⁸ The best reading in the Greek here is 'with the saints', or 'with all the saints', not 'with you all'; many of the Greek manuscripts omit the word 'Amen'.

MAPS ILLUSTRATING THE
NEW TESTAMENT

PALESTINE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT





APPENDIX I

PRONUNCIATION (AS COMMONLY GIVEN) OF THE MORE
DIFFICULT NAMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Abia	Eliézer	Néphthali
Abiathar	Elmádan	Néreus
Abilina	Élymas	Nicánor
Acháicus	Emmáüs	Nicodémus
Æneas	Epænetus	Nicoláitans
Ærion	Épaphras	Onésimus
Ágabus	Epaphrodítus	Onesíphorus
Aminadab	Éphpheta	Pármenas
Ananías	Eubúlus	Pátara
Andronicus	Euráquilo	Pátrobas
Archeláüs	Eútychus	Phigéllus
Areópagus	Evódia	Philémon
Áretas	Ezechías	Phoenixe
Aristobúlus	Gábbatha	Próchorus
Ártemas	Gamáliel	Ptolemáis
Asýncritus	Genésareth	Putéoli
Attalia	Gérasenes	Rabbóni
Azótus	Hacéldama	Saláthiel
Barachias	Hermógenes	Salmóne
Beélzebub	Heródias	Silóe
Bernice	Heródion	Sópater
Bethsáida	Illyricum	Sospater
Bóöz	Jairus	Sóstheneš
Candáce	Jechonías	Stéphanas
Capharnaüm	Jóatham	Sýntyche
Cappadócia	Laodicéa	Thessaloníca
Corozáin	Lithóstrotos	Thyatíra
Cyréne	Lysánias	Trachonitid
Cyrinus	Lýsias	Tróphimus
Dalmanútha	Malaléel	Týchicus
Dámaris	Matthathías	Urías
Didymus	Milétus	Zabúlon
Diótrephes	Mityléne	Zoróbabel
Eliacim	Náim	

APPENDIX II

THE EPISTLES AND GOSPELS FOR SUNDAYS AND THE PRINCIPAL HOLY DAYS

SUNDAYS

	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Sundays of Advent		
First	Romans 13. 11-14	Luke 21. 25-33
Second	Romans 15. 4-13	Matt. 11. 2-10
Third	Phil. 4. 4-7	John 1. 19-28
Fourth	I Cor. 4. 1-5	Luke 3. 1-6
Sunday within the Octave of Christmas	Gal. 4. 1-7	Luke 2. 33-40
Sundays after Epiphany		
First	Romans 12. 1-5	Luke 2. 42-52
Second	Romans 12. 6-16	John 2. 1-11
Third	Romans 12. 16-21	Matt. 8. 1-13
Fourth	Romans 13. 8-10	Matt. 8. 23-27
Fifth	Col. 3. 12-17	Matt. 13. 24-30
Sixth	I Thess. 1. 2-10	Matt. 13. 31-35
Septuagesima	I Cor. 9. 24-10. 5	Matt. 20. 1-16
Sexagesima	II Cor. 11. 19-12. 9	Luke 8. 4-15
Quinquagesima	I Cor. 13. 1-13	Luke 18. 31-43
Sundays in Lent		
First	II Cor. 6. 1-10	Matt. 4. 1-11
Second	I Thess. 4. 1-7	Matt. 17. 1-9
Third	Eph. 5. 1-9	Luke 11. 14-28
Fourth	Gal. 4. 22-31	John 6. 1-15
Passion Sunday	Heb. 9. 11-15	John 8. 46-59
Palm Sunday		Matt. 21. 1-9
	Phil. 2. 5-11	Matt. 26. 36-27. 60
Easter Sunday	I Cor. 5. 7-8	Mark 16. 1-7
Sundays after Easter		
Low Sunday	I John 5. 4-10	John 20. 19-31
Second	I Peter 2. 21-25	John 10. 11-16
Third	I Peter 2. 11-19	John 16. 16-22
Fourth	James 1. 17-21	John 16. 5-14
Fifth	James 1. 22-27	John 16. 23-30
Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension	I Peter 4. 7-11	John 15. 26-16. 4
Pentecost	Acts 2. 1-11	John 14. 23-31

EPISTLES AND GOSPELS

	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Sundays after Pentecost		
Trinity Sunday	Romans 11. 33-36	Matt. 28. 18-20
Second	I John 3. 13-18	Luke 14. 16-24
Third	I Peter 5. 6-11	Luke 15. 1-10
Fourth	Romans 8. 18-23	Luke 5. 1-11
Fifth	I Peter 3. 8-15	Matt. 5. 20-24
Sixth	Romans 6. 3-11	Mark 8. 1-9
Seventh	Romans 6. 19-23	Matt. 7. 15-21
Eighth	Romans 8. 12-17	Luke 16. 1-9
Ninth	I Cor. 10. 6-13	Luke 19. 41-47
Tenth	I Cor. 12. 2-11	Luke 18. 9-14
Eleventh	I Cor. 15. 1-10	Mark 7. 31-37
Twelfth	II Cor. 3. 4-9	Luke 10. 23-37
Thirteenth	Gal. 3. 16-22	Luke 17. 11-19
Fourteenth	Gal. 5. 16-24	Matt. 6. 24-33
Fifteenth	Gal. 5. 25-6. 10	Luke 7. 11-16
Sixteenth	Eph. 3. 13-21	Luke 14. 1-11
Seventeenth	Eph. 4. 1-6	Matt. 22. 34-46
Eighteenth	I Cor. 1. 4-8	Matt. 9. 1-8
Nineteenth	Eph. 4. 23-28	Matt. 22. 1-14
Twentieth	Eph. 5. 15-21	John 4. 46-53
Twenty-first	Eph. 6. 10-17	Matt. 18. 23-35
Twenty-second	Phil. 1. 6-11	Matt. 22. 15-21
Twenty-third	Phil. 3. 17-4. 3	Matt. 9. 18-26
Twenty-fourth	Col. 1. 9-14	Matt. 24. 15-35

EPISTLES AND GOSPELS

HOLY DAYS

	DATE	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
St Andrew	Nov. 30	Romans 10. 10-18	Matt. 4. 18-22
Immaculate Conception	Dec. 8	Prov. 8. 22-35	Luke 1. 26-28
St Thomas	Dec. 21	Eph. 2. 19-22	John 20. 24-29
Christmas Day	Dec. 25	Titus 2. 11-15 Titus 3. 4-7 Heb. 1. 1-12	Luke 2. 1-14 Luke 2. 15-20 John 1. 1-14
St Stephen	Dec. 26	Acts 6. 8-10, 7. 54-59	Matt. 23. 34-39
St John	Dec. 27	Ecclus. 15. 1-6	John 21. 19-24
Holy Innocents	Dec. 28	Apoc. 14. 1-5	Matt. 2. 13-18
St Thomas of Canterbury	Dec. 29	Heb. 5. 1-6	John 10. 11-16
The Circumcision	Jan. 1	Titus 2. 11-15	Luke 2. 21
The Holy Name	<i>Movable</i>	Acts 4. 8-12	Luke 2. 21
Epiphany	Jan. 6	Isaias 60. 1-6	Matt. 2. 1-12
The Holy Family	<i>Movable</i>	Col. 3. 12-17	Luke 2. 42-52
The Purification	Feb. 2	Mal. 3. 1-4	Luke 2. 22-32
Ash Wednesday	<i>Movable</i>	Joel 2. 12-19	Matt. 6. 16-21
St Matthias	Feb. 24 or 25	Acts 1. 15-26	Matt. 11. 25-30
St David	Mar. 1	Ecclus. 44. 16-45. 20	Matt. 25. 14-23
St Gregory	Mar. 12	I Peter 5. 1-4, 10-11	Matt. 16. 13-19
St Patrick	Mar. 17	Ecclus. 44. 16-45. 20	Matt. 25. 14-23
St Joseph	Mar. 19	Ecclus. 45. 1-6	Matt. 1. 18-21
The Annunciation	Mar. 25	Isaias 7. 10-15	Luke 1. 26-38
Maundy Thursday	<i>Movable</i>	I Cor. 11. 20-32	John 13. 1-15
Good Friday	<i>Movable</i>	Osee 6. 1-6 Exodus 12. 1-11	John 18. 1-19. 42
Holy Saturday	<i>Movable</i>	Col. 3. 1-4	Matt. 28. 1-7
Easter Monday	<i>Movable</i>	Acts 10. 37-43	Luke 24. 13-35
Easter Tuesday	<i>Movable</i>	Acts 13. 26-33	Luke 24. 36-47
St George	Apr. 23	II Tim. 2. 8-10, 3. 10-12	John 15. 1-7
SS Philip and James	May 11	Wisdom 5. 1-5	John 14. 1-13
Finding of the Cross	May 3	Phil. 2. 5-11	John 3. 1-15
The Ascension	<i>Movable</i>	Acts 1. 1-11	Mark 16. 14-20
St Augustine	May 26	I Thess. 2. 2-9	Luke 10. 1-9
Our Lady, Queen of Heaven	May 31	Ecclus. 24. 5, 7, 9-11, 30-31	Luke 1. 26-33
Whit Monday	<i>Movable</i>	Acts 10. 34, 42-48	John 3. 16-21
Whit Tuesday	<i>Movable</i>	Acts 8. 14-17	John 10. 1-10
Corpus Christi	<i>Movable</i>	I Cor. 11. 23-29	John 6. 56-59
Sacred Heart	<i>Movable</i>	Eph. 3. 8-19	John 19. 31-37

EPISTLES AND GOSPELS

	DATE	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Nativity of John Baptist	June 24	Isaias 49. 1-3, 5-7	Luke 1. 57-68
SS Peter and Paul	June 29	Acts 12. 1-11	Matt. 16. 13-19
St James	July 25	I Cor. 4. 9-15	Matt. 20. 20-23
St Anne	July 26	Prov. 31. 10-31	Matt. 13. 44-52
St Lawrence	Aug. 10	II Cor. 9. 6-10	John 12. 24-26
The Assumption	Aug. 15	Ecclus. 24. 11-13, 15-20	Luke 10. 38-42
St Bartholomew	Aug. 24	I Cor. 12. 27-31	Luke 6. 12-19
Nativity of B.V.M.	Sept. 8	Prov. 8. 22-35	Matt. 1. 1-16
St Matthew	Sept. 21	Ezech. 1. 10-14	Matt. 9. 9-13
St Michael	Sept. 29	Apoc. 1. 1-5	Matt. 18. 1-10
SS Simon and Jude	Oct. 28	Eph. 4. 7-13	John 15. 17-25
Christ the King	Last Sunday in Oct.	Col. 1. 12-20	John 18. 33-37
All Saints	Nov. 1	Apoc. 7. 2-12	Matt. 5. 1-12